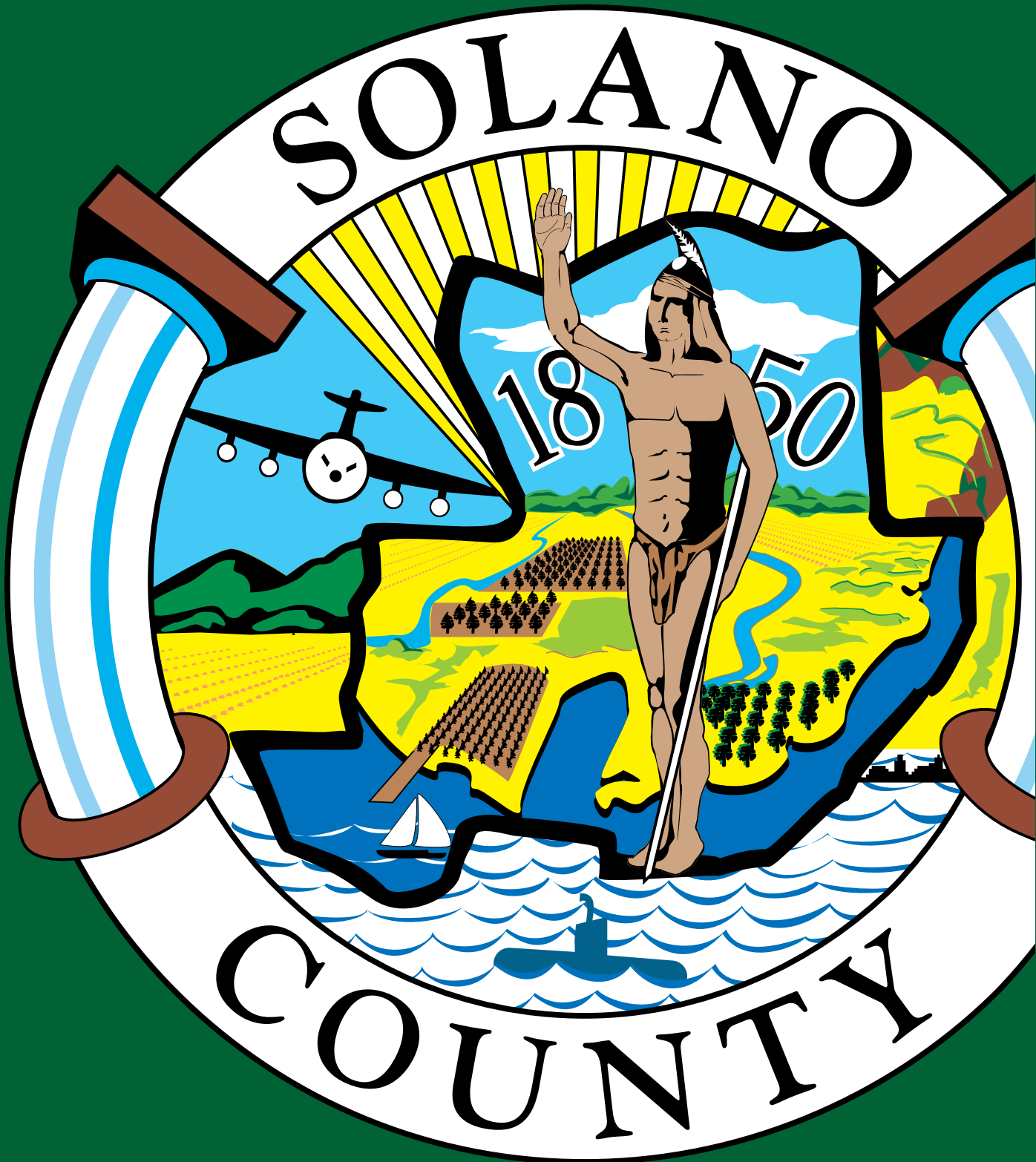




SOLANO  
COUNTY

## Branding Standards Manual



## Introduction

The first step in building a brand is developing a visual identity that is used consistently on all communications—the *County of Solano Branding Standards*.

This *Branding Standards Manual* will significantly improve the visual presentation of publications, presentations, success stories, and other common communications, as well as standardize stationery and business cards.

It provides guidelines and templates for the design of materials. It will help the County project a more unified image that creates instant recognition.

### **OUR OBJECTIVES**

- Enhance the visibility of County programs and services.
- Enhance the perception of value for County programs and services.
- Improve the impact and consistency of communications across agencies, departments and programs.

### **UNIVERSAL STANDARDS**

Not only written words, but photos, colors, typography, and layout all contribute to creating a specific image. Yet, because the County's work is so diversified and decentralized, the vast majority of products currently produced looks varied. These practices dilute the effectiveness of our communications—and are a barrier to building a strong brand.

While there's a need for flexibility and adapting communications to appeal to various constituents, the County has developed universal standards to ensure our communications have some basic things in common—as individual people can be extremely different but are all members of the same family.

