

## February 3, 2026 Seward County Board of Commissioners

State of Nebraska)  
County of Seward) ss.

A regular meeting of the Seward County Board of Commissioners was convened in open and public session at 8:30 a.m. on February 3, 2026 in the Commissioner's room at the Seward County Courthouse. Notice of the meeting was posted on the Courthouse bulletin board, on the Commissioner's Room door, on the Seward County website: [sewardcountyne.gov](http://sewardcountyne.gov) and published in the Seward County Independent. The agenda for all meetings is kept continually current and is available for public inspection at the County Clerk's Office during normal business hours. The agenda is held open until one business day prior to the meeting for appearance before the Board. The Board of Commissioners has the right to modify the agenda to include items of an emergency nature only at such public meeting.

The Seward County Board of Commissioners convened on February 3, 2026 at 8:30 a.m.

Present: Chairperson: Misty Ahmic  
Members: Raegan Hain, Darrell Zabrocki, Ken Schmieding,  
Scott Pekarek  
County Clerk: Brandy Johnson

The Chairperson noted that the public meeting information is posted as required by law and available for public distribution if requested.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Moved by Zabrocki and seconded by Pekarek to approve the minutes of January 27, 2026.

Affirmative Vote: Zabrocki, Pekarek, Hain, Schmieding, Ahmic      Motion Carried

Jonathan Jank, Executive Director of Seward County Chamber & Development Partnership (SCCDP), updated the Commissioners on activities of the organization.

Jon Regnier, Highway Superintendent, and Trever Trebilcock, Assistant Highway Superintendent, updated the Commissioners on activities of their department.

### **Commissioner Reports:**

Commissioner Pekarek reported he attended interviews for the Emergency Manager/Zoning Assistant, both via Zoom and in person, had a meeting with the E911 Director, and met with the Detention Center Director and Commissioner Hain.

Commissioner Schmieding reported he called constituents in his district, attended the Seward County Chamber & Development Partnership (SCCDP) Awards and Recognition Banquet, will attend a Blue Valley Community Action (BVCA) meeting and a Visitors Bureau meeting.

Commissioner Ahmic reported she attended interviews for the Emergency Manager/Zoning Assistant, both via Zoom and in person, looked through Emergency Management office items with Commissioner Pekarek, met with the Highway Superintendent, the Road Dept Administrative Assistant, and Commissioner Hain about the Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) Grant, and gathered information for said grant, attended a Seward/Saline Solid Waste Management meeting, will be attending multiple upcoming village board meetings in both Saline & Seward county, reached out to Senator Storer regarding property tax relief and reported on legislative bills that have been introduced that include property tax relief.

Commissioner Zabrocki reported that the SouthEast Nebraska Development District (SEND) Executive Board meeting was canceled, he attended a Nebraska Intergovernmental Risk Management Assn. (NIRMA) Board meeting, attended a Safety Committee meeting and met with the E911 director.

Commissioner Hain reported she had a virtual meeting with the grant writers from Sunflower Grant Writers regarding the BUILD grant, has been reaching out to other organizations and individuals for letters of support for the BUILD grant, met with the Highway Superintendent, the Road Dept. Administrative Assistant and Commissioner Ahmic about the BUILD Grant, and noted that the Administrative Assistant has been very helpful and has done a lot of work on the grant, met with the Detention Center Director and Commissioner Pekarek, and gave an update on the Benefit Cost Analysis portion of the grant involving Kirkham Michael, which is on the agenda to be discussed.

Ahmic discussed the resolution for a moratorium extension on livestock operations. She reported that she asked the Planning Commission for an update on poultry barns, and they asked to have the moratorium extended through May.

Moved by Pekarek and seconded by Hain to adopt Resolution No. 3914 in regard to a moratorium extension on livestock operations.

Resolution # 3914

Seward County Board of Commissioners

WHEREAS, on August 5, 2025, pursuant to the authority conferred upon the County Board of Commissioners by *Neb. Rev. Stat.* §23-114, this Board passed Resolution #3870, implementing a moratorium on large-scale commercial poultry Confined Feeding Operations due to health and environmental concerns;

WHEREAS, the moratorium was passed in order to prevent potential harm while data was gathered and further study done on the overall impact of large-scale poultry operations on health, safety, welfare, infrastructure, and environmental quality in Seward County;

WHEREAS, the moratorium was enacted immediately and, by its terms, effective until February 1, 2026, unless extended by resolution of the Board following appropriate notice and public hearing;

WHEREAS, a committee was thereafter appointed to gather and assess information regarding the impact of large-scale poultry operations on Seward County to address the concerns that led to the moratorium;

WHEREAS, the committee needs additional time to complete this information-gathering and assessment;

WHEREAS, extension of the temporary moratorium is necessary to protect the public interest while the County completes the assessment of the health, environmental, and infrastructure implications of large-scale poultry operations;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Seward County Board of Commissioners that the terms of the moratorium contained in Seward County Resolution #3870 shall be, and hereby are, extended and will remain in effect until May 31, 2026.

Dated this 3rd day of February 2026.

