

# FULTON COUNTY GOVERNMENT BRANDING AND SIGNAGE STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES



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## **I. Preamble - Purpose**

Fulton County (“County”) is the largest county in Georgia and is considered a progressive leader in providing world class customer service to its constituents. The county has established an aggressive program to modernize and upgrade county facilities. In keeping with this program, this document provides the latest approved standards and guidelines for branding and signage in county facilities.

These standards and guidelines are applicable to all forms of branding and signage for Fulton County, including communications (stationary, business cards, memorandums, notices, websites and any other forms of media), as well as any and all signage used in/or on behalf of the county. The standards and guidelines complement the newly established operation policy, entitled “Signage, Wayfinding and Branding Policy”.

Standards and guidelines evolve to meet additional needs of the county and its constituents. As a result, formal updates will be issued periodically to address any changes or additions.

## **II. Branding and Logo**

A logo is a symbol used by an organization on its letterhead, advertising material, and signage as an emblem by which the organization can easily be recognized.

The Fulton County logo is a protected emblem/symbol. The logo should be easily recognizable by the public and should be identified with the provision of professional and quality services, in well maintained facilities, which are thoughtfully designed, using the latest in proven technology. The logo should be used only when approved by authorized Fulton County government personnel and in specific approved instances or for specific uses. The use or misuse of the logo, even in a single instance, may potentially interfere with the county’s recourse for misuse of the county logo in the future.

The Fulton County External Affairs Department has been designated by the county manager as the department responsible for approval, usage and administration of the Fulton County logo.

## **III. Signage**

Signage is defined, by Wikipedia, as “the design or use of signs and symbols to communicate a message to a specific group, usually for the purpose of marketing or a kind of advocacy”, or “... graphic designs, as symbols, emblems, or words, used especially for identification or as a means of giving directions or warning.”

In Fulton County government facilities, the use or misuse of signage affects and influences the constituents’ and our employees’ perception of the county’s image. Improper use of the Logo, misspellings, the use of unauthorized and inconsistent materials, colors and placement of signs reflect poorly on our professionalism and may be in violation of established legal and regulatory requirements.

The standards and guidelines contained herein incorporate the approved signage parameters, as changed from time to time, and should be implemented, as soon as reasonably possible. All unauthorized and non-compliant signage should be replaced with approved signage as soon as possible. The Department of Real Estate and Asset Management (DREAM), in conjunction with the affected department location or agency personnel, will be responsible for adherence to the signage

requirements on an ongoing basis. Before removing any non-compliant signage, DREAM must be consulted to determine the best way to implement the change.

## **IV. Wayfinding**

Wikipedia defines wayfinding as: "... wayfinding has been used in the context of architecture to refer to the user experience of orientation and choosing a path within the built environment."

For the purposes of this document, the county defines wayfinding as the means to get constituents and employees to their needed destination, in the most efficient, direct and effective manner, and with minimal human assistance, through the use of signage, graphics and technology.

Signage and wayfinding are very closely linked. Wayfinding generally requires some form(s) of signage, but signage can incorporate functions other than wayfinding.

Wayfinding can be addressed via traditional manufactured materials (plastics, wood, metal, paper handouts, etc.), through technology (kiosks, electronics, etc.), with human assistance (concierge desks, courtesy phones, etc.) or by using descriptive color and graphic symbols (pictographs, color directional arrows, etc.).

The county will use a combination of these methodologies and materials, to address signage and wayfinding. The standards and guidelines contain information, at a high level, which outline technological options identified, so far. There is some flexibility in these options, based upon the requirements of the facility and current technology, but all plans to add or change any current signage with a technological solution, must be approved by DREAM, and the Fulton County Customer Service and Consistency Committee.

## **V. Fulton County Customer Service and Consistency Committee**

A cross departmental committee has been established to develop and recommend policies, operating and administrative procedures, to implement and maintain these branding, wayfinding and signage standards and guidelines. The committee will work closely with External Affairs to ensure that our branding and wayfinding projects, incorporating the use of the logo and signage, conform to the approved standards and guidelines.