This *Branding Standards Manual* sets the official universal standards for design of the County family of communications. Soon, people all over the state will be able to look at any communication and instantly know it was produced or funded by the County.

If you have any queries contact [slpierce@solanocounty.com](mailto:slpierce@solanocounty.com).

# Table of Contents

Introduction	2
Guidelines	4
County of Solano's Brand	5
Positioning	6
Audience	7
Brand components	8
Seal	9
Logo	10
Logo Lockup Build	11
Size and Placement	12
Logo Color Combinations	13
Improper Logo Usage	14
Color	15
Imagery	16
Typography	17
Placement	18
Design Grid	19
Templates	20
Improper Logo Placement	21
Social Networking	22

## Guidelines

Following are some guidelines and suggestions to send the right message and create the right tone to best communicate the County and its brand promise. Getting the message and tone right will be the measure between the success and failure of each communication.

Audiences must understand the benefits—the points of differentiation—that come from partnering with the County. Above all, you should strive to use the points of benefit that uniquely position County in the hearts and minds of our customers, partners and other key audiences.

**Obtain approval.** All ads, literature and other external communication materials must be reviewed in accordance with departmental policies, and where appropriate should be reviewed by the Public Communications Officer before they are completed. Departments should review the *Branding Standards Manual* when developing communications materials.

**Be human.** Images should relate to benefits and, therefore, be human, rather than product-oriented. Base the message in humanity and the human experience, not in technical gobbledygook.

**Be impactful.** Find arresting images to capture the readers' attention immediately.

**Be confident.** Quietly. Our message should be understated, subtle, not boastful. Our voice is one of partner; we are in the business of assistance.

**Be understated.** The dramatic understatement of under promising and over delivering is the tone to strive for. Find it.

**Be clean and crisp.** Use elegant, simple but effective communication. Visually and verbally, less is more.

**Be respectful and non-promotional.** Engage the reader by speaking in a common language. Avoid jargon.

**Be benefit-driven.** How does this product or service enhance people's lives? Talk about the benefit.

**Be global.** We are a multicultural organization, as is our audience—and need to act like one. Do not use metaphors or sports analogies. Consider translations and image selection with a multicultural view in mind.

**Be sensitive.** Not all cultures in the global village share the same values. For example, subtle humor is a wonderful tool to use but humor “here” isn't necessarily humor “there.” Also consider facial expressions and body language in the images you select.

**Be sure.** Test the visual and verbal content with the audience to be sure that you are communicating what you want to communicate



## County of Solano's Brand

The County of Solano's Branding Standards are a propagation of the County's overall Communications Plan, a strategy to expand and enhance public awareness and understanding of the County of Solano government.

### **OUR VISION**

Locally and nationally recognized for its partnerships and leadership in providing innovative, effective and fiscally responsible services that result in the highest quality of life for its residents.

### **OUR MISSION**

Serve the people and to provide a safe and healthy place to live, learn work and play.

### **OUR GOALS**

- Improve the health and well-being of those who live and work here.
- Ensure responsible and sustainable land use.
- Maintain a safe community.
- Invest in and for the future.

### **OUR VALUES**

- **Integrity:** Be open and honest, trustworthy, ethical and fair
- **Dignity:** Treat all persons with respect
- **Excellence:** Provide quality, integrated, sustainable and innovative public services
- **Accountability:** Take ownership, be fiscally responsible and result-driven
- **Leadership:** Be personally responsible and a positive example for others

## Positioning

### **IDENTITY AND IMAGE**

One of the goals of any corporate communications program is to maintain a positive image of the organization. There are actually two steps involved in this process—identity and image.

**IDENTITY** is the sum of what an organization really is. Every employee, service, office, building, letter, form, process, sign, vehicle, etc. communicates various aspects of the County of Solano identity. This *Branding Standards Manual* seeks to increase the consistency of how this identity is portrayed in the day-to-day activities of County employees.

**IMAGE** is the perception that individuals and institutions have of the County Solano based on direct interactions with County staff and services or indirect exposure through news media reports and word of mouth. Ideally, the intended identity of the organization is the actual perception of its image. This is not always the case. Image is often affected by the quality of information an individual or institution receives about the County, which can lead to a lack of understanding, particularly in times of great change. Image is important because people base their actions on perceptions. To them, their image of the County is their reality.

It is critical that the County's messages are communicated honestly and effectively. However, no amount of communication efforts can overcome deficiencies within the organization. County image is not only built through its formal communication channels, but more importantly through the day-to-day interactions of its employees and customers. Each County employee is charged with the responsibility of fostering a positive image of the County of Solano government.

### **EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION**

The County's work is highly technical and unfamiliar to those not working in government. It is critical to unify and simplify our message. Avoid using internal organizational structures when speaking to external audiences. Here are a few tips for communicating our work:

- Focus on County "assistance" versus the County.
- Don't promote or "brand" departments, divisions, bureaus or sections without County identity.
- Don't develop program logos that compete with the County Branding Standards.
- Do promote our Core Mission and Goals
- Avoid jargon and acronyms.
- Showcase success.