Moved by: Pekarek                      Seconded by: Hain  
Ayes: Ken Schmieding, Scott Pekarek, Raegan Hain, Darrell J. Zabrocki,  
Misty Ahmic, Chairperson, Board of Commissioners  
Attest: Brandy M. Johnson, Seward County Clerk

Affirmative Vote: Pekarek, Hain, Zabrocki, Schmieding, Ahmic

Motion Carried

Ahmic presented a proposed plan for the relocation/reallocation of Emergency Manager inventory items. She and Commissioner Pekarek have been working in the former Emergency Manager's office to sort through items that need to be relocated, reallocated or submitted as surplus property. There are a desk and a printer that will replace the current desk and printer in the Zoning office assigned to the Zoning Assistant, a wall mounted tv that will be made into a more portable tv and kept in the Law Library, and a desk that will replace the Zoning Administrator's desk. There was discussion regarding the badge making station and where it should be housed, as the proposal currently suggests relocating the station, as well as the badge creation duties, to Human Resources. Hain commented that she isn't in favor of shifting job responsibilities from one department to another. This portion of the proposal, as well as what to do with all of the remaining items in the former Emergency Manager's office, will be discussed more once a new Emergency Manager is hired. For now, the desks, printer, and tv will be relocated and reallocated to the appropriate inventories.

Hain led discussion on the Supplemental Agreement from Kirkham Michael for Benefit Cost Analysis (BCA) for the BUILD Grant for Seward County. Hain had previously asked Regnier to reach out to other engineering firms to obtain quotes for this project, but due to the short turnaround time for this grant and the fact that Kirkham Michael is the engineering firm that has already been working on this project and no other firms have any familiarity with it, this is the only agreement that could be obtained. Ahmic noted that American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds have already been allocated for grant writing and this would qualify for use of those funds, as it is part of the grant process.

Moved by Hain and seconded by Zabrocki to approve the Supplemental Agreement from Kirkham Michael for Benefit Cost Analysis (BCA) for the Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) Grant for Seward County in the amount of \$8200 to be paid using American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funds.

Affirmative Vote: Hain, Zabrocki, Schmieding, Pekarek, Ahmic

Motion Carried

The Commissioners recessed at 9:13 a.m.

The Commissioners reconvened at 9:15 a.m.

One bid was received for a used motor grader from NMC CAT.

Jonathan Leo, a member of the public who was not present earlier in the meeting, asked about the moratorium extension on livestock operations. Ahmic informed him of the discussion, and that the Planning Commission had asked for an extension on the moratorium through the end of May.

Moved by Zabrocki and seconded Pekarek by to open bids for an engineering consultant for the Safe Streets and Roads For All (SS4A) Grant.

Affirmative Vote: Zabrocki, Pekarek, Hain, Schmieding, Ahmic

Motion Carried

One bid was received from JEO Consulting Group, Inc.

The Commissioners recessed at 9:25 a.m.

The Commissioners reconvened at 9:30 a.m.

Moved by Hain and seconded by Pekarek to open the public hearing at 9:30 a.m. for a Conditional Use Permit for a Truck Body Repair Shop in the NW ¼ of Section 33, Township 10 North, Range 3 East of the 6th P.M.

Affirmative Vote: Hain, Pekarek, Schmieding, Zabrocki, Ahmic

Motion Carried

Marissa Pfile, Zoning Administrator, and Commissioner Ahmic gave information on the permit, stating that the Planning Commission approved the application noting that this is *not* authorized as a conditional use in this zone as it's currently zoned TA-1, but across the road is A-1 and this will be the same type of business as what was previously operated at this location.

Allan Hemsath, co-owner of the business, testified for this Conditional Use Permit.

No one from the public spoke in opposition or neutral position of the permit.

Hain spoke of some questions she has received and asked why this area isn't being rezoned instead of the applicants obtaining a Conditional Use Permit. The operator is not the owner of the property and does not own property within this quarter of land. Jim Daws, the owner of the property, was present. Ahmic asked if he foresees any additional businesses that could potentially open on that property, because in that instance, a rezone would be the more appropriate action to take. Daws does not plan on any additional businesses opening on the property. Pekarek noted that conditions can be added if the Conditional Use Permit is approved.

Moved by Zabrocki and seconded by Pekarek to close the public hearing at 9:46 a.m.  
Affirmative Vote: Zabrocki, Pekarek, Schmieding, Hain, Ahmic Motion Carried

The Commissioners completed the Findings of Facts.

BEFORE THE SEWARD COUNTY NEBRASKA COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

IN THE MATTER OF CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT: Truck Body Repair Shop  
APPLICANT: Hwy 15 Truck Repair LLC – Allan Hemsath/Cory Stoll  
CURRENTLY ZONED: TA-1

This matter came before the Seward County Board of Commissioners at the request of the applicant. A public hearing was held on the 3rd day of February 2026. Notice of said hearing was publicized on the 21st day of January 2026.

The Seward County Commissioners recommend to:

  X   Approve the Conditional Use Permit for Hwy 15 Truck Repair LLC  
       Deny the Conditional Use Permit for Hwy 15 Truck Repair LLC

With a roll call vote of:   4   For   1   Against   0   Absent Not Voting

Upon review of all necessary facts, the County Commissioners make the following findings:

1.   Y   The use, in all other respects, conforms to the applicable regulations of the district in which it is located.
2.   Y   The use will have adequate water and sewer facilities.
3.   Y   The use will be in harmony with the character of the area and the most appropriate use of the land.
4.   Y   The establishment, maintenance, or operation of the conditional use will not be detrimental to or endanger the public health, safety, moral, comfort, or general welfare of the county.
5.   Y   The conditional use will not be injurious to the use and enjoyment of other property in the immediate vicinity for the purpose already permitted, nor substantially diminish and impair property values within the neighborhood.
6.   Y   The establishment of conditional use will not impede the normal and orderly development of the surrounding property for uses permitted in the district.

