

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **A. Authority, Purpose, Jurisdiction and General Intent**

The Contra Costa Local Agency Formation Commission (“LAFCO”) was formed and operates under the provisions of the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000 (“CKH Act”) (California Government Code Section 56000 et seq.).

This law establishes LAFCOs as independent public agencies in each county in California. LAFCOs implement state statutes and state and local policies relating to the organization of local government, specifically boundary changes for cities and most special districts, including spheres of influence, incorporations, annexations, detachments and other changes of organization. In this capacity, the Contra Costa LAFCO plans and regulates boundaries for cities and special districts in Contra Costa County.

The CKH Act requires each LAFCO to adopt written policies and procedures. Other state laws require LAFCOs to adopt written policies and guidelines applicable to specialized functions (e.g., California Environmental Quality Act, Political Reform Act, etc.).

The Commissioner Handbook is a compilation of written policies and procedures adopted by the Contra Costa LAFCO. These policies are intended to supplement state law, rather than interpret or reiterate the statute. To fully understand LAFCO processes and procedures, the applicable provisions of state law should be reviewed in conjunction with this document. All citations included in the Handbook are from the CKH Act, unless otherwise noted.

Each chapter of the Commissioner Handbook is freestanding and can be amended or changed without amending the entire Handbook. The Contra Costa LAFCO Executive Officer ensures the Handbook is current and up to date and publicly available. To the extent that any portion of the Handbook conflicts with any provision of law, the applicable law takes precedent.

### **B. Procedural Flexibility**

The Commissioner Handbook is a guide. The Commission may, by majority vote, modify procedures and policies set forth in the Handbook when the situation warrants provided the change is not in conflict with statutes governing LAFCO activities.

C. Amendment Procedures

1. Commission-Approved Changes

The Commission shall approve all amendments to the Commissioner Handbook, except as set forth in Section 2 below.

2. Executive Officer-Approved Changes

The LAFCO Executive Officer is authorized to make minor or routine changes in the following sections of the Handbook without Commission approval:

Section 1.9      Roster of Cities and Special Districts

Section 3.1      Boundary Change Processing Procedures