### **SPEAKING WITH ONE VOICE**

Departments, divisions, bureaus, or sections should coordinate the creation of NEW and individual logos or separate identities. Separate identities diminish the County's brand strength and our recognition as a regional organization.

## Audience

The identification of target audiences is a key component of a communications plan and minimizes the resources needed to communicate to that audience.

### **EXTERNAL AUDIENCE**

- Residents of Solano County
- Residents of the greater Solano region
- News media outlets, primarily local newspapers, online publications and radio
- Community segments with shared interests, such as business, nonprofits, education, other government agencies, etc.

### **INTERNAL**

- County employees
- Board of Supervisors
- County Boards, Commissions and Committees

## Brand components

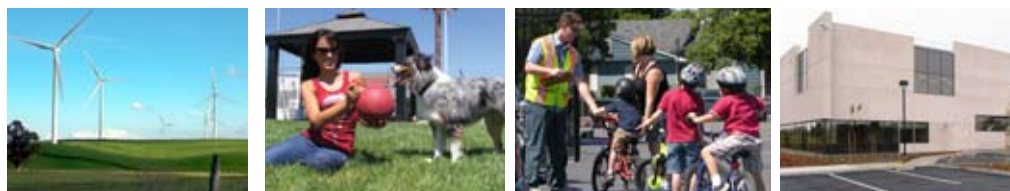
Our brand is one of our key assets. Using standard design elements provides a distinct and familiar look that consistently builds equity and strength in the County brand.

The look and feel of the County's brand identity reveals a key component of our equity—the value of our brand. A clean, uncluttered visual identity provides clarity and consistency. By using design elements consistently, the value of the County brand is preserved with each use.

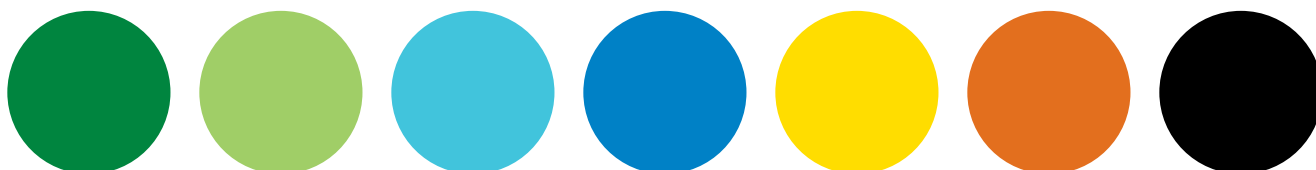
### LOGO



### IMAGERY



### COLORS



### TYPOGRAPHY

Tahoma

Adobe Garamond

### PLACEMENT



## Seal



### **HISTORY OF THE SEAL**

The first official seal of Solano County was adopted by the Board of Supervisors on April 20, 1965. The seal is rich in symbolism that reflects the history and values of Solano County.

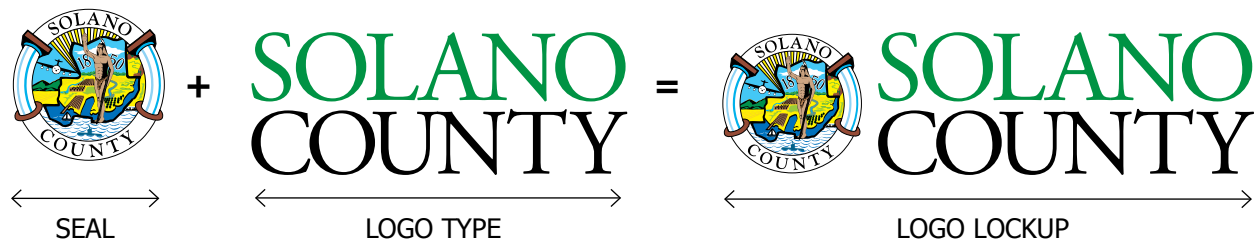
The pillars from the Old State Capital building in Benicia are incorporated into the border of the design. Dominating the outline of the county is the figure of Chief Solano, for whom the county is named. Inside the county outline you can see the vast agriculture area surrounded by blue skies, mountains and waterways.

The U.S. Armed Forces are part of Solano County—both past and present. The large aircraft reflects the mission of Travis Air Force Base and the ships reflect the former Mare Island Naval Shipyard.

The golden rays indicate the benign climate Solano County residents enjoy, and the recreational boat showcases the outdoor amenities that abound in the county.

## Logo

The logo is the cornerstone of the County's branding. Its consistent application is essential.



The logo *can* appear in two ways: 1) Seal only or 2) Logo Lockup.