7. Y Adequate utilities, access roads, and drainage facilities have been or are being provided.
8. Y That adequate measures have been or will be taken to provide ingress and egress so designed as to minimize traffic congestion in the public streets.
9. Y The use does not include noise, which is objectionable due to volume, frequency, or beat unless muffled or otherwise controlled
10. Y The use does not involve any pollution of the air by fly-ash, dust, vapors, or other substance which is harmful to health, animals, vegetation, or other property or which can cause soiling, discomfort, or irritation.
11. Y The use does not involve any malodorous gas or matter, which is discernible on any adjoining lot or property.
12. Y The use does not involve any direct or reflected glare, which is visible from any adjoining property or from any public street, road, or highway.
13. Y The use does not involve any activity substantially increasing the movement of traffic on public streets unless procedures are instituted to limit traffic hazards and congestion.
14. Y The use does not involve any activity substantially increasing the burden on any public utilities or facilities unless provisions are made for any necessary adjustments.

Further, the County Commissioners recommend the following specific conditions that are necessary or desirable to address the most appropriate use of the land, the conservation and stabilization of the value of property, the provision of adequate open space for light and air, concentration of populations, congestion of public streets, and the promotion of the general health, safety, welfare, convenience, and comfort of the public: Permit is issued to Cory Stoll & Allan Hemsath only and is not transferable to any other applicant.

Dated this 3rd day of February 2026.

Misty Ahmic  
County Commissioner Chairman

Marissa Pfile  
Zoning Administrator

Barb Armstead, Deputy County Attorney, remarked that her office has not given an opinion on this and it is stated on the Application for Conditional Use that this is not authorized as conditional use in this zone.

Moved by Pekarek and seconded by Zabrocki to adopt Resolution No. 3915 in regard to approving the Conditional Use Permit for a Truck Body Repair Shop in the NW ¼ of Section 33, Township 10 North, Range 3 East of the 6th P.M. with the condition that this permit is nontransferable.

**RESOLUTION NO 3915 OF THE  
SEWARD COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

**WHEREAS** Hwy 15 Truck Repair LLC owners Allan Hemsath and Cory Stoll have applied for a Conditional Use Permit to operate a Truck Body Repair Shop and

**WHEREAS** the property is described as a tract in the Northwest ¼ of, Section 33, Township 10N, Range 3 East of the Sixth P.M, Seward County, Nebraska, and

**WHEREAS** The Planning Commission held a public hearing to consider the application at a regular meeting January 26, 2026, and

**WHEREAS** notice of the public hearing was published in the Seward County Independent, and

**WHEREAS** The Planning Commission recommended approval of the Conditional Use Permit and finding of facts presented, with a vote of 7 In Favor, 0 Against, and 2 Absent not voting, and

**WHEREAS** The Seward County Board of Commissioners held a public hearing to consider the application at a regular meeting February 3, 2026, and

**WHEREAS** notice of the public hearing was published in the Seward County Independent, and

**WHEREAS**   X   No one appeared to oppose said Conditional Use  
       Individuals appeared to oppose said Conditional Use  
       No one appeared to support said Conditional Use  
  X   Individuals appeared to support said Conditional Use,  
  X   Individuals appeared without commitment, and

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Seward County Board of Commissioners do hereby approve   X   or        deny the Conditional Use Permit to operate a Truck Body Repair Shop at the described location on a tract of ground located in the Northwest ¼ of, Section 33, Township 10N, Range 3 East of the Sixth P.M, Seward County, Nebraska.

**THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that approval is subject to the following conditions: The permit is nontransferable and is granted to the applicants, Cory Stoll & Allan Hemsath only.

February 3, 2026

Moved by: Pekarek Seconded by: Zabrocki  
Ayes: Ken Schmieding, Scott Pekarek, Darrell J. Zabrocki,  
Misty Ahmic, Chair of the Board  
Nays: Raegan Hain  
Attest: Brandy M. Johnson, Seward County Clerk

Affirmative Vote: Pekarek, Zabrocki, Schmieding, Ahmic  
Voting No: Hain

Motion Carried

Pfile presented a request for a Zoning fee refund for John Neal. Neal asked to rezone a piece of property he owns, but the Zoning office made an error on the number of homes on the property. She is asking to refund his fee, as the property is already at density. Pfile asked what budget/line item the refund would be issued from, and Ahmic suggested paying it out of Zoning budget, from whichever line Pfile chooses to be most appropriate.

Moved by Zabrocki and seconded by Hain to approve the request for a Zoning fee refund for John Neal in the amount of \$600, to be paid out of the Zoning budget.  
Affirmative Vote: Zabrocki, Hain, Pekarek, Schmieding, Ahmic Motion Carried

Moved by Zabrocki and seconded by Schmieding to open bids for a used motor grader, which was done at 9:15 without a motion.  
Affirmative Vote: Zabrocki, Schmieding, Pekarek, Hain, Ahmic Motion Carried

Regnier gave his recommendation for awarding the bid for a used motor grader.

Moved by Zabrocki and seconded by Hain to award the bid to NMC CAT for a used Caterpillar 12M3 motor grader, using funds from the Inheritance Fund.  
Affirmative Vote: Zabrocki, Hain, Schmieding, Pekarek, Ahmic Motion Carried

Roxanne Knutson, Human Resources Director, was present to request the approval of 80 Hours of Catastrophic Leave for Employee #1537093.

Moved by Hain and seconded by Pekarek to approve the Human Resources Director's request for 80 hours of Catastrophic Leave for Employee #1537093.  
Affirmative Vote: Hain, Pekarek, Zabrocki, Schmieding, Ahmic Motion Carried

Next, Knutson presented the following policy updates to the employee manual:

1. Annual Performance Evaluation
2. Proximity Cards, ID Badges, and Justice Center Access
3. Newly Created Positions
4. Employment Reference Checks
5. Wage and Compensation Practices
6. Recruitment and Selection
7. Acceptable Use for Computers and Information Systems

\*Policies Attached

Moved by Hain and seconded by Pekarek to approve the policy updates to the employee manual.  
Affirmative Vote: Hain, Pekarek, Zabrocki, Schmieding, Ahmic Motion Carried

Brandy Hafer, Public Transit Director, was present to request setting a date and time for a public hearing to reduce service hours.