Specifically, External Affairs and the committee will:

- Establish and administer policies related to branding, wayfinding, signage, and related communications efforts (See "EXHIBIT D, Signage, Wayfinding and Branding Policy", attached)
- Establish a mechanism for communicating and educating departments on related policies, standards and guidelines
- Determine the best way to incorporate the new standards and guidelines into ongoing operations
- Determine methodology and requirements associated with the new and continuing processes (administration and Follow-up)
- Develop what is needed to successfully address the new processes (approvals, forms, media, questions (FAQs))
- Create a budget, in conjunction with DREAM, for one-time and on-going projects

The county's director of customer experience and solutions will chair the committee and will publish notes from each committee meeting. The functional details and make-up of the committee and governing and operating rules will be determined by the members of the committee, with the approval of the county's chief operating officer (COO).

## **VI. Basic Principles and Rules for the Standards and Guidelines**

The standards and guidelines must:

- Contain language which is easily understandable and actionable
- Be as universal as possible in its application, while being flexible enough to allow for customization, if necessary and approved.
- Focus on efficiently attaining the objective, while ensuring simplicity and clarity
- Be specific in providing the information required, by the process, for additions, changes or deletions to any signage or communications related to signage and the standards and guidelines
- Provide information as to what is acceptable and not acceptable, relative to message, media and medium
- Contain exact and detailed technical and/or regulatory (ADA, Title VI) specifications, including any other safety and legal requirements, relative to signage, wayfinding and branding
- For signage and branding, provide clear examples of the do's and don't's in design, placement, use, reproduction, approvals and control, and logo usage

## **VII. Steps to Request a New Sign or Remove an Existing Sign**

To request a new sign or replace or remove an existing sign: Complete the Add, Change or Remove Signage Request (see Exhibit A, attached). Fill in as much information as possible on the request.

If you need assistance with the request, please call 404-612-0322 in DREAM. Once the request is completed by you, send it to the director of customer experience and solutions. The director of customer experience and solutions will review with External Affairs and the committee, approve or clarify any issues with you, and return the request to you. If the request is approved, an order can be placed, through DREAM, for the sign. DREAM will determine the proper method for installation and the projected timing for preparation of the sign, if being added or replacing an existing sign. If the request is for removal of sign(s), when the form is approved, you can remove the sign or request assistance from DREAM to remove it. The funding information must also be provided by the requesting department or, prior approval will be required if the department is requesting a different department fund the signage.

Every effort will be made to respond with either an approval, request for additional information, or denial of your request, within 7 working days from receipt.

If the request to add a sign is an emergency, as may be the case with a potential facility closure or hazardous condition, the director of customer experience and solutions and/or the director of

DREAM should be immediately contacted by telephone, text or email to assist. We realize that emergencies sometimes require an emergency response.

Note3: There are specific requirements (size, color, mounting, etc.) for Fulton County signs, both inside and outside a facility. These requirements detailed in Appendices 1-3 as updated from time to time.

## VIII. Types of Information and Signage

Signage can generally be divided into types of information, based upon the functionality or purpose. Shown below are the typical types of signage encountered inside and outside county facilities.

### Interior Signage

Shown below are the types and functions as well example(s) of each signage type.

#### a. Wayfinding and/or Directional Signage

Instructions or graphic symbols that enable constituents and employees to get to a specific desired location in the easiest, most efficient and generally most direct manner. Based upon the complexity and size of the building(s), it may be necessary to request that an engineered wayfinding solution be sought for larger facilities (e.g. county courthouses). Directional signage can be as simple as arrows with verbiage, pointing to a location.