### 1) SEAL ONLY



### 2) LOGO LOCKUPS



**SOLANO**  
**COUNTY**

HORIZONTAL



**SOLANO**  
**COUNTY**

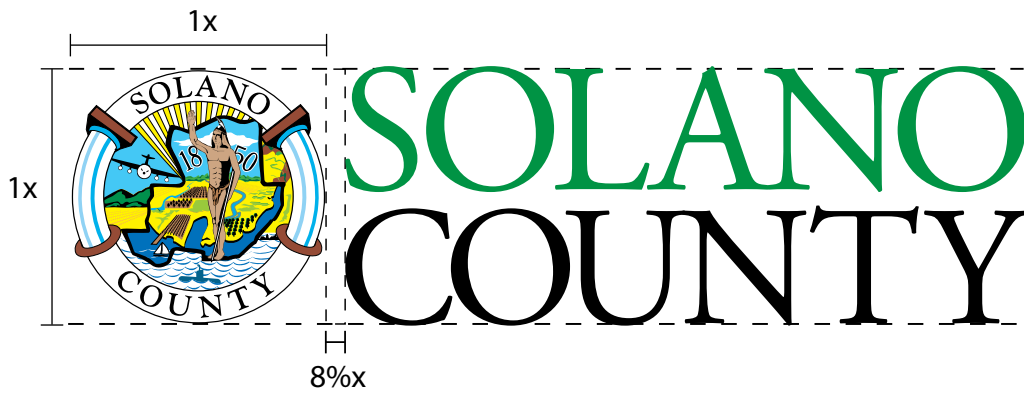
VERTICAL

The Logo Type should *never* appear on its own.

### LOGO TYPE ONLY

~~**SOLANO**  
**COUNTY**~~

## Logo Lockup Build



## Size and Placement

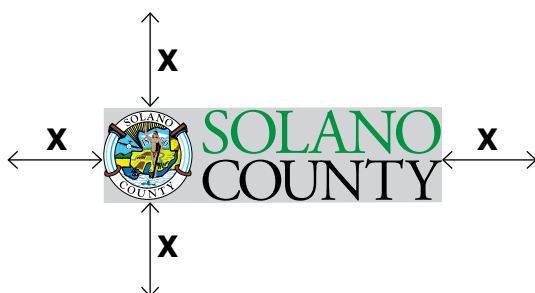
The size and placement of the logo in relation to other elements on the page or from the sides of the page is important in maintaining a consistent look and feel between publications, ads, websites, etc.



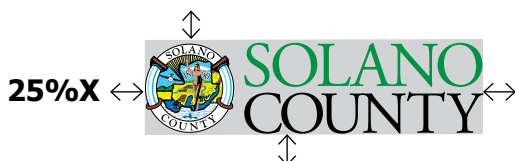
THE PREFERRED LOGO HEIGHT IS ½-INCH OR LARGER (ACTUAL SIZE SHOWN)



THE MINIMUM LOGO HEIGHT IS ⅙ -INCH (ACTUAL SIZE SHOWN)



IT IS PREFERRED TO MAINTAIN THE WIDTH OF ONE "SEAL" TO ANY OTHER ELEMENT ON THE PAGE OR TO THE EDGE OF THE PAGE



THE MINIMUM FREE SPACE IS ¼ OF ONE "SEAL" TO ANY OTHER ELEMENT ON THE PAGE OR TO THE EDGE OF THE PAGE



## Logo Color Combinations

It is critical that the logo is used only in the following color combinations.



**SOLANO**  
COUNTY



**SOLANO**  
COUNTY



**SOLANO**  
COUNTY



**SOLANO**  
COUNTY

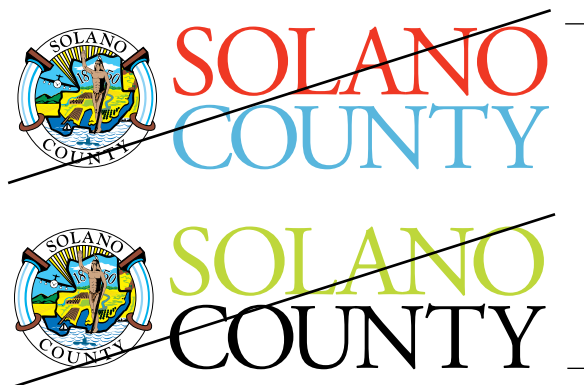


## Improper Logo Usage

The logo should never be used in any of the following ways:



DO NOT STRETCH OR CONDENSE THE LOGO DISPROPORTIONALLY



DO NOT USE THE LOGO IN ANY OTHER COLOR COMBINATIONS OTHER THAN THOSE LISTED ON THE LOGO COLOR PAGE



DO NOT REARRANGE THE LOGO ELEMENTS



DO NOT USE THE LOGO IN REVERSE

## Color

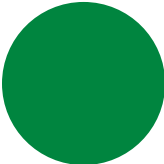

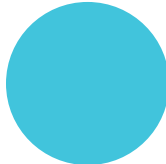
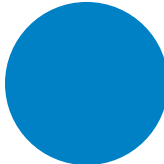
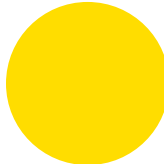
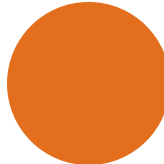
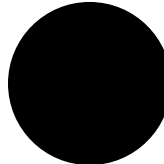
The County has standards for reproducing colors so they will always look consistent, no matter where they appear. For example, the landmark and logo should be reproduced in full color whenever possible. These colors serve as the source for our standard color palette.