Moved by Zabrocki and seconded by Hain to authorize the Public Transit Director to set a date and time for a public hearing to reduce service hours for February 24, 2026 at 9:45 a.m.  
Affirmative Vote: Zabrocki, Hain, Schmieding, Pekarek, Ahmic Motion Carried

Next, Hafer provided an update on the Public Transit Fiscal Year 2027 grant and potential department funding needs for fiscal year 2027. The Public Transit grant funding was cut this year, leaving her to explore various funding options for the remainder of the fiscal year once all of the grant funds have been used. Currently, it costs on average around \$29,100 per month to operate the department. There was discussion regarding the various potential options for days and hours of operation and the costs associated with each option. Hain asked how many individuals utilize the services on different days, noting that no department could be expected to incur operating costs if only one to two individuals are utilizing those services. Ahmic asked Hafer to provide a total of unique individuals using the service, and how many trips each of those individuals have taken in the last year, because it may not be feasible to raise the levy for taxpayers to fund the entire budget for a low number of individuals. Hafer will provide an update during next week's meeting.

Known items on the agenda for Board of Equalization on February 10, 2026 are as follows:

8:30 a.m.

1. Convene and announce Open Meetings Law
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Discuss/Action – Approve minutes of January 27, 2026
4. Discuss/Action – Assessor Information Update

8:30 a.m. Public Hearing – Motor Vehicle Exemption Application for Concordia University for a 2025 Ford Van

Discuss/Action – Motor Vehicle Exemption for Concordia University for a 2025 Ford Van

Known items on the agenda for Board of Commissioners on February 10, 2026 are as follows:

9:00 a.m.

1. Convene and announce Open Meetings Law
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Discuss/Action - Approve minutes of February 3, 2026
4. Discuss/Action – Claims for the Period Through January 30, 2026

**Other Business Matters to Address When Time Allows**

5. Discuss/Action - Public/Organizations/Officials
6. Commissioner Reports
7. Discuss/Action – Agenda for February 17, 2026

9:05 a.m. Discuss/Action – Award bid for Engineering Consultant for the Safe Streets and Roads For All (SS4A) Grant

9:10 a.m. Discuss/Action – Proposal from Marvin Planning and Consultants for Zoning Consultation

9:15 a.m. Discuss/Action – Options for a Water Trailer and Roller/Packer for Permazyme Application on County Roads

9:30 a.m. Discuss/Action – Update on Public Transit Department Funding

Moved by Zabrocki and seconded by Pekarek to adjourn at 10:44 a.m.

Affirmative Vote: Zabrocki, Pekarek, Schmieding, Hain, Ahmic Motion Carried

State of Nebraska)  
County of Seward) ss.


I, Brandy Johnson, the undersigned County Clerk of Seward County, Nebraska do hereby certify the foregoing minutes are true and are part of the official records of this office.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed my official seal this 10<sup>th</sup> day of February, 2026.

\_\_\_\_\_  
County Clerk

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chairperson



	Seward County Employee Policy	
	Policy Name:	Annual Performance Evaluation
	Revised Date:	January 2026
	Approved By:	Seward County Board of Commissioners

## ANNUAL PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

Each employee will have an annual performance evaluation. A positive evaluation will result in an increase in compensation as authorized by the County Board during the annual budgeting process.

An employee's first annual evaluation after hire, promotion, or transfer to a new position, either with the same or a different office, will take place at the one-year anniversary of the employee's hire, transfer, or promotion.


After the one-year anniversary evaluation, employees will then be evaluated annually. Wage increases will be effective as of July 1<sup>st</sup> of each year.

In the unusual circumstance in which an employee transfers laterally or voluntarily steps down, the Department Head should consult with Human Resources to assure that the employee's annual compensation performance increase occur not later than 12 months from the time of the last increase.

*For example: An employee who has been on the annual July budget-year increase cycle receives a promotion and wage increase on February 1<sup>st</sup>. February 1<sup>st</sup> becomes the employee's new anniversary date, and they begin a 6-month introductory period for their new role. In July, they are not eligible for another increase but will receive their performance-based increase on February 1<sup>st</sup> of the next year. After that one-year anniversary increase, the employee joins the regular budget year cycle in July.*

*For example: An employee begins employment with Seward County in March. That employee does not receive an annual increase in July, as they have not completed one year of employment. The employee transfers offices in October and is now considered a new employee since they have taken on a new role. Their anniversary increase occurs in October of the next year and they then join the budget year cycle the following July.*

Annual performance evaluations for all current Seward County employees who have completed their one-year mark will be conducted during the months of May and June. The original or a copy must be submitted to Human Resources before or at the time of the wage increase and will be retained in their personnel file. On an annual basis, the Elected Official or Department Head shall review with the employee their current job description to evaluate if any changes need to be made based on current job duties. If changes are needed, the Elected Official or Department Head shall work with Human Resources to update the job description and have the employee sign it. A copy will be given to the employee and the original placed in the employee's file.

	Seward County Employee Policy	
	Policy Name:	Proximity Cards, ID Badges, and Justice Center Access
	Revised Date:	January 2026
	Approved By:	Seward County Board of Commissioners

## **PROXIMITY CARDS, ID BADGES, AND JUSTICE CENTER ACCESS**

### **Proximity Cards**

It is the policy of Seward County to provide a secure environment for employees. The interior of the Justice Center will be controlled by proximity access card readers and/or security hardware. Proximity cards are an electronic key to entrances throughout the Seward County Justice Center offices and are specific to the employee to which the card has been assigned. They permit access to designated areas by using the access clearance level that has been assigned to the proximity card.