Examples of wayfinding and/or directional signage:

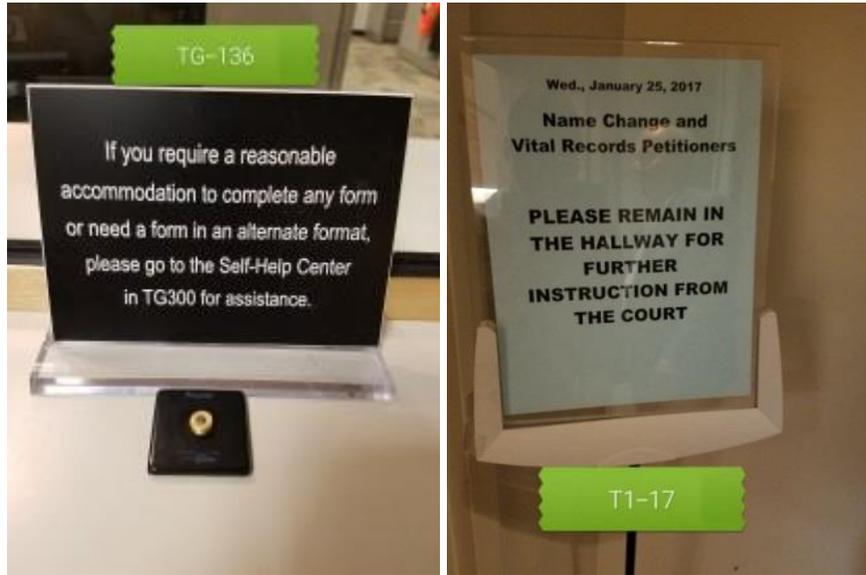


**b. Instructional/Informational Signage:**

Instructional/Informational signage provides information or instructions that direct or offer assistance or that require performance of specific actions by the individual.

Note that, in this case, a sign can be instructional, informational and/or directional.

Examples of instructional/informational signage:



### c. Safety/Security Signage

Safety/Security signage is designed to provide needed information for general safety and instructions for emergencies, including “IN CASE OF FIRE,” weapons or entry prohibitions and other rules and regulations designed to protect constituents and employees. Many of the existing safety and security signs are red and white, although we are reviewing signage colors and designations currently.

Examples of safety/security signage:



#### d. Restrictive Signage

Restrictive signs are instructive. In some cases, these signs restrict access to the area to only employees or other authorized personnel, but they can also restrict activities (i.e. “No Smoking”, “Courtroom Rules” or “No Cellphone Usage Allowed”). Note that a “No Smoking” sign is a restrictive sign as well as being a safety sign. In the courthouses, many courtrooms display a list that specifies “Courtroom Behavior and Acceptable Attire.”

Examples of restrictive signage:



### e. Functional Signage

Functional signs describe a function performed in a location -- such as a tag office, conference room or a library -- or what is contained within the identified physical location, as in the case of air handling units or similar mechanical functions.

Examples functional signage:



**f. General Interest (Announcements) Signage**

A general interest or announcement sign is generally temporary in nature but should be created and displayed in a professional manner, adhering to the same standards and guidelines as permanent signage. Taping paper to a wall or using a photocopy of a sign is not considered to be professional. Shown below are examples of what should be avoided.

In an effort to reduce confusion caused by outdated signs, temporary signage shall include an expiration date and time at the very bottom. This will prevent temporary signs from being displayed beyond their useful lifecycle. Department personnel will inspect the expiration dates on all temporary signage under their purview and immediately remove any sign past its expiration date.

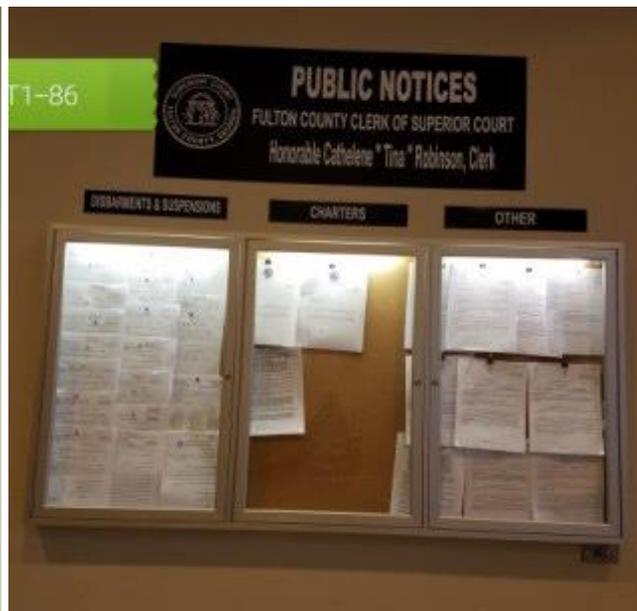
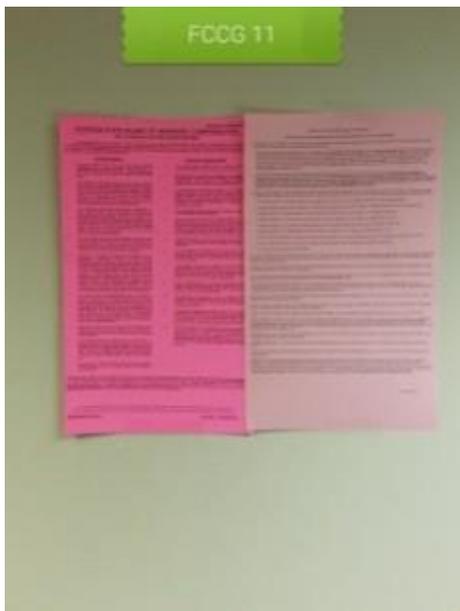
Examples general interest (announcements) signage:



