

CITY OF LIVINGSTON

CODE OF CONDUCT

PREAMBLE

The residents and businesses of the City of Livingston (“City”) are entitled to a fair, ethical, and accountable City government. Such a government requires that a City Official:

- Comply with both the letter and the spirit of all laws and policies affecting operations of the City.
- Be independent, impartial, and fair in their judgment and actions.
- Use their public office for the public good, not for personal gain.
- Conduct public deliberations and processes openly, unless legally confidential, in an atmosphere of respect and civility.

To this end, the City Council has adopted this Code of Conduct to build public confidence in the integrity of the City’s Elective and Appointed Officials and ensure the fair and effective operation of the City’s government.

Elected and Appointed Officials shall agree to and sign this Code of Conduct at the time of their appointment to public office.

Employees and Volunteers representing the City shall agree to and sign this Code of Conduct at the beginning of their employment, volunteer assignment or during Ethics Training sessions.

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Each City Council Member, Appointee, and Board/Commission Member (each a “City Official,” collectively “City Officials”) shall adhere to the following principles:

1. ACT IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST.

Recognizing that stewardship of the public interest must be their principal concern, a City Official shall work for the common good of the City and not for any private or personal interest and shall endeavor to treat all persons, claims, and transactions in a fair and equitable manner.

2. COMPLY WITH ALL LAWS, REGULATIONS, AND CITY POLICIES.

A City Official shall comply with the laws of the United States, the State of California, and the City in the performance of their public duties. These laws include but are not limited to: the United States and California constitutions, the Political Reform Act, the Brown Act, the City of Livingston Municipal Code, and City ordinances and policies.

3. CONDUCT BUSINESS IN A MANNER THAT IS RESPECTFUL.

A City Official shall refrain from abusive conduct, verbal attacks upon the character or motives of other members of the City Council, Boards, Commissions, Committees, staff, and the public.

4. RESPECT THE PROCESSES ESTABLISHED BY THE CITY COUNCIL.

Duties shall be performed in accordance with the processes and rules of order established by the City Council.

5. FULLY PARTICIPATE IN PUBLIC MEETINGS WHEN PRESENT.

A City Official shall inform themselves of public issues, listen attentively to public discussions before the body, and focus on the business at hand.

6. MAKE DECISIONS BASED ON MERIT.

A City Official's decision shall be based upon the merits and substance of the matter at hand.

7. COMMUNICATE OPENLY AND RESPECTFULLY.

A City Official shall publicly share substantive information that is relevant to a matter under consideration that they received from sources outside of the public decision-making processes. When disagreements or differing opinions arise, a City Official shall present their disagreement or opinion in a professional manner.

8. DISCLOSE KNOWLEDGE OF CORRUPTION.

Each City Official shall take an oath upon assuming office, pledging to uphold the constitution and laws of the City, state, and federal government. As part of this oath, a City Official commits to disclosing to the City Council, City Attorney, and/or City Manager any behavior or action that may qualify as corruption, abuse, fraud, bribery, or other violations of the law.

9. CONFLICT OF INTEREST.

In order to assure their independence and impartiality on behalf of the public good, a City Official shall not use their official position to influence government decisions in which they have a financial interest as defined and stipulated by the Political Reform Act, or where they have an organizational responsibility or a personal relationship that would present a conflict of interest under applicable state laws, regulations, or Attorney General Opinions.

10. NOT ACCEPT GIFTS OR FAVORS THAT ARE NOT AVAILABLE TO THE PUBLIC.

A City Official shall not take advantage of services or opportunities for personal gain by virtue of their public offices that are not available to the public in general. They shall refrain from accepting gifts, favors, or promises of future benefits that might compromise their independent judgment or action or give the appearance of being compromised.

11. CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION.

A City Official shall respect and preserve the confidentiality of information provided to them concerning the confidential matters of the City. They shall neither disclose confidential information without proper legal authorization nor use such information to advance their personal financial or private interests.

12. NO REPRESENTATION OF THIRD PARTY PRIVATE INTERESTS.

In keeping with their role as stewards of the public's trust, a City Official shall not appear on behalf of the private interests of a third-party before the City Council or any board, commission or committee or proceeding of the City, unless expressly permitted to do so by law.

13. REPRESENTATIVES OF THE CITY OF LIVINGSTON.

A City Official is a representative of the City of Livingston, and when in public, shall conduct themselves in a professional and respectful manner. To the best of their ability, a City Official shall represent the official policies and positions of the City Council. When presenting personal opinions or positions, a City Official shall explicitly state that those personal opinions or positions do not represent the Council or the City.

14. REFRAINING FROM IMPROPER INFLUENCE.

A City Official shall refrain from using their position to improperly influence the deliberations or decisions of the Council, City staff, boards, commission, or committees.

15. COUNCIL-MANAGER FORM OF GOVERNMENT.

City Officials shall respect and adhere to the Council-Manager form of government of the City.

16. PROMOTION OF A POSITIVE ENVIRONMENT.

City Officials shall support the maintenance of a positive and constructive environment for residents, businesses, and City employees.

17. IMPLEMENTATION.

These standards shall be included in the regular orientations for City Officials. All members shall sign a statement affirming they read and understand the City's Code of Conduct.

18. COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT.

Each City Official has the responsibility to adhere to and hold their colleagues accountable regarding this Code of Conduct, recognizing that the ethical standards established herein are essential to building and maintaining the public’s confidence in the integrity of City government.

This Code of Conduct shall be considered to be a summary of ethical conduct required of City Officials.