Proximity cards will be issued to employees who have an office in the Justice Center by the Administrative Captain or Civil Process Sergeant of the Seward County Sheriff's Office. Prior to being issued a proximity card, the employee must complete the Seward County Access Card Agreement, which must then be approved and signed by the employee's supervisor. An access clearance level will be assigned to the proximity card and can be modified if an individual's level of access needs to be changed. The Administrative Captain or Civil Process Sergeant have the final determination as to the level of access provided to each employee.

Proximity cards for employees with offices in the Courthouse will be issued by the Buildings and Grounds Superintendent. The employee's Supervisor must contact the Superintendent to obtain an access card with specific access clearance.

### **Lost, Stolen or Damaged Cards**

Loss of a proximity card can create a major security issue. All lost or stolen proximity cards must be reported to the employee's supervisor immediately and the supervisor must report the lost or stolen card to the Administrative Captain or Civil Process Sergeant, who will terminate the card's access. Failure to report a loss is a serious violation and may result in disciplinary action. The first lost or stolen card will be replaced at County expense. The cost of any subsequent lost or stolen cards will be the responsibility of the employee. Replacement cards are \$5 each. Damaged cards should be turned in to the Administrative Captain or Civil Process Sergeant.

### **Identification Badges**

As a vital part of our security system, a Seward County identification badge with the employee's name, photo, and department name will be issued during the first week of employment. All Seward County

employees are required to have their ID badge on them at all times while on Seward County premises. If the employee does not have their ID badge with them or refuses to display it upon request, they may be denied admittance to secure areas. For security purposes, some departments are required to follow specific guidelines for visibility of ID badges. Employees should refer to their supervisor for requirements in their Department. If an identification badge is lost or stolen, the employee must obtain a replacement by contacting Human Resources immediately. Failure to wear an ID badge as required or excessive loss or damage to ID badges and cards can lead to disciplinary action.

### **Employee Access Into Justice Center**

All employees will use the east entrance of the Justice Center during business hours and may be subject to the screening process upon entry. The screening process consists of, but is not limited to, scanning of purses, bags, briefcases, and any other articles hand-carried into the Justice Center. The screening process will include using an X-ray machine and may include a search of an article by a Sheriff's Deputy. Employees may be required to walk through the magnetometer (metal detector). Any items considered contraband will be confiscated. Any employee that refuses the screening process for entry into the Justice Center may be refused admittance. Employees are not permitted to allow any other employees, citizens, friends, or family into any door other than the designated east entrance unless pre-authorization is given by the Administrative Captain or other authorized personnel.

### **Access After Business Hours**


Employees requiring access after business hours, including essential services that require 24-hour access (Maintenance, E911, Detention Center, and Sheriff's Deputies) will be given authorization by the Administrative Captain, or other authorized personnel, to be allowed to access areas of the Justice Center that are necessary for their position. Employees accessing the Justice Center after business hours are subject to internal screening policies and procedures.

Any other employee needing access after regular business hours for a specific purpose should pre-arrange access through the Administrative Captain.

If an individual other than a county employee (i.e. vendor, contractor, etc.) must have access outside of regular business hours, the individual must be escorted in and out of the building by a member of the department in which the work is being done.


### **Separation of Employment**

At the time of separation of employment, the employee must immediately return all proximity cards, ID badges, and keys to county property to their supervisor. It is the responsibility of the supervisor to determine which keys have been issued to the employee, obtain the keys from the employee, and return the keys to the appropriate individual.

	Seward County Employee Policy	
	Policy Name:	Newly Created Positions
	Revised Date:	January 2026
	Approved By:	Seward County Board of Commissioners

## NEWLY CREATED POSITIONS

Upon submission of a job description and request by a Department Head for creation of a new position, Human Resources will, with input from the Department Head as necessary, research comparable positions to determine an appropriate starting wage for the position and create a job description if one does not already exist . Once the wage and job description have been agreed upon, the Department Head and Human Resources will submit the request to the County Board of Commissioners for approval. For the purpose of this policy, “newly created position” refers to adding additional staff or positions beyond the approved budget year personnel list, creating a new job description, or a combination of both.

	Seward County Employee Policy	
	Policy Name:	Employment Reference Checks
	Revised Date:	January 2026
	Approved By:	Seward County Board of Commissioners

## EMPLOYMENT REFERENCE CHECKS

Seward County strives to conduct formal, documented reference checks for applicants being considered for employment as well as utilize a systematic method for responding to reference check and employment verification inquiries from other employers and entities. All requests for references (calls, contacts, and written inquiries) must be directed to Human Resources. No other Elected Official, Department Head, or employee is authorized to release references or employment verification for current or former employees, unless otherwise permitted by Human Resources.

### Candidates for Employment

Job-related reference checks are encouraged but not mandatory, except as required for by federal or state regulations for positions with the Sheriff's Office or Detention. Reference checks shall be conducted by Human Resources before an employment offer is made. Reference information shall be obtained from the applicant's "Employment History" section contained in Seward County's *Application for Employment* or additional documentation supplied by the applicant. A *Consent for Employment Verification* form will be included on all employment applications. Human Resources shall not initiate reference checks with current or former employers unless and until the applicant signs this consent form. The applicant will be advised that withholding consent to contact a current or former employer could affect the selection decision.