These colors should be employed throughout our communications and are equivalent to the PANTONE® (PMS) numbers listed in the table below. For four-color process printing (also known as full-color printing), refer to the CMYK values shown. For desktop publishing, such as Microsoft® Word or Microsoft PowerPoint®, refer to RGB. For Web applications, refer to the Hexadecimal Web values. The PANTONE and CMYK values provided can be used on both coated and uncoated paper when printing. Although variations in color will occur, try to match the colors as closely as possible. For applications in color systems not included here, use the PANTONE values for color matching.

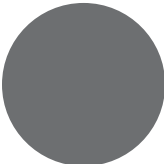

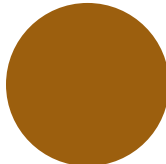
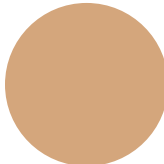

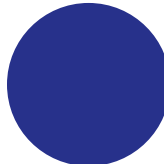
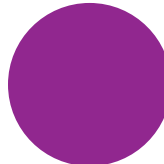
### LOGO PALETTE



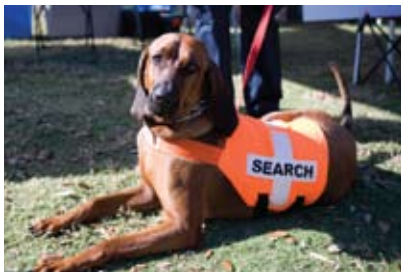
### PRIMARY PALETTE

							
PMS	PMS 356	PMS 375	PMS 311	PMS 3005	PMS 109	PMS 159	PMS BLACK
CMYK	95/0/100/27	41/0/78/0	63/0/12/0	100/34/0/2	0/10/100/0	0/66/100/7	0/0/0/100
HEX WEB	#00853f	#a0cf67	#42c4dd	#0081c6	#ffdd00	#e36f1e	#000000
RGB	0/133/63	160/206/103	66/196/221	0/129/198	255/221/0	227/111/30	0/0/0

### SECONDARY PALETTE

							
PMS	PMS 425	PMS 420	PMS 4635	PMS 4655	PMS 186	PMS 273	PMS 253
CMYK	0/0/0/70	0/0/0/15	0/48/96/44	0/26/45/18	0/100/81/4	100/96/0/8	43/95/0/0
HEX WEB	#666666	#ddddd	#9b5f0e	#d4a67c	#e31937	#27318b	#9d3393
RGB	102/102/102	221/221/221	155/95/14	212/166/124	227/25/55	39/49/139	157/51/147

## Imagery



### IMAGERY USAGE

Imagery is an integral and vital part of County communications. Visual imagery—specifically photography—conveys the spirit and energy of our efforts. The type of imagery that dramatizes our daily activities is called documentary, and it has a journalistic feel. Since imagery will be used in applications from print to the Web, we must ensure that it consistently captures the best of our work and showcases our success. Following our guidelines will ensure that our communications have a recognizable look. When preparing or selecting imagery, keep in mind these guidelines:

- Focus on positive aspects of County efforts.
- Demonstrate “assistance in action.”
- Ensure relevancy to story.
- Include “who, what, when, where, and why” of photos in captions.
- Credit the photographer.
- Show people looking at camera, whenever possible, to connect emotionally with readers.
- Select images that are in focus and that are colorful and bright.
- Request digital photos to be shot with at least a 3-megapixel resolution, original files at least 2000 pixels by 1500 pixels, high quality JPEG or TIFF format, RGB color mode. Offset printed images should be at least 300 pixels per inch and either CMYK or grayscale color mode. These imagery guidelines can also be provided to photographers.

### BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES

When showing buildings and structures include identifying signage whenever possible. If possible also include subjects that can humanize the image such as people or animals. These objects further provide relative scale giving the viewer an idea of the structure’s size.

### SHOW POSITIVE BENEFITS

Show positive images of patrons using County services. The subject of the photo is still the people and their happy expressions. The photo should look natural not staged.

### COLOR COUNTS

Images should be visually appealing. Bright colors help the reader feel the moment and make our publications more dynamic. Photos are the way to add colors outside of the palette to our communications.

### CROP FOR CLOSEUP

Good pictures have a clear subject. Cropping images makes them more dramatic and eliminates distracting backgrounds that may not be relevant.

## Typography

The County has standards for typography to ensure brand consistency across all printed materials. Typography is one of the most important design elements. It is used to differentiate sections of information as headlines, text, or captions. The font family, Tahoma, was selected for clarity. Adobe Garamond Regular is used in the County logo and logo type. Arial is the standard font for desktop publishing.

As a general rule, Tahoma Bold is used for headlines, subheads, and highlighted text; Tahoma Regular or Light is used for notations, graphics and captions. When the Tahoma font family is not available, default to Arial.

Adobe Garamond Regular, Bold, and Italic may be used for body text in longer documents or technical papers and reports. When the Adobe Garamond font family is not available, default to Times Roman.

