



COUNTY OF INYO

BUDGET CONTROL AND RESPONSIBILITY & EXTRAORDINARY BUDGET POLICIES

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that department heads are responsible and accountable to maintain their department expenditure levels within the adopted budget and to collect, in a timely manner, the full amount of revenues budgeted.

II. GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR THE REQUESTED, RECOMMENDED AND ADOPTED BUDGETS

With the exception of traditional General Fund Discretionary Revenues (i.e., sales tax, property tax and other general purpose revenues) all versions of the budget(s) should reflect an appropriation for all expenditures to be incurred and revenues expected to be received during the Fiscal Year.

For example:

- General Fund Discretionary Revenues will be budgeted in a separate budget to be known as “General Revenues” and will be the joint responsibility of the County Administrator and the Auditor-Controller;
- Grant expenditures and revenues need to be appropriated on an annual basis;
- Revenues directed to a specific program and/or department will be reflected in the receiving program and/or department (i.e., Trial Court Funds in the court budgets, Prop 172 in the Public Safety departments, Health Realignment in Health, etc.);
- All Capital Project Budgets will reflect anticipated expenditures as well as clearly delineate the source(s) and amount(s) of all offsetting revenues;
- The General Fund obligation/contribution to a program and/or department will be reflected as the “Net County Cost” of said program and/or department;



III. SUBMISSION OF AMENDMENTS TO THE ADOPTED BUDGET PLAN

If a department determines it cannot operate within the parameters of the Adopted Budget, the department shall submit a plan to the County Administrator as soon as the department determines a problem exists, outlining corrective actions necessary to bring their budget under control for the balance of the fiscal year.

IV. APPROPRIATION OF UNANTICIPATED REVENUE

Unanticipated revenue is generally a new source of revenue for a specific purpose not originally included in the budget.

- A. The appropriation of **UNANTICIPATED REVENUE** during the year will **NOT** be permitted unless the department has realized its pro rata percentage of estimated revenue, e.g., a department with an estimated revenue of \$100,000 must have received at least \$25,000 by September 30th before the Board will consider approval of the request to appropriate unanticipated revenue.

Department Heads in processing **FUND TRANSFERS** must specify the date(s) by which the unanticipated revenue will be received and whether it will be in advance of or in arrears (after costs have been incurred). If the full amount of unanticipated revenue will lag behind the expenditure of program funds, this must be specified on the fund transfer with a recommendation as to how to deal with the negative cash flow.

- B. Exceptions to IV.A. will be considered on a case-by-case basis. For example, unanticipated revenue for a new program, restricted program, etc. would probably constitute an exception.

V. BUDGET CONTROL

- A. During the Fiscal Year, the following expenditure accounts will be subject to object code controlled at the object level. This means that changes/transfers from these accounts will require prior approval of the County Administrator.



1. Workers Compensation
 2. Liability Insurance
 3. Public Liability Insurance
 4. Motor Poll
 5. Telephone – Internal
 6. Postage – Internal
 7. Computer Charge – Internal
 8. Any other charges categories (5500)
- B. All other expenditure object codes will be controlled and monitored at the object category level (i.e., 5000 - Salaries & Benefits; 5100 – Services and Supplies; 5600 – Fixed Assets) by the Auditor-Controller.

All appropriation changes/transfers between object categories will require prior approval of the County Administrator.

- C. Department’s expenditures for grant-funded programs shall not exceed projected grant revenues. Authorization to “increase” appropriations without offsetting revenues must be obtained from the Board of Supervisors.

Note 1: This policy applies even if a department is within its overall departmental expenditure and revenue budget.

Note 2: Should expenditures exceed the projected grant revenues, the Auditor-Controller will inform the department of this occurrence so the department can work with the County Administrator to get the appropriate authorization to “increase” appropriations from the Board of Supervisors.

- D. The County Administrator is authorized to approve a new fixed asset or augment an existing fixed asset in an amount not to exceed \$10,000, provided that the total appropriation of the budget unit is not increased.
- E. If an **OVER-EXPENDITURE** is projected to occur, the department head shall perform one of more of the following steps.
1. Lower the expenditure level to maintain overall expenditures within the budgeted amount at the object level or overall departmental budget.
 2. Request an Appropriation Change from another object category within the same budget.



3. Request an Appropriation Change from another budget unit within the same department and under the Department Head's control.
 4. Prepare a memo to the County Administrator, providing adequate justification. Additionally, prepare an Appropriation Change Request Form for an appropriation from Contingencies and an agenda item for the Board of Supervisors approval.
- F. If estimated revenue is projected to be **UNDER-ACHIEVED**, the Department Head shall perform one or more of the following steps.
1. Lower expenditure levels so Net County Costs are not exceeded.
 2. Same as Section V.E.