### Inquiries Regarding Seward County Employees

Seward County permits the following information to be shared with inquiring employers when written consent is not provided from the employee/former employee:

- Hire date, status of employment, job title, and current wage or wage at separation.

Seward County permits the following additional information to be shared with inquiring employers when a written consent **is provided** from the employee/former employee:

- Job description and duties.
- Job performance or workplace behavior that may impact a prospective employer's hiring decision, especially if there is reason to believe such knowledge would need to be reported to avoid negligent hiring by the prospective employer.
- Whether the separation was voluntary or involuntary.

#### **Other Employment Verification Inquiries**


When other types of employment verification requests are received (e.g., bank loan documentation, creditors, etc.), Seward County will permit information to be provided as requested if the employee/former employee has signed a release of information specifically detailing the type of information allowed to be disclosed. If the request is received verbally, Seward County will only release hire date and status of employment.

#### **Access to References**

Information obtained during the reference check process is confidential and should only be shared on a need-to-know basis. Under Nebraska's public records law, job application materials submitted by applicants are not public records and employers are not required to share information obtained through its reference checking process with the applicant.

#### **Maintenance of Records**

All materials related to the reference check/employment verification process will be maintained in the employee confidential file as required by state and federal record retention laws.

	Seward County Employee Policy	
	Policy Name:	Wage and Compensation Practices
	Revised Date:	January 2026
	Approved By:	Seward County Board of Commissioners

## **WAGE AND COMPENSATION PRACTICES**


Seward County strives to have a well-designed compensation philosophy that supports government services, competitive outlook, operating objectives, and reasonable compensation. In carrying out this philosophy, the County Board of Commissioners is responsible for developing and implementing plans that best meet the needs of Seward County. Compensation strategies must be flexible enough to ensure that the County is able to recruit, retain, and reward a highly qualified workforce, remain competitive, and assure internal equity while providing the structure necessary to effectively manage the overall compensation program within the County's budget. As part of the annual budgeting process, the County Board of Commissioners will review any proposed changes to the compensation strategy as recommended by the Human Resources Director. Seward County may amend or deviate from this policy as necessary to respond to changes in Seward County's tax funding.

### **Compensation Study and Analysis**

Seward County will conduct every three (3) years a compensation study and analysis based on job descriptions and comparable market as determined by the County Board of Commissioners. A market analysis is the process in which compensation of our county is compared to compensation of area counties of similar size and mission. After market data is collected or received, a thorough analysis will be conducted by Human Resources. All recommendations will be brought before the Board for consideration, modifications, and approval. Due to their unique nature, some positions within the county cannot be matched to traditional market surveys. These positions will be assessed independently by Human Resources and a recommendation will be made to the County Board of Commissioners for the appropriate wage range. Modifications to the compensation plan become effective at the start of the upcoming fiscal year.

### **Annual Compensation Advancement**

Each year, the Board of Commissioners will evaluate the county-wide compensation plan for the upcoming fiscal year, which begins on July 1<sup>st</sup>. As part of that process, the County Board will determine the maximum annual compensation increase, expressed as a percentage of current wages. The Elected Official or Department Head shall then determine the appropriate percentage change in each employee's wage, commensurate with the employee's performance evaluation that was provided to Human Resources, up to the maximum amount determined by the County Board. Refer to the *Annual Performance Evaluation* policy for more information.

	Seward County Employee Policy	
	Policy Name:	Recruitment and Selection
	Revised Date:	January 2026
	Approved By:	Seward County Board of Commissioners

## RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

### 1. REQUEST FOR PERSONNEL

All requests to fill new or existing positions, including internal promotions and transfers, must be discussed by Human Resources and the Department Head.

### 2. JOB POSTING

All open county positions must be posted by Human Resources, unless the Department Head has pre-approval from Human Resources to post to a specific job board or organization. Each job posting will include the following:

- a) Position title and wage
- b) Summary of qualifications
- c) A copy of the job description
- d) The county's equal opportunity employer and veteran's preference statements

All job openings must be posted for a minimum of one week (7 calendar days) but can be extended further at the discretion of the Department Head.

Seward County reserves the right not to post a particular opening. While it is the County's philosophy to make every effort to promote vacancies, there are conditions that can cause a position to be filled without posting internally and/or externally. The conditions that could cause a decision to bypass posting according to normal procedures include, but are not limited to:

- Organizational restructuring.
- If the position requirements include specialized skills, education, and/or experience that are not known to match any existing employee, the position would not require internal posting
- Emergency operational needs.
- When candidates within the same department or another county department are qualified and/or already possess the training applicable to an open position, a promotion or transfer can occur without posting the position for other applicants.

### 1. APPLICATION PROCESS

To be considered for employment with Seward County, candidates must complete Seward County's standard employment application, sign a release for background checks and drug testing, and comply with application deadline listed in the advertisement, if any. Additional application criteria may be established



by the hiring Department Head in coordination with Human Resources. Human Resources will collect, log, and distribute application materials to the hiring Department Head.

Job opportunities shall be open to any individual who meets the application requirements listed in the recruitment posting and job description. If an applicant indicates that he or she requires special accommodation to complete the application process, Human Resources will contact the applicant to discuss reasonable accommodations.

If the applicant fails to identify which position he/she is applying for, Human Resources will make a reasonable attempt to contact the applicant for clarification. If such attempt is unsuccessful, the application materials will not be considered and will be placed in the archived recruitment files.

**a. Previously Filed Applications**

The Department Head and/or the Hiring Supervisor shall review application materials from applicants who may have previously applied for the same job opening.

Individuals wanting to re-apply for a position may do so without resubmitting an application if: 1) it has not been more than 6 months since their previous submission for the same position; and 2) they notify Human Resources, either verbally or in writing, of their desire to apply for the new position. Applications will only be considered active (considered for employment) for 6 months.

