

City of Santa Clara, CA

Code of Ethics and Values

PREAMBLE

The proper operation of democratic government requires that decision-makers be independent, impartial, and accountable to the people they serve. The City of Santa Clara has adopted this Code of Ethics and Values to promote and maintain the highest standards of personal and professional conduct in the City's government. All elected and appointed officials, City employees, volunteers, and others who participate in the city's government are required to subscribe to this Code, understand how it applies to their specific responsibilities, and practice its eight core values in their work. Because we seek public confidence in the City's services and public trust of its decision-makers, our decisions and our work must meet the most demanding ethical standards and demonstrate the highest levels of achievement in following this code.

1. As a Representative of the City of Santa Clara, I will be *ethical*.

In practice, this value looks like:

- a.) I am trustworthy, acting with the utmost integrity and moral courage.
- b.) I am truthful, do what I say I will do, and am dependable.
- c.) I make impartial decisions, free of bribes, unlawful gifts, narrow political interests, and financial and other personal interests that impair my independence of judgment or action.
- d.) I am fair, distributing benefits and burdens according to consistent and equitable criteria.
- e.) I extend equal opportunities and due process to all parties in matters under consideration. If I engage in unilateral meetings and discussions, I do so without making voting decisions.
- f.) I show respect for persons, confidences, and information designated as "confidential."
- g.) I use my title(s) only when conducting official City business, for information purposes, or as an indication of background and expertise, carefully considering whether I am exceeding or appearing to exceed my authority.

2. As a Representative of the City of Santa Clara, I will be *professional*.

In practice, this value looks like:

- a.) I apply my knowledge and expertise to my assigned activities and to the interpersonal relationships that are part of my job in a consistent, confident, competent, and productive manner.
- b.) I approach my job and work-related relationships with a positive attitude.
- c.) I keep my professional knowledge and skills current and growing.

3. As a Representative of the City of Santa Clara, I will be *service-oriented*.

In practice, this value looks like:

- a.) I provide friendly, receptive, courteous service to everyone.
- b.) I am attuned to, and care about, the needs and issues of citizens, public officials, and city workers.
- c.) In my interactions with constituents, I am interested, engaged, and responsive.

- 4. As a Representative of the City of Santa Clara, I will be *fiscally responsible***
In practice, this value looks like:
- a.) I make decisions after prudent consideration of their financial impact, taking into account the long-term financial needs of the City, especially its financial stability.
 - b.) I demonstrate concern for the proper use of City assets (e.g., personnel, time, property, equipment, funds) and follow established procedures.
 - c.) I make good financial decisions that seek to preserve programs and services for City residents.
- 5. As a Representative of the City of Santa Clara, I will be *organized*.**
In practice, this value looks like:
- a.) I act in an efficient manner, making decisions and recommendations based upon research and facts, taking into consideration short and long term goals.
 - b.) I follow through in a responsible way, keeping others informed, and responding in a timely fashion.
 - c.) I am respectful of established City processes and guidelines.
- 6. As a Representative of the City of Santa Clara, I will be *communicative*.**
In practice, this value looks like:
- a.) I convey the City's care for and commitment to its citizens.
 - b.) I communicate in various ways that I am approachable, open-minded and willing to participate in dialog.
 - c.) I engage in effective two-way communication, by listening carefully, asking questions, and determining an appropriate response which adds value to conversations.
- 7. As a Representative of the City of Santa Clara, I will be *collaborative*.**
In practice, this value looks like:
- a.) I act in a cooperative manner with groups and other individuals, working together in a spirit of tolerance and understanding.
 - b.) I work towards consensus building and gain value from diverse opinions.
 - c.) I accomplish the goals and responsibilities of my individual position, while respecting my role as a member of a team.
 - d.) I consider the broader regional and State-wide implications of the City's decisions and issues.
- 8. As a Representative of the City of Santa Clara, I will be *progressive*.**
In practice, this value looks like:
- a.) I exhibit a proactive, innovative approach to setting goals and conducting the City's business.
 - b.) I display a style that maintains consistent standards, but is also sensitive to the need for compromise, "thinking outside the box," and improving existing paradigms when necessary.
 - c.) I promote intelligent and thoughtful innovation in order to forward the City's policy agenda and City services.

City of Santa Clara, CA

Values are deeply held beliefs that influence attitudes, actions and the practical choices and decisions we make at home and at work.

Ethics are standards, principles, or norms for how we *ought* to act. Ethics defines our moral rights and duties, and involves a commitment to “do the right thing,” i.e., **take ethical action**.