VI. PROCESSING OF OVER-EXPENDED ACCOUNTS

- A. It shall be the responsibility of the Auditor-Controller to not process any payment request when an over-expenditure of object categories of accounts will occur and there has been no increase in appropriations approved either by the County Administrator or the Board of Supervisors as defined under Section IV.B.
- B. It shall be the Department's responsibility to initiate appropriation changes between non-controlled objects to keep them from being over-expended. In the event that an appropriation change is not processed in a timely manner and the object code is over-expended, as long as the total object category is not over-expended, the Auditor-Controller will continue to process any payments and inform the Department of the over-expenditure and request an immediate correction. However, should the Department consistently over-expend object line items, the Auditor-Controller will inform the County Administrator who will take appropriate corrective actions, which may include requesting Board of Supervisors approval to implement budget controls over the department's entire budget.
- C. It shall be the responsibility of the Purchasing Agent to withhold the processing of any purchase order which would result in over-expenditure of the Fixed Assets Object.
- D. Even if expenditure savings are available, the transfer of funds between major object categories (i.e., Salaries and Services and Supplies) will NOT be authorized if a department's Net County Cost is projected to exceed that originally budgeted and approved by the Board of Supervisors. The department should take corrective action(s) as outlined in Section V.E and/or F.



VII. APPROPRIATION FROM CONTINGENCIES

It will be the Department Head's responsibility to fully justify a request for an appropriation from contingencies and demonstrate an inability to reduce corresponding expenditures and/or increase revenues in other areas of the budget. In addition, the County Administrator, in working with the affected departments, reserves the right to use savings in other areas of the County budget to offset shortfalls before using contingencies.

VIII. REPORTS

Department Heads shall submit MID-YEAR and THIRD QUARTER FINANCIAL REPORTS to the County Administrator. These reports will provide a projection of the department's expenditures, revenues and Net County Cost for the fiscal year and include the reasons for over-expenditures and/or under-realization of revenues, along with a corrective action plan by the Department.

It shall be the responsibility of the County Administrator to submit the Mid-Year and Third-Quarter Financial Report to the Board of Supervisors. The Mid-Year Financial Report will usually occur in January and Third-Quarter Financial Report will usually occur in April. Subsequent financial reports may be required based on the overall financial condition of the County and/or as directed by the Board of Supervisors.

IX. ACCOUNTABILITY

As provided for in State law, it is the intent of the Board of Supervisors to hold Department Heads PERSONALLY LIABLE for over-spending their budgets and not adhering to the foregoing policy. Department Heads may be required to address the Board of Supervisors and/or the County Administrator on the financial performance of their departments.



EXTRAORDINARY BUDGET CONTROL POLICIES

1. Department heads are responsible and accountable to maintain their department budgets.
2. Departments must promptly prepare and submit billings for reimbursable revenue; doing so as soon as permissible under the terms of the applicable funding agreement or program guidelines.
3. Upon being notified, or otherwise learning of a reduction in funding, or a possible reduction in funding that could impact a department's ability to collect the full amount of budgeted revenues, the department head shall immediately notify, in writing, the Board of Supervisors and County Budget Officer.
4. Upon being notified of the suspension or elimination of payments, or upon learning of any other known reduction in budgeted revenues, the department head shall immediately prepare appropriate amendments to the affected budget(s) for consideration by the Board of Supervisors within two-weeks of the notice.
5. Minimize purchases to maximize end-of-the-year Fund Balance.
6. Minimize travel expense to maximize end-of-the-year Fund Balance.
7. To enrich cultural and recreational opportunities for residents and visitors alike, and to provide assistance to the local tourism industry in attracting visitors to the county, the County will strive to maintain Advertising County Resources programs and contracts to the extent practical when considering other Budget needs and revenue projections, but no recipient of a County grant or contract should assume or count on continued funding beyond the year in which the grant or contract is awarded.
8. Department heads responsible for programs that might be proposed for realignment or restructuring by the State, need to evaluate all realignment/restructuring proposals and alert the Board of Supervisors and County Administrator of the proposals, their potential impacts (positive and negative), and any issues specific to Inyo County or small rural counties in general.
9. Departments are encouraged to remain cognizant and utilize the principles of Service Redesign to achieve ongoing reductions in expense of increases in revenues.