**b. Selection of Applicants for Interview**

The Department Head will screen application materials, using screening criteria as approved by Human Resources, prior to scheduling interviews.

**c. Disqualification of Applicants**

Seward County may refuse to consider an applicant for employment if:

- a) The applicant does not meet the requirements established for the position.
- b) The applicant cannot perform the essential job duties, either with or without reasonable accommodation.
- c) The applicant has made an intentionally false statement in the application process.
- d) The applicant has failed to submit the application correctly or within the prescribed time limits.
- e) The applicant has previously been dismissed for cause from a position in Seward County's service or has resigned while charges for dismissal for cause were pending.
- f) As a result of hire, the applicant would be supervising or receiving supervision from, or working with, a member of his/her immediate family.
- g) If an actual or appearance of a conflict of interest exists.
- h) If Seward County officials have reason to believe employment of the individual would be detrimental to the best interests of Seward County.

## 2. INTERVIEW

All interviews shall be conducted within the following parameters:

- a) Utilization of a standard interview format approved by Human Resources. Questions may be added to the standard format with prior approval from Human Resources.
- b) All interviews conducted must include a representative from the Department seeking to fill the vacancy and a representative from Human Resources.
- c) A secondary, or peer, interview may be conducted to allow co-workers to participate in an interview with the applicant. This peer interview could occur if a Department Head is considering extending a job offer to an applicant and is interested in having the department staff meet the prospective employee.

## 3. HIRING

Once the application and interview process is completed, including reference checks conducted by Human Resources, the Department Head and Human Resources will determine the appropriate wage and start date for the selected candidate, and a contingent offer of employment will be extended. Seward County acknowledges the importance of recognizing and compensating prior experience when hiring new employees. As a result, the offer may include a starting wage that is up to 6% higher than the base starting wage. The deviation from base salary would be based on the prospective employee's relevant experience.


If the applicant verbally accepts the contingent offer, a written offer will be prepared and provided to the prospective employee by Human Resources. Human Resources shall then conduct a background check and schedule drug testing, if applicable. Other than law enforcement positions, the employee may begin employment pending satisfactory results of the background checks report and drug testing.

A candidate will not be hired if:

- They fail to return their signed offer letter by the specified date.
- They cannot meet the requirements of the I-9 or other eligibility requirements, including a social security number, or necessary documentation has been requested but has not been provided.
- The background check or pre-employment test was unsatisfactory.
- They accept employment but fail to present themselves for duty at the agreed time and place without giving a satisfactory reason for the delay.

## 4. NOTIFICATION TO APPLICANTS NOT SELECTED

The Human Resources Department will notify those applicants who were not selected for employment.

	Seward County Employee Policy	
	Policy Name:	Acceptable Use for Computers and Information Systems
	Revised Date:	January 2026
	Approved By:	Seward County Board of Commissioners

## ACCEPTABLE USE FOR COMPUTERS AND INFORMATION SYSTEMS

Seward County owns its information systems and the data transmitted and stored within it. Employees have no expectation of privacy or confidentiality of data stored on the County's devices, including all incoming and outgoing electronic messages utilizing email and voice systems. During business hours, computer use and internet communications to and from County employees and with outside government agencies are presumed to be work-related. County computers and data stored in them are property of the County and may be accessed at any time by authorized County officials. The equipment, services, and technology provided to access the internet are property of the County. As such, the County reserves the right to monitor internet traffic, including retrieving and reading any data composed, sent, or received through its online connections and/or stored in its computer systems.

Employees using Seward County's information systems represent Seward County and are responsible for ensuring that the internet and information systems are used in an effective, ethical, and lawful manner. Access to certain information systems is provided as a necessary and useful tool to complete the job functions of Seward County employees. With this access comes inherent risk, as the internet and similar communications systems contain security threats and inappropriate material. Seward utilizes web-based internet filtering technology to help minimize risk of access to inappropriate web content and questionable or malicious websites.

The following procedures have been established for using Seward County's information systems to protect both the County and the employee:

### Security and Confidentiality

- **Passwords:** Users must maintain the confidentiality of their passwords and are responsible for ensuring that their login credentials are not shared with unauthorized individuals. Passwords shall not be provided to or shared with anyone not authorized to obtain such information. Human Resources or County IT support can assist with retrieving passwords if necessary.
- **Data Protection:** Confidential and sensitive information should only be shared with authorized personnel. Users must ensure that all data is stored securely, and data encryption should be used when available.
- **Virus Protection:** Users are required to ensure that their devices are running up-to-date antivirus software, and that security patches are applied in a timely manner.

- **Security Breaches:** Any suspicious activity, including security breaches, must be immediately reported to IT support. Users should not attempt to access or tamper with data or systems without proper authorization.

### Internet Usage

- **Work-Related Use:** Internet access should primarily be used for work-related purposes. While personal use is allowed in moderation, it should not interfere with work responsibilities.
- **Prohibited Sites:** The use of the internet for illegal activities or to access inappropriate websites (e.g., gambling, adult content, pirated materials) is strictly prohibited.
- **Downloading:** Users should avoid downloading software, files, or media that could potentially harm the agency's IT infrastructure or compromise data security. Employees must work with IT support to download material if there is any question about its security.
- **Unprofessional Communication:** Using agency IT resources to send harassing, offensive, or inappropriate emails or messages is prohibited. Cyberbullying, hate speech, and discriminatory behavior are not tolerated.
- **Unauthorized Access:** Attempting to access systems, networks, or data without proper authorization or using someone else's credentials is forbidden.