### PRIMARY FONT

#### **TAHOMA REGULAR**

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ  
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz  
1234567890

#### **TAHOMA BOLD**

**ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ**  
**abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz**  
**1234567890**

#### **ADOBE GARAMOND REGULAR**

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ  
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz  
1234567890

#### **ADOBE GARAMOND REGULAR ITALIC**

*ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ*  
*abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz*  
*1234567890*

#### **ADOBE GARAMOND BOLD**

**ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ**  
**abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz**  
**1234567890**

#### **ADOBE GARAMOND BOLD ITALIC**

***ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ***  
***abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz***  
***1234567890***

### ALTERNATE FONT

#### **ARIAL REGULAR**

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ  
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz  
1234567890

#### **ARIAL BOLD**

**ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ**  
**abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz**  
**1234567890**

#### **TIMES ROMAN REGULAR**

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ  
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz  
1234567890

#### **TIMES ROMAN REGULAR ITALIC**

*ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ*  
*abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz*  
*1234567890*

#### **TIMES ROMAN BOLD**

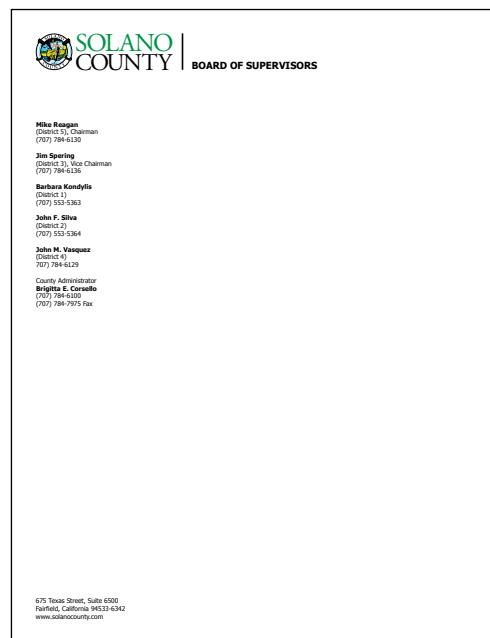
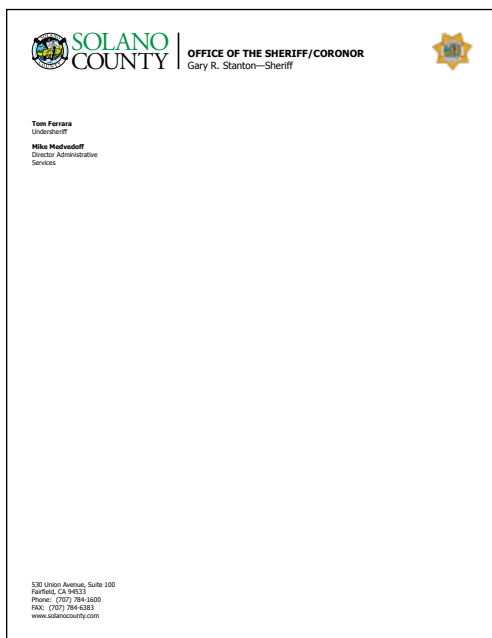
**ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ**  
**abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz**  
**1234567890**

#### **TIMES ROMAN BOLD ITALIC**

***ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ***  
***abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz***  
***1234567890***

## Placement

In order to maintain consistency of brand the County identity should be placed consistently.



