



CODE OF CONDUCT

I. PURPOSE

The Town recognizes that all employees and members of boards, committees and commissions elected and/or appointed by the Town should maintain courteous discourse with each other, with those who volunteer their time and services to the Town in other ways, and with members of the public by striving at every meeting, forum or other official interaction to treat every person fairly and with respect, regardless of any differences of opinion. The intent of this policy is to establish a standard of conduct for all employees and elected and appointed members of Town boards, committees and commissions in the Town.

II. APPLICABILITY

This policy shall apply to all employees and elected and appointed members of Town boards, committees and commissions acting on behalf of the Town and covers all their actions and communications, whether spoken or written, including but not limited to all electronic communications including social media, to the extent permitted by law.

III. CODE OF CONDUCT

All Town employees and elected and appointed members of Town boards, committees and commissions are expected to act honestly, truthfully, fairly, and in good faith regarding their responsibilities, the interests of the Town and the welfare of its residents.

All Town employees and elected and appointed members of Town boards, committees and commissions are expected to refrain from communicating or acting in a disrespectful, abusive and/or threatening manner towards members of the community, other Town employees, elected and appointed members of Town boards, committees and commissions and the Town Administrator.

Furthermore, all Town employees and elected and appointed members of Town boards, committees and commissions must assume the following responsibilities:

A. Conduct Generally and in Relation to the Community

- All elected and appointed members of Town boards, committees and commissions must be well informed concerning the local and state duties of a board/committee/commission member.



- No elected and appointed members of Town boards, committees and commissions should purport to represent the opinion of their board/committee/commission except when specifically authorized by a recorded vote to do so. All elected and appointed members of Town boards, committees and commissions should view their position as a means of unselfish public service personally, professionally or financially.
- All Town employees and elected and appointed members of Town boards, committees and commissions should recognize that the chief function of local government is to serve the best interests of all Town residents.
- All Town employees and elected and appointed members of Town boards, committees and commissions should demonstrate respect for the public that they serve.
- All Town employees and elected and appointed members of Town boards, committees and commissions should safeguard confidential information.
- All Town employees and elected and appointed members of Town boards, committees and commissions should conduct themselves so as to maintain public confidence in our local government.
- All Town employees and elected and appointed members of Town boards, committees and commissions should conduct official business in such a manner that they cannot be improperly influenced in the performance of their official duties.
- All Town employees and elected and appointed members of Town boards, committees and commissions should conduct the public's business in a manner that promotes open and transparent government, consistent with the provisions of the Open Meeting Law, Public Records Law and other state and federal laws and regulations.
- All Town employees and elected and appointed members of Town boards, committees and commissions should faithfully comply with all Town policies, including, without limitation, the following:
 - Anti-harassment and Anti-discrimination Policy
 - Anti-fraud Policy
 - The Open Meeting Law
 - Procurement Laws
 - The Ethics/Conflict of Interest Statute (G.L.c.268A)



B. Conduct in Relation to other elected and appointed officials

All elected and appointed members of Town boards, committees and commissions should:

- Treat all members of the board/committee/commission to which they belong with respect, notwithstanding differences of opinion. Keep in mind that professional civility does not preclude honest differences of opinion, but requires respecting those differences.
- Participate and interact in official meetings with the dignity and restraint befitting those who hold a position of public trust. Recognize the responsibility to be prepared for and attend all meetings. Members should promptly notify the chair should they for any reason be unable or unwilling to continue to serve. Formal notice to resign from a board/committee/commission requires written notification to the Town Clerk.
- Recognize that actions taken at official legal meetings are binding and that an individual member cannot bind the board/committee/commission outside of such meetings.
- Refrain from making statements or promises as to how they will vote on issues that will come before the board/committee/commission until they have had an opportunity to hear the pros and cons of the issue during a public meeting.
- Uphold the intent of executive session and respect the privileged communication that exists in executive session.
- Make decisions only after all facts regarding an issue have been presented and discussed.

C. Conduct in Relation to the Town Administrator

All elected and appointed members of Town boards, committees and commissions should:

- Recognize and support the administrative chain of command and refuse to act on complaints as an individual outside that chain of command. Respect the Town Administrator's authority to carry out his/her responsibilities and/or to develop solutions to problems and issues.



- Refrain from giving orders or directions to the Town Administrator for action as an individual board/committee/commission member.
- Refrain from providing information to the Town Administrator that they would not be willing to share with other board/committee/commission members

D. Conduct in Relation to Employees

All elected and appointed members of Town boards, committees and commissions should:

- Treat all employees as professionals and respect the abilities, experience, and dignity of each individual.
- Refrain from giving instructions to or requesting assistance from Town staff. Instead, you should initially communicate through the Town Administrator.
- Communicate concerns about staff performance privately to the Town Administrator rather than engaging in public criticism of individual employees.

IV. DISTRIBUTION AND EDUCATION

- The Town Clerk shall provide a copy of this policy to all employees and elected and appointed members of Town boards, committees and commissions upon its issuance. The Clerk or designee will provide a copy to new employees when they commence employment with the Town and will provide a copy to elected and appointed members of Town boards, committees and commissions upon the subsequent appointment, re-appointment, election or re-election of any individual.
- Each individual shall sign a statement that they have read this policy and will comply with all requirements set forth in this policy. If any member declines to sign the form, that fact shall be noted by the Town Clerk on the form.

V. POLICY ADMINISTRATION

- In addition to any other remedies or enforcement options available under the law, each board/committee/commission may vote to censure any member. The appointing authority may decline to reappoint an individual who violates this Code of Conduct.



- If any elected or appointed member of a Town board, committee or commission is accused of violating the Town's Anti-Harassment and Anti-Discrimination Policy, the Town Administrator or designee shall refer the matter for review, and, if appropriate, investigation to the contact named in the Town's Anti-Harassment and Anti-Discrimination policy or a disinterested outside firm or individual qualified to investigate the alleged conduct. The firm or individual to whom the matter is referred shall promptly notify the accused member of the allegation(s) and shall investigate the matter in a fair and thorough manner and report back findings of fact and recommendations to the Town Administrator. The Town Administrator/ shall share the reported findings and recommendations with the member(s) who were investigated, the member's(member's) board/ committee/commission and the Selectboard. The board/committee/commission shall then take such action as is authorized by law and as it deems fit in response to the matter. The board/committee/commission's actions (or lack thereof) shall not prevent the Town from taking any other actions authorized by law.
- The release of any materials related to the investigations referenced above shall be governed by the Public Records Law, Open Meeting Law, and any other applicable law(s).