### g. Legally or Legislatively Required Signage and/or Public Notices

In some cases, signs or documents are required to be conspicuously posted to meet federal, state, county, city or legal, legislative or governmental directives. Examples include worker's compensation rules, non-discrimination compliance legislation, court- or sheriff-issued notifications and departmental policy notifications. Public notices are dated and normally require posting for a specific duration or time period.

Examples of legally or legislatively required and/or public notice signs:



## **Exterior Signage**

Identifying county facilities is a mandatory part of providing good customer service to our constituents. All county facilities should be clearly identified as a Fulton County building.

Note4: It is important to note that there are local building codes that can restrict or dictate the parameters for exterior signage for a particular facility, and the county will adhere to those parameters.

While not all descriptive information allowed may be required or desirable, exterior signs can identify the function or purpose of the facility, location address, provide instructions, directions and other miscellaneous information, such as operating hours, closures and emergency contact information, as well as any restrictions or conduct requirements.

There are several categories of information that may or may not be required for exterior signs for a county facility, such as:

Logo – The official Fulton County symbol should be clearly present at each Fulton County facility. However, circumstances may result in the logo not being displayed on the exterior of the facility (i.e. code restrictions, lack of adequate display space, design considerations). Whenever possible, the logo should be displayed on the exterior of the building or on affixed signage.

Building name – The Board of Commissioners (BOC) must approve the naming of all county buildings that carry an official name, such as the Lewis R. Slaton Court House or Fulton County Public Health at 10 Park Place.

Building Address – It is critical that we clearly and distinctly display the building address, including building location address number and street name, wherever possible and allowed by code, on the face of the facility or on a monument or stanchion sign adjacent.

Building function – A facility's function should be clearly identified either in the name of the facility (Fulton County Public Health at 10 Park Place, Fulton County Medical Examiner's Facility, Wolf Creek Library), or in the exterior sign wording, as is the case with many multi-purpose senior centers.

Building hours – While it is not possible, or necessarily desirable, to permanently display hours for a facility on a monument or building face sign, provisions must be made to indicating days and hours of normal operations. While stencils can be applied to glass doors, it may be more advisable to create professional looking placards that can be inserted in plastic or metal frames to allow for easy changes during seasonal or holiday changes.

Restrictions – We generally want to display positive messages or useful public information in a county facility; however, sometimes safety and good practices dictate the display of some information on the exterior of the building (e.g. "No Weapons Allowed" except for law enforcement). To ensure this is enforced, adequate notice is required at the entrance to most facilities, especially courthouses, clinics and the government center. In certain facilities, cellphones must be silenced. These types of restrictions should be identified, via signage, at the entrances to the facilities. Additionally, certain entrances and exits are restricted to employees only and must be correctly identified. The appropriate exterior and interior signage must be correctly installed.

## **IX. What are the basic components of a good sign?**

Signage should enhance the constituent's experience, identify the specific location information, provide necessary information to achieve the constituent's reason for visiting, notify the visitor of

any restrictions or conduct requirements, provide safety and security information or simplify instructions that might be subject to misinterpretation.

