

Hiring of MITs and the ICMA Length of Service Guideline

Tenet 4 of the ICMA Code of Ethics says, “Recognize that the chief function of local government at all times is to serve the best interests of all people.” The length of service guideline that follows this Tenet reads as follows:

A minimum of two years generally is considered necessary in order to render a professional service to the local government. A short tenure should be the exception rather than a recurring experience. However, under special circumstances, it may be in the best interests of the local government and the member to separate in a shorter time. Examples of such circumstances would include refusal of the appointing authority to honor commitments concerning conditions of employment, a vote of no confidence in the member, or severe personal problems. It is the responsibility of an applicant for a position to ascertain conditions of employment. Inadequately determining terms of employment prior to arrival does not justify premature termination.

Recent Committee on Professional Conduct advice, [which can be found on the ICMA website under Member Support→Ethics Advice→Program Highlights](#), recognizes the MIT circumstance.

Also, our colleague Bill Hansell has offered the following suggestions when hiring an MIT:

- The work to be done is work that is needed by the local government
- The MIT must be qualified to do the work and have reasonable deadlines for completing the assignment
- The compensation must be reasonable for the work
- Both the MIT and any local government employees or officials involved must understand the timing of the assignment and approximately when it will be completed.