



Code of Shared Ethics and Values

of the Member Entities of the Shared Ethics Advisory Commission

Preamble

For government to operate with transparency and accountability, it is essential that public officials and employees conduct themselves in ways that uphold the public trust. The Code of Shared Ethics and Values provides guidance and support to public servants for the promotion and maintenance of the highest standards of personal and professional conduct. Because we wish to ensure the public confidence in the integrity of our government entities, it is proposed that all elected and appointed officials, employees, volunteers and others who participate in government shall personally commit to being trained on the values and standards put forth in this document.

Public Service Values

Honesty/Integrity

- To exercise the moral courage to hold myself and others accountable for our actions.
- To work within the law and in a way that will bear close public scrutiny.
- To exhibit trustworthiness.
- To employ decision making that promotes the public's best interests.
- To avoid impropriety and refrain from misusing an official position to secure unwarranted privileges or advantages for myself or others.
- To make no private promises of any kind that may unduly influence my public duties.
- To refrain from engaging in business that would be directly or indirectly inconsistent with the conscientious performance of public duties.
- To accept the responsibility to expose corrupt and/or unethical behavior.
- To protect the public trust by exercising honesty and ensuring transparency.

Respect/Civility

- To treat every person with dignity and respect.
- To accomplish the goals and responsibilities of my individual position while respecting my role as a member of a team and the community at large.
- To act in a professional, responsive and courteous manner.
- To reach decisions only after considering various points of view.
- To work with others in a spirit of tolerance and understanding.
- To work to build consensus and accommodate diverse opinions.
- To utilize effective communication by listening, asking questions and responding in a way that adds value to the conversation.
- To support the public's right to know the truth and encourage diverse and civil public debate in the decision-making process.

Accountability/Responsibility

- To refrain from using official positions to secure unwarranted privileges or advantages for myself or others.
- To remove myself from every decision-making process in which I, my business, my associates or my family may benefit and upon removing myself from decisions, I will show self-restraint and not voice my opinion on the question.
- To conduct my private affairs in a manner that minimizes the risk of real, potential or perceived conflicts of interest.
- To make full public disclosure of the nature of any conflict of interest prior to any considered action.
- To respect the privacy of others by keeping confidential information that I acquire in the course of my professional duties protected unless a legitimate reason to disclose exists.
- To refrain from taking advantage of information received in the course of my professional duties that is not available to the public.
- To refrain from directly or indirectly using or allowing the use of government property for anything other than official activities.
- To refrain from soliciting or accepting gifts or gratuities that may have a real or perceived influence on my objectivity in carrying out official responsibilities or placing me under obligation to the donor.
- To refrain from competing with the community where I am employed or serve as an appointed or elected official.

Fairness/Justice

- To advocate and promote the most efficient, effective, and equitable way to deliver public services without prejudice or discrimination.
- To publicly acknowledge that the function of government is to serve the best interests of all citizens.
- To refrain from granting preferential treatment to family and friends when making staffing decisions or awarding contracts.
- To refrain from retaliation or condoning retaliation against those who have exposed corrupt or unethical behaviors.
- To assess the effects of inadequate resources on diverse groups within the service population and develop plans to remedy and implement such plans.
- To behave consistently and with respect toward all citizens.