## Design Grid

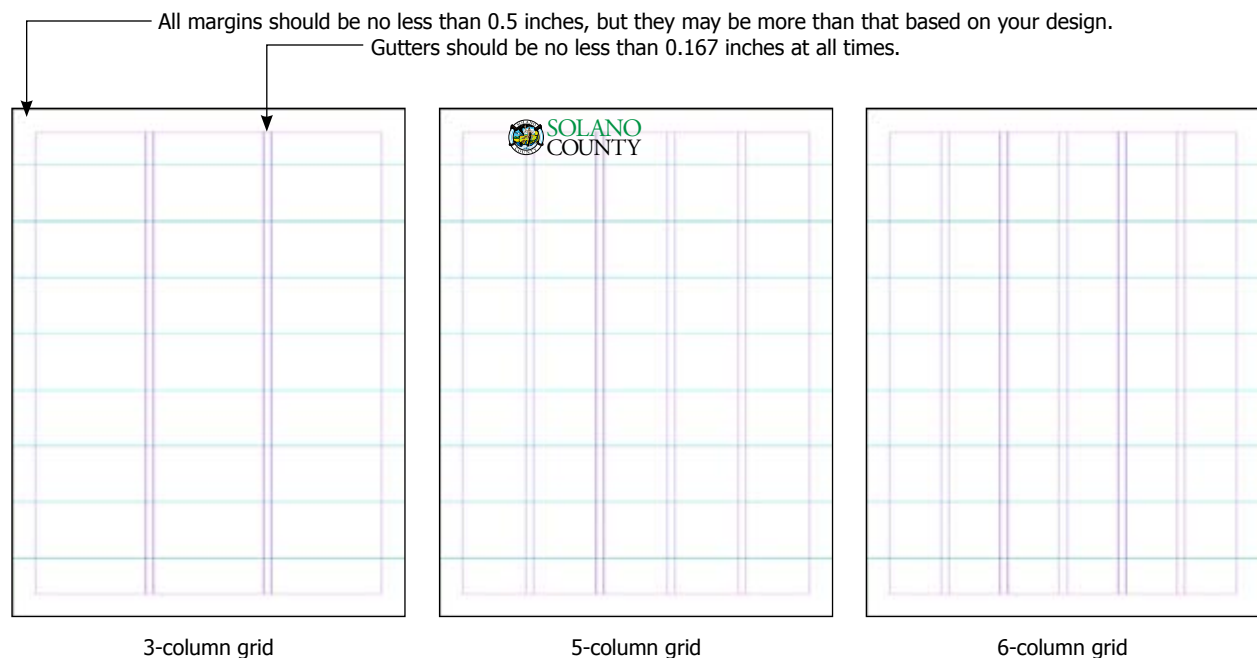
### HORIZONTAL GRID AND STANDARD GRAPHIC IDENTITY PLACEMENT

All communications adhere to a basic horizontal grid. To apply the grid, simply divide each page layout into nine equal horizontal bars. To ensure all communications present a consistent image, use this grid on publications as well as exhibits, posters and other County communications. These bars will guide the placement of all visual elements.

The identity should be scaled to fit the space of one bar or two bars maximum.

### INTERIOR PAGE VERTICAL GRIDS

In addition to the horizontal bars that will guide the placement of all visual elements on the County three vertical grids for text have been established for use on interior pages. There are 3-column, 5-column, 6-column grids. These grids will guide the placement of all body text and sidebars. Headlines may be scaled according to the format of a given document and may begin lower vertically on a given page according to the amount of content and design preferences. The grids may be interspersed throughout a document as content dictates to make the information easy for a reader to follow.



# Templates

A series of communications templates has been developed for common items such as business cards and stationary. All graphic elements—typography, images, areas of color, and other items—are oriented to specific areas, as shown in the following pages. Consistent placement of these elements will result in a standard family of communications. These templates are available in electronic format for download at “Employee intranet>Forms & Publications>Graphics”.

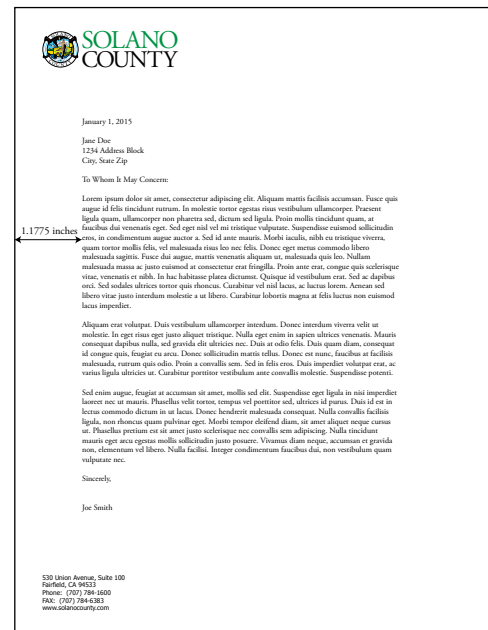
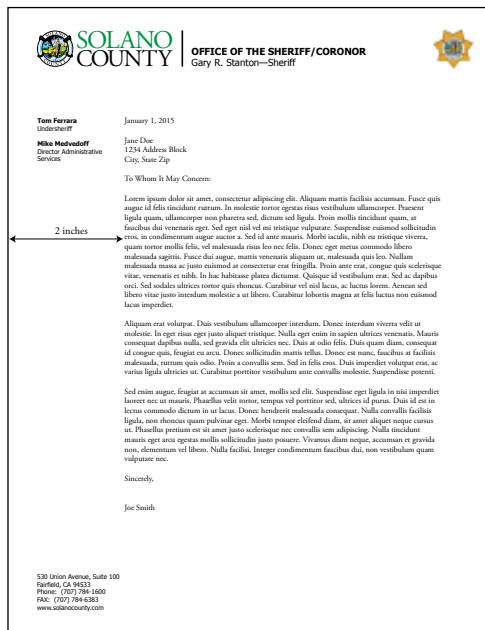
## BUSINESS CARDS

The copy for the name should be set in 8 point Tahoma Bold, with the title and contact block set in 8 point Tahoma Regular on 9pt leading. All text should appear right justified. All copy is set in black. Allow at least one line of clear space between the title and the contact block.



## LETTERHEAD

The County logo should go in the upper left corner with a 0.5 inch margin on the top and left. The address block should be placed in the lower left corner with a 0.5 inch margin on the bottom and left. Department, division and program logos should go in the upper right corner with a 0.5 inch margin on the top and right. The name of the department, division or program should be placed to the right right of the County logo separated by a 2pt rule that is the height of X (refer to page 11), the height of the County seal. The name of the department, division or program should be in 12pt Tahoma Bold, ALL CAPS. A secondary line, when applicable, should be in 12pt Tahoma Regular. Name blocks should go on the left and start 2 inches from the top and 0.5 inches from the left. Names should be in 8pt Tahoma Bold and titles, and other information in 8pt Tahoma Regular. Body copy should be aligned at 2 inches when a name block occupies the left margin. When there is no name block on the left margin the body copy should be aligned at 1.1775 inches.