Implementing a comprehensive signage plan can significantly address a constituent's questions and reduce the time required by the constituent to address the reason for the visit.

## **X. Message and Media**

Having correct and necessary signage is a requirement and responsibility the county assumes, especially when serving the public in county facilities. There are several key components to transmitting messages or instructions to constituents and employees. These components are inherent in every good sign.

### **Message**

The instruction(s) or information must be clearly written, using proper grammar, should be as short and direct as possible, and contain a complete and understandable thought. "No Smoking" is succinct and generally understood by most individuals. Some signs require interpretation by the public. As an example, "Proper Courtroom Behavior" and legal postings may be legally required but may need to be carefully reviewed before posting as a "sign." The key is ensuring what is posted is clear, short and understood by the reader. A list of 10 do's and don't's may be too difficult for the reader to remember. A rule of thumb is to keep the message as simple, short and direct as possible.

### **Media**

Media (also referred to as "medium") is defined as the means of communication, as radio and television, newspapers, magazines, and the Internet, that reach or influence people widely. Media refers to how the message is transmitted, which can include:

- a. Traditional – Physical signage using traditional materials
- b. Technology – Use of Data, displayed automatically or accessible via technical devices, such as Kiosk, Display Boards, Apps
- c. Non-Technological – Concierge Desks, Courtesy Phones, Pamphlets, Notices, Information Booth, Use of Color and Graphics, Decals

Note5: No single media type is sufficient to fully address communication requirements. A good program should be designed to incorporate multiple media in a complementary plan.

Note6: All public signage MUST incorporate the ADA provisions contained in Sections 216 and 703 of the 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design, as incorporated herein in Appendix 2, "ADA 2010 Standards for Accessible Design" and Appendix 3, "Title VI Specifications and Requirements," including Braille and mounting heights, as well as any Title VI related multi-language requirements. All public signage is subject to, but not limited to, these specifications, which will be revised from time to time. Any questions or specific issues about ADA or Title VI compliance shall be addressed to the Fulton County Office of Diversity and Civil Rights Compliance.

## **XI. Implementation Plan**

### **Implementation and Review**

The Department of Real Estate and Asset Management (DREAM), the Customer Service and Consistency Committee (Committee), and the requesting department, shall have the responsibility for the implementation of, and adherence to, these standards and guidelines.

DREAM and the committee shall periodically visit Fulton County facilities and review the facilities for compliance, advising the facility of any identified non-compliance issues. Ensuring the standards and guidelines are implemented and maintained will assist in the county maintaining a professional and world-class appearance.

Other departments whose participation may be required to maintain or participate in the long-term program development and implementation are:

- Branding/Wayfinding/Signage Development Team
- County Management and BOC
- Finance
- IT
- Purchasing
- Outside entities (consultants, sign companies, etc.)
- Library team
- Legal
- Office of Diversity and Civil Rights Compliance

### **Education/Training/Resources**

While the primary goal of each department is to deliver the specialized function of that department, no program can be successful without the responsible party's knowledge of what is required to adhere to any established program.

Therefore, the committee, in conjunction with DREAM and Communications, will be responsible for providing knowledge resources to ensure compliance. Such resources should be targeted towards the facility or location manager, or his/her designee, or someone specifically designated by the department or agency with the responsibility for compliance to these Standards and Guidelines. Education/Training/Resources may include:

- Online targeted training
- One-on-one meetings at the facility
- Online resources (manuals/illustrations)
- Semi-annual or annual on-site reviews
- A designated DREAM contact for questions, advice and interpretation of requirements
- A targeted campaign, through Communications, to provide awareness to all employees of the efforts to remove clutter, improve wayfinding and branding, signage and, ultimately, customer service for the public and employees.

## **XII. Exceptions, Appeals and Customization**

The purpose of these standards and guidelines is to ensure that the branding, wayfinding and signage in all Fulton County facilities reflects the highest level of professionalism and world-class appearance, in a non-cluttered and attractive facility, while enabling the public and employees to conduct business efficiently and effectively, while making the best use of his/her time to do so.

