

## Audit Alert

Alert Number 2023-002

March 8, 2023

# Volunteer Background Checks

During our biennial risk assessment, we observed that Cobb County (County) utilizes a substantial number of volunteers in the workplace to supplement customer service and agency/department goals. A volunteer is defined as “a person who gives his/her services without any express or implied promise of remuneration. Volunteers give freely of their time, talents, skills, and energy, with no expectation of monetary compensation.” Volunteers engaged in County activities come with inherent risks, but a notable area of risk involves the safety and security of minors, seniors, and other vulnerable populations while at County facilities and/or functions. One key control measure to minimize the risks associated with volunteers is the use of background checks, and the County has a policy to address this risk.



The County's Volunteer Policy<sup>1</sup> provides “overall guidance and direction to staff and volunteers engaged in volunteer activities and efforts.” The Volunteer Policy specifically requires that “Individuals interested in volunteer assignment **involving customer contact:**

- ⇒ **Must** participate in an interview,
- ⇒ **Must** consent to required reference/background checks, and
- ⇒ **Must** complete any Department/Agency required core skills training before, during, or in the course of the volunteer's assignment.”

Each County agency or department in the reporting structure of the Board of Commissioners are required to comply with the Volunteer Policy, and all other County functions that utilize volunteers should align with this policy and other best practices to minimize the associated risk to minors, seniors, and other vulnerable populations served by the County.

If your County function utilizes volunteers involving customer contact, be sure to assess your compliance with the County's Volunteer Policy.

<sup>1</sup> Located on iCOBB under Policies > Employee > Volunteer Policy.