An **ethical dilemma** is a situation in which:

- You are unsure of the right thing to do.
- Two or more of our values may be in conflict.
- Some harm may be caused, no matter what you do.

A **values dilemma** occurs when:

- Advancing one value does significant harm to another.
- Two or more of our values suggest different good outcomes and we're not sure which one to choose.
- One or more of the City's values are in conflict with your personal values.

How do you decide what to do? First, follow the law. Then, if you have an ethical obligation to act:

- You consider the facts.
- You walk in the shoes of all stakeholders.
- You consider the options you have.
- You evaluate them based on
 - Which does more good than harm?
 - Which supports individuals' rights and treats everyone with dignity and respect?
 - Which is fair and satisfies your duties?
 - Which is best for the community as a whole?
 - Which best advances the City's Core Values?
- **Test 1:** If I do this, who wins? Who loses? Why? Should I consider different options? What do others think of my reasoning? What ethics reasons make this the right thing?
- **Test 2:** Explain your reasoning to someone harmed by it. Always talk an ethics problem over with another good person. Use all the resources available. Give yourself time to think. **Then take action.** What happened? Learn for next time.

AS A REPRESENTATIVE OF SANTA CLARA, I WILL BE:

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| DO THE RIGHT THING | <p>ETHICAL: I am trustworthy, acting with the utmost integrity and moral courage.▪ I am truthful, do what I say I will do, and am dependable▪I make impartial decisions, free of bribes, unlawful gifts, narrow political interests, and financial and other personal interests that impair my independence of judgment or action▪ I am fair, distributing benefits and burdens according to consistent and equitable criteria.▪ I extend equal opportunities and due process to all parties in matters under consideration. If I engage in unilateral meetings and discussions, I do so without making voting decisions.▪ I show respect for persons, confidences, and information designated as “confidential.”▪ I use my title(s) only when conducting official City business, for information purposes, or as an indication of background and expertise, carefully considering whether I am exceeding or appearing to exceed my authority.▪</p> |
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ASK THESE TWO QUESTIONS BEFORE YOU MAKE YOUR FINAL DECISION:

- 1. HOW WILL MY ACTION ADVANCE THE CITY'S CORE VALUES?**
- 2. WHY IS THIS THE ETHICAL THING TO DO?**

SIDE 2: VALUES

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| PROVIDE SUPERB CITIZEN SERVICES. | <p>PROFESSIONAL I apply my knowledge and expertise to my assigned activities and to the inter-personal relationships that are part of my job in a consistent, confident, competent, and productive manner.▪ I approach my job and work-related relationships with a positive attitude.▪ I keep my professional knowledge and skills current and growing.</p> | <p>SERVICE-ORIENTED I provide friendly, receptive, courteous service to everyone.▪ I am attuned to, and care about, the needs and issues of citizens, public officials, and city workers.▪ In my interactions with constituents, I am interested, engaged, and responsive.▪</p> | <p>ORGANIZED I act in an efficient manner, making decisions and recommendations based upon research and facts, taking into consideration short and long term goals.▪ I follow through in a responsible way, keeping others informed, and responding in a timely fashion.▪ I am respectful of established City processes and guidelines.▪</p> | <p>FISCALLY RESPONSIBLE I make decisions after prudent consideration of their financial impact, taking into account the long-term financial needs of the City, especially its financial stability.▪ I demonstrate concern for the proper use of City assets (e.g., personnel, time, property, equipment, funds) and follow established procedures.▪ I make good financial decisions that seek to preserve programs and services for City residents.</p> |
| BUILD TRUST AND MUTUAL RESPECT. | <p>COLLABORATIVE: I act in a cooperative manner with groups and other individuals, working together in a spirit of tolerance and understanding.▪ I work towards consensus-building and gain value from diverse opinions.▪ I accomplish the goals and responsibilities of my individual position, while respecting my role as a member of a team.▪ I consider the broader regional and State-wide implications of the City's decisions and issues.</p> | | <p>COMMUNICATIVE: I convey the City's care for and commitment to its citizens.▪ I communicate in various ways that I am approachable, open-minded and willing to participate in dialog.▪ I engage in effective two-way communication, by listening carefully, asking questions, and determining an appropriate response which adds value to conversations.</p> | |
| BE AT OUR BEST | <p>PROGRESSIVE: I exhibit a proactive, innovative approach to setting goals and conducting the City's business.▪ I display a style that maintains consistent standards, but is also sensitive to the need for compromise, “thinking outside the box,” and improving existing paradigms when necessary.▪ I promote intelligent and thoughtful innovation in order to forward the City's policy agenda and City services.</p> | | | |