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| Title: CASH HANDLING POLICY | | |
| Subject: FINANCIAL AFFAIRS | Page: 1 of 5 | Policy Number: 02.00.00 |
| Category: DISTRICTWIDE POLICY | Approval Date: 7/6/2015 | Last Revised Date: 06/13/2018 |

POLICY STATEMENT:

This Cash Handling Policy (“Policy”) is intended to govern, and provide guidance with respect to the expected best practices to be followed by all Forest Preserve District of Cook County (*the “District”*) employees that handle cash transactions.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of the Cash Handling policy is to provide the recommended procedures to accept, store, deposit, document, and to transport cash/checks safely. All Departments are expected to provide secure surroundings for employees who handle these types of transactions and keep them informed of all policies and procedures. All employees involved in the handling of cash are expected to be accurate and efficient when processing customer payments, making change, or accepting cash. They are also expected to safeguard District funds against loss, and to establish and maintain good customer relations.

AFFECTED AREAS:

This policy applies to all District employees.

DEFINITIONS:

Cash: Cash includes currency, coins, checks, money orders, negotiable instruments and charge card transactions.

PROCEDURE/PROCESS:

1) Handling and Safeguarding Cash:

- a. All cash, checks, and payment cards, should be kept in a locked/combination vault or safe. Locations that do not have vaults/safe should store all forms of payments in a lock-box.
- b. Lock boxes should be kept in a locked file drawer or cabinet during non-business hours.
- c. Access to areas where cash is being stored should be limited to only those designated employees who need access.
- d. During business hours, all forms of cash should be stored in locking drawers, cash registers and/or lock boxes.
- e. Only the individuals who are collecting monies should have control over this cash, and it is their responsibility to make sure that the cash is secured when they take a lunch or break.
- f. The cashiers should have complete control and responsibility for any forms of payments being collected during normal business hours.
- g. To reduce the risk of errors, all cash should be separated according to denomination and should face the same direction.
- h. Checks should be kept separate from the cash, and recorded on the Check Receipts Log. Credit Card receipts and any forms of documentation should also be kept together separately.

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- i. Credit Card machines and the receipts should not be left unattended. Machines and/or receipts should be kept in an inaccessible area.
- j. Credit Card numbers should never be written down and stored!
- k. Checks should be endorsed immediately!
- l. Cash balances in excess of \$100 should be deposited within one business day.
- m. Cash balances under \$100 are to be deposited within three (3) business days).
- n. All checks should be deposited by the end of the day

2) Accepting Payments:

- a. All types of payments should be input into a purchase order system (POS) if accessible, or tracked manually with pre-numbered receipts to ensure that all payments are documented. Payments for District activities or events can be accepted in the form of cash, coin, checks, and payment cards (debit/credit cards).
- b. In-Person Cash, Coin, and Check Payments Accepted Manually: Payments accepted by any departments without an electronic device should be tracked by pre-numbered receipts.
- c. When cash is accepted as payment, payment should always be recounted in front of the customers to confirm the amount received by the customer, and the correct change is given back to the customers. A receipt should **ALWAYS** be given to the customer for any payments collected.

3) Cash Collections Procedures:

- a. All cash collected should be kept in a locked register drawer, or a locked box at all locations accepting payments. At the end of each day, cash is totaled by the designated individuals and recorded on the Deposit Record Spreadsheet that summarizes the programs, dates, amounts, and participant's name/organization. Any variance of cash should be reviewed by the location supervisors, and corrected immediately. Cash should be deposited within three (3) business days. Money should be removed from the locked location, totals verified to the cash deposit spreadsheet before being deposited. The electronic version of the Deposit Record Spreadsheet should be signed off by the location supervisors, designated cashiers, and emailed over to Finance and Administration department (Comptroller and Accounting IV) by the end of each week.
- b. Loose Coins: Loose coins should be packaged and deposited as follows: Pennies (.50), Nickels (2.00), Dimes (5.00), and Quarters (10.00). These amounts should be **BANDED** and place placed in the coin envelopes and manually deposited into the Smart Safe, or lock box.

4) Checks Collection Procedures:

- a. Checks should be made payable to the "*Forest Preserve District of Cook County*".
- b. The individuals /organizations who are presenting the checks, as a form of payment should have a valid state issued identification card or a card representing of the organization. The District does not accept starter checks, or any checks that appears to be altered.

5) Check Deposit Procedures:

- a. All checks received will be recorded on the Check Receipt Log detailing the date, check number, check amount, and the payer/organization information. One/two individuals should be in charge of keeping the check receipt log updated. Individuals in charge of the check receipt log will make copies of checks, receipts, and any supporting documentation to be scanned/emailed over to Finance and Administration Accountant IV. The checks are given to the designated individuals who will deposit all checks using the remote deposit scanner. Only two designated individuals should be in charge of depositing checks. Individuals keeping maintenance of the check log should not deposit checks!
- b. Non-Sufficient Funds (NSF) checks are handled through a third party collection agency (Forte). If any checks are uncollectable, Finance and Administration will notify departments (PCV, CEP, Law Enforcement, Resource Mgt., OGS, etc.). NSF individuals/organizations are not allowed to write checks

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payable to the District without the approval from the Comptroller, and Accounting Manager I. (*Each location should maintain a list of NSF's.*)

6) **Deposit Records:**

- a. There are three separates spreadsheets in the Deposit Record Book: Deposit Report, Check Receipt Log, and EOD Report. **ALL THREE SHEETS MUST HAVE LOCATION SUPERVISOR SIGNATURE (electronic signatures are acceptable).**
- b. All spreadsheets must be completely filled out.
- c. Locations that have to make manual deposits (**deposits that are made at the nearest Chase Bank**), must also fill out the bank deposit slips and deposit bags with their location information on all deposit sheets.
- d. Deposit slips should be scanned and emailed to the Comptroller.
- e. Receipts of deposits from Chase Bank should also be scanned and emailed to Comptroller.

