Embedding Ethics in Local Governments

Common Approaches

- 55% of responding local governments have an established process for reporting ethics issues.
- 54% of responding local governments deal with ethical issues and violations as a routine part of their organizational management.
- Nearly half (48%) of responding local governments incorporate ethics in the employee recruitment and selection process.
- Over 90% of local governments use internal staff to investigate ethics issues.

Room to Grow

- Entity-wide ethics offices, commissions, or boards are uncommon for local governments: 13% of respondents reported having one for their organization.
- Just 16% of local governments reported surveying their employees about ethics, ethics compliance, and organizational culture.
- A significant majority of responding local governments indicate a focus on prevention of ethical issues. Only a small portion of them focuses on detection.
- It is less common, though, for local governments to formally recognize (i.e., reward) ethical behavior. Some feel this is simply a basic expectation or requirement of all employees.
Ethics Issues in Action

- 63% of local governments have established their own code of ethics/conduct. Of those, 71% were developed with input or leadership from the local government’s staff.

Please note whether your local government specifically addresses any of the following in your code of conduct or a separate policy:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Addressed</th>
<th>Not Addressed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acceptance of gifts or favors</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflicts of interest</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Use of public resources</td>
<td>94%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Appropriate conduct in the workplace</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Outside employment</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Internet usage policy</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Overall, 78% of responding local governments provide some form of ethics training to elected officials, staff, or board/commission members.
  - Trainings are most often delivered using “in-house” resources (in 66% of responding local governments).

Is ethics training provided to your local government? (n=684)

- Yes: 22%
- No: 78%

To whom is ethics training provided? (n=536)

- Elected Officials: 42%, Mandatory 23%
- Managers: 47%, Mandatory 13%
- All Staff: 49%, Mandatory 6%
- Board/Commission Members: 26%, Mandatory 13%

For additional information, please contact ICMA survey research at surveyresearch@icma.org. To read the full summary report of the Ethics in Local Government Survey, visit www.icma.org/documents/ethics-local-government-survey-report. To learn more about ICMA’s ethics activities and resources, visit icma.org/ethics.