



New County Extension Directors Fact Sheet

Roles and Responsibilities of County Directors

Introduction

As a county Extension director, you are not only pivotal to the success of the Extension program in your county, but also in the district and in Washington State. Understanding the roles and responsibilities of the County Director is the first step in being successful with your new responsibility.

Logistics

- **Term of Appointment** – Term begins July 1 of each year for 4 years.
- **Eligibility** – All Educators within the county unit are eligible. The position maybe advertised internally and externally.
- **Selection** – District director gathers input from all staff. The district director evaluates the collective input and makes recommendation to the dean and director of WSU Extension. Due to the partnership with the county commissioners, their concurrence is secured before the appointment is made by the WSU Extension dean and director.
- **Compensation** – A scale of compensation is based on the number of employees in the office. The size of the stipend is normally based on the number of resident county faculty and full time WSU employed administrative professional staff reporting directly to the county director.
- **Evaluation** – District director solicits input from all personnel regarding performance of county Extension director. Formal re-appointment is based on performance during the fourth year.
- **Policies and Procedures** – Please refer to the WSU Extension Policies and Procedures Web site for specific questions regarding [County Extension Director](#) appointments.

Roles and Responsibilities

Each county is unique and as a result the job description for each county Extension director will vary. The items described below are expectations of WSU county Extension directors.

Administration:

1. Function as designated administrative head of their county unit.
2. Serve as communication link between district and state administration and county faculty and staff.
3. Be familiar with programs in the county.
4. Encourage programming to reach a diverse clientele.
5. Stimulate creative programming and provide advice regarding the process of planning, conducting, and evaluating subject matter programs.

6. Market and promote the entire Extension program to county officials, agencies, stakeholders, volunteers, and county residents.
7. Develop a “Friends of Extension” group. Keep them apprised of programs and initiatives at the local and state level.
8. Be responsible for the unit’s timely completion of WORQS, WEMIS, Civil Rights reports, and other organizational reports.
9. Facilitate regular, effective office conferences.
10. Be responsible for the development of an advisory system for the county Extension program. Specific guidelines for [WSU Extension advisory systems](#) are found in the WSU Extension Policies and Procedures manual.

Personnel:

1. Interpret and implement WSU and WSU Extension personnel policies.
2. Utilize WSU Extension Human Resources and district director as resources to assure accurate personnel policies and practices are being followed.
3. Serve as immediate supervisor for all unit staff, including Extension educators.
4. Participate in the selection and hiring of Extension educators, provide orientation to the county program and introduction to key program clientele and other stakeholders.
5. Be responsible for hiring program assistants and other support staff (both full-time and part-time).
6. Be a mentor to faculty and administrative professionals, assisting them in their tenure and/or promotion processes.
7. Work to increase diversity in staffing and programming in the county. Comply with Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action policies and guidelines. Complete Civil Rights Policies and Guidelines are found in the WSU Extension Policies and Procedures Manual.
8. Be a leader in creating and maintaining a positive workplace environment.
9. Provide timely feedback and conduct annual performance appraisals with all staff.

Fiscal:

1. Be certain that public funds are handled within defined legal parameters. There are no compromises when handling public money.
2. Manage both county- and state-appropriated funds and non-appropriated funds. These responsibilities include purchasing, accounting, auditing, and overseeing others who may handle the daily business in the office.
3. Utilize the WSU Extension Business and Finance Office personnel to assist with questions and procedures.
4. Utilize the [WSU Extension Business and Finance](#) Web site to access county budget guidelines.
5. Understand WSU guidelines and policies related to grants, gifts, and contracts.
6. Provide leadership and assistance to Extension educators in developing strategies to increase county funding to support expanded programming.

Legislative:

1. Because of the public nature of Extension funding, accountability to county commissioners and other funding providers and elected officials is an on-going process.
 2. Prepare annual budget with input from Extension educators and suitable advisory participation; coordinate presentations to public decision-makers.
 3. Represent and promote Extension at key county events, encourage Extension educators to invite and involve elected officials in educational programs.
 4. Emphasize public involvement, networking, and awareness of Extension's contributions to meet county needs.
 5. Develop linkages with other organizations in the county that are aligned with Extension's mission and vision.
- **Work Environment:**
 1. Create a positive work environment for all staff members.
 2. Facilitate teamwork and encourage interdisciplinary programming.
 3. Demonstrate strong coaching skills with employees.
 4. Model effective listening, oral, and written communication skills.
 5. Conduct regularly scheduled staff meetings to promote communication and interdisciplinary efforts.
 - **Professional Development:**
 1. Participate in at least two professional development experiences focused on management and/or leadership development during each two-year period as a part of your professional development plan.
 2. Review professional development plan with district director annually.
 3. Participate in appropriate organizational training and meetings related to the role of county Extension director (such as the WSAC Affiliates Conference, county director training, district county director meetings).
 4. Assist faculty and staff in developing their professional development plan.
 5. Utilize the on-line [WSU Extension County Director Handbook](#) and [WSU Extension Policies and Procedures Manual](#) as resources to strengthen and enhance effectiveness as county Extension director.