Because of the diversified nature of the functions performed in the locations, some signage may be required over and above the signage approved for county-wide implementation. In those

instances, the departments or agencies should discuss such variances with the committee or with DREAM. DREAM and the committee will work closely to ensure that such signage is compatible with all other design and legal/regulatory/legislative requirements contained herein. In the unlikely event of a difference of opinion, as to any additional signage required, the Fulton County Chief Operating Officer will serve as the escalation and decision point.

### **XIII. Funding**

Unless otherwise agreed by county management, Finance and DREAM, each department shall be responsible for funding the addition of new or replacement of existing signage or any activities related to signage engineering, design, production or installation for that department, with the exception of any county-wide projects for branding, wayfinding and/or signage.

### **XIV. Updates**

These standards and guidelines will continue to evolve over time. The most up-to-date version of this document will be available to all Fulton County employees. Update notifications will be broadcast through the county's Communications Department channels.

### **XV. Signage Development Process**

The formal signage development process is accomplished through phases. Those phases are:

- Programming and schematic design
- Design development
- Design documents
- Purchasing process (bid/RFP/pricing)
- Project management
- Administration of results

DREAM will be responsible for development and implementation of the signage development process.

# **Exhibits & Appendices**

**Exhibit A – Add, Change or Remove Signage Request**

## Exhibit B – Workplace Notice Poster Requirements

Under certain federal and state laws, all employers are required to post notices of employees’ rights in conspicuous places where they are easily visible to all employees as set forth in the various charts below. Additionally, certain notices identified herein are required to be placed where they can be seen by applicants for employment. Furthermore, the United States Department of Labor (“USDOL”) allows employers to choose to post notice requirements electronically but must ensure that the notices are placed in a prominent place on the employer’s website. See 42 U.S.C. § 2000e-10(a). However, the USDOL’s allowable posting on an employer’s website is not a substitute for posting the notice posters in conspicuous places on the employer’s premises. The following chart sets forth certain federal employee rights notices that employers are required to post in the workplace:

| Federal Law  | Notice Posting Requirement  |
|--|---|
| Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)                                | The notice poster must be displayed in a <b>conspicuous place</b> where employees and applicants for employment can see it. A poster must be displayed at locations even if there are no eligible employees. 29 U.S.C. § 2619(a).                                       |
| Equal Employment Opportunity and Equal Access to the Law           | The notice poster must be posted in <b>conspicuous places</b> available to employees and applicants for employment. 42 U.S.C. § 2000e-10(a).  |
| Employee Rights Under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA)          | The notice poster must be posted by every employer who employs employees subject to FLSA’s minimum wage provisions. Employers must keep the notice posted in a conspicuous place in all of their establishments. 29 U.S.C. § 211; 29 C.F.R. 5164.                       |
| Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA) | Employers are required to provide persons covered by USERRA a notice of the rights, benefits, and obligations of the employees and employers under USERRA. Employers may post the notice where employer notices are customarily placed. 38 U.S.C. 4334; 20 C.F.R. 1002. |

In addition to federal workplace notice posting requirements, employers in Georgia must comply with certain state posting requirements mandated by various Georgia laws and regulations. The chart below summarizes Georgia’s employee-related workplace notice posting requirements. It also specifies any additional requirements, such as specific locations where the notice must be posted, and whether the notice must be posted in another language and where to obtain the required poster.

