

Hidalgo County

IDENTIFICATION BADGE POLICY

I. PURPOSE

Hidalgo County is committed to providing a safe and secure workplace for all employees. As part of this goal, the County is instituting an identification badge system for County employees.

This policy specifically applies to the County Identification Badge which will be issued to all county employees. The Identification Badge Policy serves the dual purpose of readily identifying County employees and other authorized personnel, while providing measured protection against unauthorized personnel and intruders from entering designated secure work areas. The system is effective only if there is active cooperation and compliance by all employees at all times. Any laxity in compliance and enforcement subjects the entire system to failure.

In the best interests of the County and to make identification as easy as possible, one standard will be implemented Countywide. The Human Resources Department will provide Identification Badges for all Departments. Departments that have existing identification badge systems in place will have three months from the date of the implementation of this policy to replace their badges to the official County badge and destroy their previous badges.

This identification will also validate employee identity on the countywide time and attendance system, TAAP, and provide access to county buildings through keyless entry. Implementation of the keyless entry system will begin with the New Administration Building and continuing to other areas as funds become available. This system will eventually replace any existing entry access system and will become the county standard.

A. Elected Officials/Department Heads

Elected Officials/Department Heads shall ensure that this Policy is fully implemented and adapted to the needs of their departments and work locations. Elected Officials/Department Heads shall ensure that the requirements of this policy are enforced for their department. Elected Officials/Department Heads will need to provide a list to the Human Resources Department of permanent full and part time employees who will have keyless access to buildings and designated interior areas.

B. Managers and Supervisors

It shall be the direct responsibility of Managers, Supervisors, and other assigned personnel, that are designated in writing by their Department Head, to enforce the requirements of this policy.

C. All Employees

The County requires appropriate display of employee Identification Badges at all times by all employees on any County work site, with an exception for law enforcement assignments that require anonymity. For the purpose of this Policy, employees include permanent full time, permanent part-time and temporary employees.

II. CONTROL AND ISSUANCE OF BADGES

A. Employee Identification Badges

1. Description of Badges: The employee badge consists of a hard plastic card, which on the face reflects the county name, department name, an accurate photograph of the employee, the employee's first and last name, department telephone number, and employee ID number. In a growing effort to provide access control throughout the County, ID Badges will be printed on proximity cards. Each card will have a unique code and will provide access through particular doors and other controlled areas, on an as needed basis. The Human Resources Department will coordinate with the appropriate departments in order to program the proximity cards for entry into designated locations. Note that not all doors will have electronic access. Most internal doors will continue to have regular locks that require keys. Because the card holds permission to gain access to particular doors, the ID Badge must be protected from non-authorized persons.

When a badge is damaged, lost, stolen or misplaced, the employee must immediately report the incident to the department head and to the departmental timekeeper. The department will in turn immediately notify the Human Resources Department through an official form. The County requires that both the employee and department head sign the official form. The proximity card system provides significant advantages over a lost key, as the system can maintain its integrity by deactivating this card in the database, therefore reporting of lost badges is essential.

Identification badges will only be re-issued if the identification badge is damaged, lost, stolen, misplaced, or the appearance of the employee changes to the degree that the photograph is not a recognizable resemblance of the employee. The issuing office must immediately destroy any replaced Identification Badge.

2. Upon initial implementation of this Policy, all incumbent employees will be issued Identification Badges. Following implementation, new employees will be issued badges during enrollment.

3. Identification Badges will be issued by the Human Resources Department.

4. The Human Resources will schedule to have picture taken. Employees will sign an acknowledgment form signifying receipt and acceptance to abide by Identification Badge policy. Human Resources will then issue the employee the identification badge.

5. Badges are the property of the County. On a terminating or retiring employee's last workday, the employee's supervisor shall require the employee to surrender the badge, and the supervisor shall return the badge to the Human Resources Department.

6. An Employee who is on extended leave (30 days or more) will be required to turn in his or her Identification Badge to the supervisor pending return to work.

7. Each Employee must not have more than one County Identification Badge in his or her possession at any one time.

III. REQUIREMENTS AND ENFORCEMENT

A. Employee Identification Badge

The County expects all employees to fully comply with all provisions of this policy. Management staff and supervisors must enforce all provisions.

1. Employees must wear their Identification Badge at all times. Employees must prominently display their Identification Badges on the front of the employee between the neck and above the hips; in a configuration, such that the entire face of the badge is clearly visible to any other person. The employee must either clip the Identification Badge to a piece of outer clothing, or wear the Identification Badge around their neck on a chain or necklace. The County strictly prohibits any employee from defacing or altering their Identification Badge with stickers, decals, markings, or by any other means. For safety, employees performing certain jobs, such as maintaining or operating equipment, or any other potentially hazardous activity should either clip the ID badge to their clothing or put the badge in their pocket.
2. Each Employee is responsible for safeguarding his or her own Identification Badge, and must immediately report any lost Identification Badge to their supervisor and the departmental timekeeper.
3. Any employee that does not comply with this policy will be subject to disciplinary action.

IV. IDENTIFICATION BADGE HOLDER RESPONSIBILITIES

- Do not lend your Identification Badge to anyone.
- Do not allow unauthorized individuals into any secure area.
- Ensure that all external access points are properly secured.
- Do not leave badge on dash of vehicle or other locations where exposed to extreme temperatures.
- Do not fold, bend, pry open or mutilate your Identification Badge.
- Do not use your identification badge improperly.
- Do not leave your identification badge unattended.
- Immediately notify your Elected Official/Department Head if your Identification Badge is no longer in your possession.
- Immediately notify your Elected Official/Department Head of any difficulties or problems with any Identification Badge.