7) **Misappropriation of Funds:**

- a. Misappropriation of funds can occur because of a number of reasons. Some of the reasons are listed below:
 1. Employee failing to record purchases properly in order to misappropriate cash.
 2. Employee misappropriating cash from a machine or whilst cash is in transit.
 3. Employee accepting or soliciting money to provide cash to a third party.
 4. Employee accepting or soliciting money or a benefit to provide a good or service to a third party.
- b. Supervisors must document the conduct of employees suspected of any of the above allegations.
- c. Incidents must be reported to the Inspector General's Office.
- d. Employees will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination, according to Cook County policies and the District Employee Handbook.

8) **Separation of Duties:**

- a. The cashiers accepting daily payments should balance these payments at the end of the day.
- b. Monies should be counted **TWICE**, and signed off by location supervisor before any bank deposits are made.
- c. Location supervisor should be accompanied by another individual when making bank deposits.
- d. Cashiers collecting payment **SHOULD NOT** make any deposit at the bank.
- e. Cashiers collecting checks as payment **SHOULD NOT** make any checks deposits.
- f. Individuals depositing checks **SHOULD NOT** maintain the Check Receipt Log.

9) **Transporting Money:**

- a. Completed deposits should be sent to the bank within three (3) business days.
- b. Deposits that are delivered in-person to the bank should be done using two (2) people.
- c. To ensure the safety of District employees, the delivery should be in an inconspicuous manner using a large dark bag to conceal the deposit bags.

10) **Overage and Shortage:**

- a. When an overage or shortage is identified, a supervisor should recount the deposit.
- b. If it is a valid overage or shortage, an Overage/Shortage Form should be filled out, and sent to Finance and Administration with an explanation, and the appropriate documentation.

- 11) **Counterfeit Money:** Employees should notify location supervisor of any counterfeit bills, and an Overage/Shortage form should be filled out.

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- 12) **Nature Centers Special Programs and Events:** When there are special events and programs hosted by the District Nature Center Directors, or the Special Event Coordinator, is in charge of accepting money, and securing it in a lock box. Once the event is over, the Special Event Coordinator or Program Coordinator should count all the funds and record them on the correct spreadsheet for deposit. The cash deposit summary is then signed off by the location supervisor.
- 13) **Nature Center Donations:**
 - a. Any money collected as a donation at any nature centers, should be recorded as such;
 - b. Donation forms should be filled out, and scanned/mailed to Finance and Admin. Dept.; and,
 - c. Location supervisor should sign off on the donation forms.
- 14) **Credit Cards Errors/Refunds:**
 - a. If a credit card payment was processed in error, the error needs to be corrected immediately, and documented;
 - b. If a customer changes their mind after a credit card payment has been processed, then the transaction should be **VOID on the same day;** and,
 - c. If a customer changes their mind after a credit card payment has been processed, and the transaction was not voided on the same day, a refund needs to be issued back to the customer credit card.
- 15) **Security Deposits Refund Procedures:**
 - a. Security deposit refunds will be approved by PCV, and processed by Finance & Admin. Dept. PCV will complete and submit to Finance & Admin. Dept. a Refund Request Form;
 - b. Security Deposits that are paid in the form of a check will be processed for refund once funds have been verified by Finance and Administration; and,
 - c. All credit card security deposit payments must be refunded back to the customer credit card. The only exception to this procedure is the customer credit card is no longer valid, and then a check will be issued.

RESPONSIBILITY:

- 1) **Finance & Administration Department:** The Finance & Administration Department shall: (1) have overall responsibility for the Cash Handling Policy; (2) suggest best practices that should be followed; (3) conduct periodic reviews of various cash handling locations; and (4) conduct annual Cash Handling training.
- 2) **Department Heads:** District Department Heads and other senior staff shall: (1) comply with this policy; (2) ensure all individuals under their purview conducting cash related transactions complete annual cash handling policy training(s); and (3) create and maintain written Standard Operating Procedures in relation to the "Policy.
- 3) **Internal Auditor:** The District Internal Auditor shall perform periodic audits, and/or background checks, to review and ensure compliance with the District Cash Handling Policy.

TRAINING REQUIREMENTS:

- 1) All employees conducting cash transactions are required to complete the Finance & Administration Departments' Cash Handling Policy training course annually.

COMMUNICATION PLAN:

- 1) This policy should be distributed to all appropriate and necessary employees.

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2) This policy should be added to the District shared drive, intranet, and website.

REFERENCES:

Forest Preserve District of Cook County
Receipts of Money (FPDCC Code Section [1-8-1](#))

Cook County Personnel Rules
Rule 8: Conduct and Discipline of Personnel

Forest Preserve District of Cook County
Employee Handbook Rules of Conduct

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Policy & Special Projects Manager

APPROVAL: [Arnold Randall](#)
General Superintendent

POLICY HISTORY:

Approved: 07/06/2015

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Revised: 06/13/2018

If you have questions, comments, or suggestions concerning District policies, please contact:

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