| Georgia Law  | Coverage and Additional Requirements   |
|--|--|
| <p><b>Georgia Unemployment Insurance Code</b> (<a href="#">O.C.G.A. §§ 34-8-1 to 34-8-280</a> <a href="#">Ga Comp. R. &amp; Regs. 300-2-7-.15</a>)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Applies, with limited exceptions, to all employers (<a href="#">O.C.G.A. § 34-8-33</a>);</li> <li>• Employers must post the regulations regarding claims for unemployment benefits <b>conspicuously in the workplace in an area frequented by employees</b> (<a href="#">O.C.G.A. § 34-8-190(b)</a> and <a href="#">Ga Comp. R. &amp; Regs. 300-2-7-.15(1)</a>).</li> <li>• The Georgia Department of Labor (DOL) regulations also require an employer to post a notice of periods when unemployment insurance is not payable (<a href="#">O.C.G.A. § 34-8-195(a)(3)</a> and <a href="#">Ga. Comp. R. &amp; Regs. 300-2-7-.15</a>).</li> </ul> <p>Please note that the applicable posters are available at the Georgia DOL website.</p> |
| <p><b>Sex Discrimination in Employment Law</b> (<a href="#">O.C.G.A. §§ 34-5-1 to 34-5-7</a>)</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Applies to all employers that both:</li> <li>• employ ten or more employees.</li> <li>• engage in intrastate commerce. (<a href="#">O.C.G.A. § 34-5-2(4)</a>).</li> <li>• <b>Employer must post notice conspicuously in the workplace in an area frequented by employees</b> (<a href="#">O.C.G.A. § 34-5-7</a>).</li> </ul> <p>The Equal Pay Poster can be downloaded from the Georgia DOL website.</p>  |
| <p><b>Georgia Minimum Wage Law</b> (<a href="#">O.C.G.A. §§ 34-4-1 to 34-4-6</a>)</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Applies to all employers in Georgia with six or more employees, except employers:</li> <li>• with annual sales of \$40,000 or less;</li> <li>• that hire domestic employees; and</li> </ul> <p>that are farm-owners, sharecroppers, or land renters. (<a href="#">O.C.G.A. § 34-4-3(b)</a>).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Employers must post notice conspicuously in the workplace in an area frequented by employees</b> (<a href="#">O.C.G.A. § 34-4-5</a>).</li> </ul>   |

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <p><b>Georgia Workers' Compensation Law</b><br/>(<a href="#">O.C.G.A. §§ 34-9-1</a> to <a href="#">34-9-421</a> and Ga Comp. R. &amp; Regs. 120-2-36 to 120-2-38)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Applies to all employers that employ three or more persons, including regular part time workers (<a href="#">O.C.G.A. § 34-9-2</a>).</li> <li>• <b>Employers must post the notice in the workplace in a place frequented by employees</b> (<a href="#">O.C.G.A. § 34-9-81.1</a>).</li> <li>• The employer must also post the Panel of Physicians or Conformed Panel of Physicians or Managed Care Organization Procedures in prominent places on the business premises (<a href="#">O.C.G.A. § 34-9-201(c)</a>).</li> <li>• Covered employers that do not have an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) must post a listing of EAP providers in the geographic area (<a href="#">O.C.G.A. § 34-9-416</a>).</li> </ul> |
|---|--|

Additionally, the County's policy on the posting of notices must comply with Georgia's Open Meetings Act. The Open Meetings Law requires that governmental bodies provide notice of all public meetings. See O.C.G.A. § 50-14-1(3) (A). Specifically, the Open Meetings Law mandates that agencies provide notice to the public in advance of all meetings, even emergency meetings. That means agencies must make information available to the general public by, in the case of regular meetings, posting at least one (1) week in advance a notice containing the information in a conspicuous location at the agency's regular meeting place and on its website, if the agency has one, in order to comply with the Georgia Open Meetings Law. O.C.G.A. § 50-14-1(d) (1)-(3). As to special or emergency meetings that are not held at a regularly posted time and place, these meetings may require rapid posting, and any County policy should not prevent their timely posting. In particular, notice includes posting at least 24 hours in advance at the regular meeting place. These postings must be allowed at their regular meeting place and must be posted conspicuously. However, these requirements would not prohibit the policy from requiring that they be centralized.

Furthermore, the Fulton County's Policy and Procedures also requires public notification of County Fee Changes as set forth in Policy Number 600-69. Policy Number 600-69(3) provides that "Printed notification of the implementation of the fee increase or fee implementation shall be posted at the Fulton County Government Center and the North and South Government Centers." Again, these requirements would not preclude the proposed policy from requiring that such posting must be centralized.

## **Appendix 1 – U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs “Interior Signs”**

## **Appendix 2 – ADA 2010 Standards for Accessible Design**

## **Appendix 3 – Title VI Specifications and Requirements**

**Appendix 4 – Fulton County Graphic Identity (logo, fonts, colors)**