### Monitoring and Privacy

- **System Monitoring:** Seward County reserves the right to monitor and audit all computer and internet usage to ensure compliance with this policy. Users should be aware that their activities are subject to being tracked when using County resources.
- **Personal Privacy:** While personal use of the agency's IT resources is permitted within reasonable limits, users should have no expectation of privacy regarding their use of agency systems or networks. All data, emails, and communications created, stored, or transmitted on the agency's systems are property of the agency and subject to open records requests.

**Computer Viruses on Downloaded Software.** Any software obtained from a source outside County government should be scanned for viruses prior to use. Internet users should take necessary anti-virus precautions before downloading or copying any file from the internet. All downloaded files are to be checked for viruses, and all compressed files are to be checked before and after decompression.

**Logoff (Exiting).** Employees should always complete the logoff or other termination procedure when finished using an internet-accessed system or resource. This will help prevent potential breaches of security.

### **Social Networking and Online Content**

Seward County respects the rights of its employees to use social media and create online content; however, is committed to ensuring such use does not injure or interfere with the identity, integrity, reputation, or needs of Seward County or its employees. Seward County has established the following guidelines and prohibitions relating to the use of social media and online content:

- 1) Seward County encourages employees to write knowledgably, accurately, and professionally and act with integrity while online . Your online interaction can result in members of the public forming opinions of Seward County, its partners, or employees.
- 2) In addressing work-related topics online, employees are encouraged to speak respectfully about Seward County, past and current employees and partners.
- 3) Employees should respect the privacy rights of current employees and seek their permission before writing or displaying internal Seward County events or information that could be considered a breach of privacy and confidentiality.
- 4) Employees are legally liable for anything they write or post online in any format.
- 5) Employees are encouraged to resolve any work-related concerns or complaints through their supervisor or the Human Resources Department before posting or commenting online.
- 6) Employees are prohibited from excessive personal use of social networking websites during work hours.

### **Seward County Email Address Accounts**

Employees shall not use their Seward County email address when utilizing personal social networking or other websites unrelated to their job.

### **Downloads/Software Modifications**

Program and/or software downloads from the internet are NOT permitted unless specifically authorized by the Department Head and IT support.

### **Copyrights**

Employees using the internet are not permitted to copy, transfer, rename, add, or delete information or programs belong to others unless given express permission to do so by the owner. Failure to observe copyright or license agreements may result in disciplinary action by Seward County and/or legal action by the copyright owner.

### **Computer Viruses, Malware, and other Security Threats**

Computer viruses are programs designed to make unauthorized changes to programs and data and, therefore, can cause destruction of or damage to County resources. Malware is software designed to maliciously infiltrate or damage a computer system without the user's knowledge. New security threats emerge daily, and preventative measures are of utmost importance.

### **Access Codes and Passwords**

The confidentiality and integrity of data stored on Seward County's computer system must be protected by access controls to ensure that only authorized employees have access. This access shall be restricted to that which is appropriate to an employee's job duties.

IT representative shall be responsible for the administration of access controls to all Seward County systems. Employees shall:

- 1) Not use any username to log in to the network other than the username issued by Seward County. If a different networked computer must be used, employees should use their own username and password on that machine. An IT representative can assist in setting a profile up on that machine.
- 2) Websites and accounts used to conduct official county business must use the employee's county email and not a personal email.
- 3) Be responsible and accountable for all computer transactions that are made with their user ID and password.
- 4) Not disclose passwords to others. Passwords must be changed immediately if it is suspected that they may have become known to others. Passwords should not be recorded where they may be easily obtained.
- 5) Use passwords that will not be easily guessed by others.
- 6) Restart their PC when leaving their workstation for an extended period of time.

Supervisors shall notify the HR Department promptly when an employee leaves the County or transfers to another department so that his/her access can be revoked or modified. Involuntary separations must be reported concurrent with the separation.

#### **Physical Security of Technology Devices**

Computer hardware, software, data, and electronic documentation will be protected from misuse, theft, unauthorized access, and hazards as follows:

- 1) Memory cards, media, or other storage devices shall be stored out of sight when not in use. If they contain highly sensitive or confidential data, they must be locked up.
- 2) Critical computer equipment, i.e., file servers, must be protected by an uninterruptible power supply (UPS). Other equipment should be protected by a surge protector.
- 3) Hazards to hardware such as food, smoke, liquids, high or low humidity, and extreme heat or cold should be avoided.
- 4) Disconnections, modifications, and relocations of any software or hardware are not to be performed by anyone other than Seward County personnel or IT staff. This does not apply to temporary moves of laptop computers or tablets.
- 5) Employees shall not take shared portable equipment, i.e. laptop computers, tablets, cameras, or video cameras, out of the building without permission from their Supervisor.
- 6) Employees shall exercise care to safeguard electronic equipment assigned to them.

#### **Data Retention**

All local and network data, including messages created, sent, or retrieved through Seward County's information systems, or over the internet, is considered the property of Seward County and is governed by State Statute.

### **Consequences of Non-Compliance**

Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary actions, including, but not limited to, revocation of access to County IT resources, written warnings, notations in performance evaluations, suspension or termination of employment, and legal action.

### **Artificial Intelligence**

Artificial Intelligence is increasingly commonplace; however, it is not inherently reliable. Employees must not rely on AI-generated material as source material unless the employee has independently and thoroughly fact-checked it for accuracy and reliability. Be aware that internet search results or online information may be AI-generated and may or may not be labelled as such. Employees are responsible for the accuracy of their work. Therefore, caution is necessary when using information that is obtained from the internet, especially if that information contains statistics, numbers, or statements of fact.