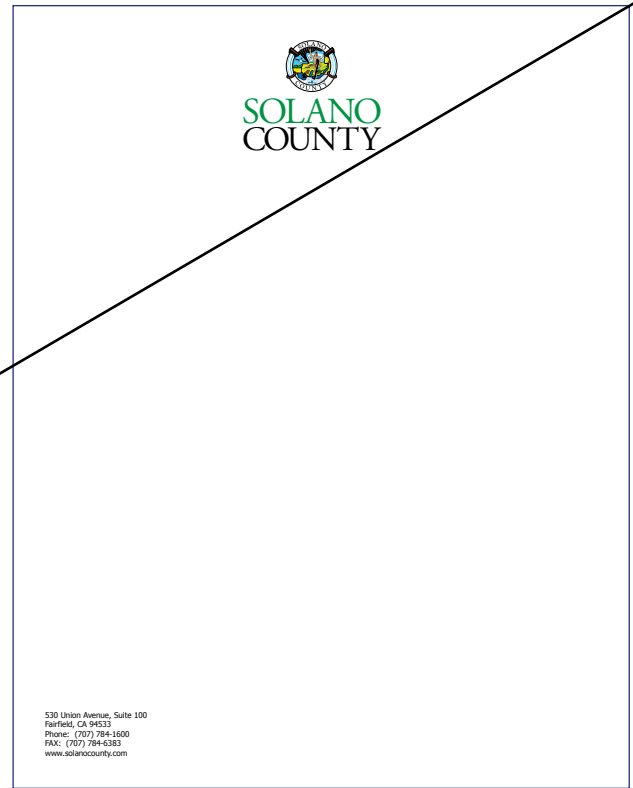
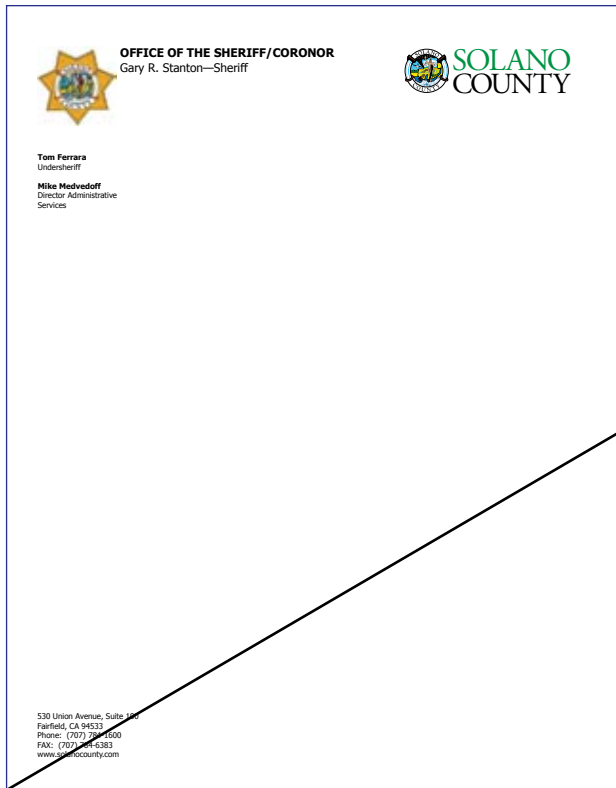




## Improper Logo Placement

The only correct uses of the County identity are as shown on page 18. The logo and brandmark may never be broken apart when used on the same page of any printed or on-screen communication. A few typical incorrect examples are shown below.

**COUNTY LOGO ALWAYS TAKES PRIMARY PLACEMENT ON THE UPPER LEFT CORNER. DEPARTMENTS, DIVISIONS AND PROGRAMS SHOULD BE NOTATED ON THE RIGHT. ALL STATIONARY AND PRIMARY COMMUNICATIONS SHOULD DISPLAY THE FULL LOGO LOCKUP.**



## Social networking

Currently, the County does not engage in any promotion via social networking web sites. These sites include, but are not limited to, FaceBook, Twitter, LinkedIn, MySpace and Youtube. The County cannot and will not ask employees to avoid participation in such media. However, no employee should be advertising or promoting County business through any social networking site or personal blog. Please refer to the following guidelines in regard to social networking media:

The County's identity, logo and official images may only be used for official purposes only. The County's identity and associated images may not be used for any personal or non-official County purposes including publications, blogs or websites. Exceptions will be made at the discretion of the County Administrator's office.





**SOLANO  
COUNTY**

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County Administrator's Office  
675 Texas Street, Suite 6500 • Fairfield, CA 94533  
(707) 784-6100 or (866) 7-SOLANO • Fax (707) 784-7975  
[solanocounty.com](http://solanocounty.com)