Audit Alert

Alert Number 2022–002
October 7, 2022

Workload Management
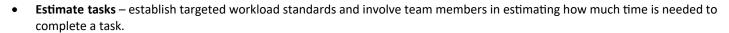
Cobb County (the County), like many employers in the country, has been experiencing high attrition rates, staff shortages, and increased service demands, while still providing quality service. The County has made a number of changes to address these challenges; however, to continue providing the expected world class service, strong workload management at all levels is essential. Workload management refers to assigning tasks to team members or teams in a way that maximizes workforce skills and abilities to achieve the best performance and deliver the highest quality services.

Workload management also allows for the effective allocation of work among team members; gives visibility into the tasks accomplished by each team member; and allows supervisors to properly manage resources. Effective workload management can reduce stress, avoid burnout, improve productivity, prevent select staff from becoming overloaded, improve the development of team skills, and may aid in controlling staff turnover.

Below are some workload management tips to developing a resource management strategy of individual team members, teams, and/or units:

- **Estimate tasks** – establish targeted workload standards and involve team members in estimating how much time is needed to complete a task.

- **Set achievable deadlines** – ensure deadlines are achievable so team members are motivated, but not stressed and resentful.

- **Distribute project tasks equitably** – avoid always assigning certain projects to your 'achievers or 'trusted team members'. Instead, examine the pool of available team members and allocate tasks according to who has the most capacity.

- **Monitor/Report on workload productivity** – analyze team member productivity in comparison with assigned tasks, other like team members productivity, changes in service levels, complexity of tasks, established goals/expectations, and/or other aggregated data, as available. Re-prioritize and re-allocate workload, as needed.

- **Give timely feedback** – discuss individual team member productivity and strategies to ensure goals and expectations are met or exceeded on a consistent basis. Feedback should not be set aside for performance evaluation only.

- **Communicate departmental/unit goals often** – Discuss overall goals, objectives, and expectations frequently, as well as any changes and best practices identified.

- **Benchmark** – benchmarking helps to identify performance gaps, how performance gaps occur, best practices to eliminate or minimize the gaps, identify areas that more efficient than others, and provide comparisons with industry standards.

If you need assistance, contact the Internal Audit Department at internalaudit@cobbcounty.org or (770) 528-2556.