



CITY OF GREENFIELD

CITY COUNCIL

CODE OF CONDUCT

**CITY OF GREENFIELD
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ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES CITY COUNCIL CODE OF CONDUCT

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Code of Conduct ("Code") is to define the role of elected and appointed officials (members of the City Council and its subsidiary Commissions and Boards, collectively "City officials" or "officials") in the governance of the City. This Code of Conduct is designed to describe the manner in which Councilmembers should treat one another, City staff, constituents, and others they come into contact with in representing the City of Greenfield. This Code consists of policies intended to advance the City's goals of providing efficient and high quality services to its residents and providing a safe and productive work environment for its employees.

It is not possible for a code of this kind to anticipate and provide a rule of conduct for all situations. At bottom, it is expected that officials will manage their behavior in a manner consistent with the rules that follow, respect the chain of command and behave within the bounds of their authority. It is also expected that officials will treat each other, City employees, residents and business-people with courtesy and respect in a manner that reflects well on the City.

This City Council code of conduct should not be interpreted to conflict with other rights and responsibilities of the City's public officials set forth in this code or Federal, State, or local law. The City Council Code of Conduct shall be the definitive document relating to ethical conduct by Greenfield Councilmembers.

II. POLICY

What follows are general policies governing the conduct of City officials:

A. General Conduct

1. Councilmembers must refrain from abusive conduct, personal charges, or verbal attacks upon the character or motives of other members of the City Council, boards, commissions, committees, staff, or the public.
2. Councilmember duties must be performed in accordance with the processes and rules of order established by the City Council.
3. Councilmembers must inform themselves on public issues, listen attentively to public discussions before the body, and focus on the business at hand.

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4. Council decisions must be based upon the merits and substance of the matter at hand.
5. It is the responsibility of Councilmembers to publicly share substantive information that is relevant to a matter under consideration that they have received from sources outside of the public decision-making process with all other Councilmembers and the public prior to acting on the matter.
6. Appropriate City staff should be involved when Councilmembers meet with officials from other agencies and jurisdictions to ensure proper staff support as needed and to keep staff informed.
7. Councilmembers must not attend internal staff meetings or meetings between City staff and third parties unless invited by City staff or directed by Council to do so.

B. Conduct at Public Meetings:

1. All Councilmembers must refrain from abusive conduct, verbal attacks upon the character or motives of other members of the City Council, boards, commissions, committees, staff or the public.
2. Members must prepare themselves for public issues, listen courteously and attentively to all public discussions before the Council.
3. Councilmembers must refrain from interrupting other speakers, making personal comments not germane to the business of the Council, or otherwise interfering with the orderly conduct of the meetings.
4. Councilmembers must recognize the responsibility of the Mayor to maintain order, keep discussion on track, and focus discussion on the agenda items at hand.
5. Councilmembers must base decisions on the merits and substance of the matter at hand rather than on unrelated considerations.

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C. Council Interaction with City Staff

1. Council requests for research or other staff work must be directed to the City Manager, or the City Attorney regarding legal matters.
2. If more than fifteen minutes of staff time will be required to complete the task/project, the item will be agendaized to ask the City Council if time should be spent on preparing a report on the proposed item.
3. Staff responses prepared to Council inquiries shall be distributed to all City Councilmembers.
4. Councilmembers must not direct staff to initiate any action, change a course of action, or prepare any report. A Councilmember shall not initiate any project or study without the approval of the majority of the Council.
5. Councilmembers must not attempt to pressure or influence discussions, recommendations, workloads, schedules, or department priorities absent the approval of a majority of the Council.
6. Whenever possible, Councilmembers should direct questions ahead of time to the City Manager and/or the appropriate Department staff so that they can provide the desired information at the Council meeting.
7. Any concerns by a member of the City Council regarding the behavior or work of a City employee should be directed to the City Manager privately to ensure the concern is resolved. Councilmembers must not reprimand employees directly nor should they communicate their concerns to anyone other than the City Manager.
8. Councilmembers may direct routine inquiries to either the City Manager or appropriate department head.
9. Councilmembers serving on Council committees or as the City's representative to an outside agency may interact directly with City staff assigned to that effort as the City Manager's designee. The City staff member so designated and a signed will keep the City Manager appropriately informed.

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10. Soliciting political support from staff (e.g., financial contributions, display of posters or lawn signs, name on support list, etc.) is prohibited. City staff may, as private citizens with constitutional rights, support political candidates, but all such activities must be done away from the workplace and may not be conducted while on duty or in uniform.

D. Council Interaction with the Public

1. Councilmembers may use their title only when conducting official City business, for information purposes, or as an indication of background and expertise, carefully considering whether they are exceeding or appearing to exceed their authority.
2. Once the City Council has taken a position on an issue, all official City correspondence regarding that issue will reflect the Council's adopted position.
3. In most instances, the Council will authorize the Mayor to send letters stating the City's official position to appropriate legislators.
4. City letterhead may only be used by Councilmembers for official City business.
5. If a member of the City Council appears before another governmental agency organization to give a statement on an issue affecting the City, the Councilmember should indicate the majority position and opinion of the Council.
6. Personal opinions and comments may be expressed only if the Councilmember clarifies that these statements do not reflect the official position of the City Council.
7. Councilmembers must not make representations or promises to any third party regarding the future actions of the City or of the body of which they are a member, unless such representation or promise has been duly authorized by the appropriate body.
8. When representing the City on official business, officials shall behave responsibly and in a manner, as to project a positive image for the City.

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E. Council Interaction with City Advisory Bodies

1. Councilmembers must not attempt to pressure or influence any commission or *committee* decisions, recommendations, or priorities absent the approval of the majority of the Council.
2. The City Council as a whole shall provide direction and guidance to its advisory bodies.

F. Confidential Information

1. Councilmembers must respect and preserve the confidentiality of information provided to them concerning the confidential matters of the City.
2. Councilmembers cannot disclose or otherwise use confidential information without proper legal authorization.

G. Enforcement

Every City official is expected to observe the foregoing policies and rules when engaged in City business.

1. Complaints alleging a violation of this Code of Conduct by a City official should be directed to the City Manager or the City Attorney. Upon receipt of a complaint of a minor nature, the City Manager and the City Attorney must together determine a course of action.
2. The City Manager and the City Attorney must, should they fail to resolve the complaint or should the complaint be of a serious nature, consult with the Mayor (unless the Mayor is the subject of the complaint, in which event they shall consult with the Mayor Pro Tern or other Councilmember, in order of seniority, as is appropriate under the circumstances) to determine an appropriate course of action.
3. The goal of enforcement of this Code of Conduct is corrective, rather than penal, and a progressive approach to curing violations shall be employed beginning with informal methods and proceeding to more formal methods as necessary.

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4. Should less drastic measures fail, the City Council may in a public meeting impose one or more of the following sanctions:
 - i. Reprimand
 - ii. Censure
 - iii. Loss of committee or liaison assignments
 - iv. Removal from an appointed committee, commission or board
 - v. Loss of staff support or use of City resources
 - vi. Other penalties as may be applicable under the circumstances.