



Anderson Township Ethics Policy

Policy Statement

Anderson Township is committed “to providing services which protect and enhance the quality of life in our community” and to delivering those services in accordance with the strictest ethical guidelines, ensuring that employees and elected officials conduct themselves in a manner that fosters confidence in the integrity of Anderson Township and its governance and professionalism and integrity among its employees and elected officials. Anderson Township elected officials and employees have worked together to develop this Ethics Policy, intended to set a standard of excellence for local governance.

General Standards of Ethical Conduct

Anderson Township officials and employees must, at all times, abide by protections to the public embodied in the Ethics Policy of the Anderson Township Board of Township Trustees and Ohio’s ethics laws, as found in Chapters 102 and 2921 of the Ohio Revised Code, and as interpreted by the Ohio Ethics Commission and Ohio courts (“Ohio Ethics Law”). A copy of these laws is provided by Township Administration to each employee upon employment and to each elected official upon taking office, receipt acknowledged as required by law, and is available through Township Administration or the Ohio Ethics Commission’s website <http://www.ethics.ohio.gov/OhioEthicsLaw.html>. Officials and employees must conduct themselves, at all times, in a manner that avoids favoritism, bias, and the appearance of impropriety and shall display, at all times, a commitment to transparency, communication, and accountability.

It is recognized that Township officials and employees who engage in specialized work such as fire inspections, plan review, financial matters, contracting, bidding, zoning approval, etc. and those who serve as elected officials may be held to higher standards as required by state law or as outlined by professional associations through which these individuals may be accredited.

A general summary of the restraints upon the conduct of all officials and employees includes, but is not limited to, those listed below. No official or employee shall:

- Solicit or accept anything of value from anyone doing business with the Township (including, without limitation, any form of compensation from anyone doing business with the Township even if the compensation is related only to business that does not directly involve the Township);

- Solicit or accept tips, money, gift cards, or alcoholic beverages offered in conjunction with the official's or employees' public position under any circumstance (nominal gifts including holiday food baskets, calendars and similar items may be accepted; and where practicable, such items to be shared with other employees);
- Solicit a meal during attendance at events where a per diem has previously been issued to the employee or official;
- Solicit or accept employment from anyone doing business with the Township, unless the official or employee completely withdraws from Township activity regarding the party offering employment, and the Township approves the withdrawal;
- Use his or her public position to obtain benefits for the official, employee, family members, or anyone with whom the official or employee has a business or employment relationship;
- Be paid or accept any form of compensation for personal services rendered on a matter before any board, commission, or other body of the Township, unless the official or employee qualifies for the exception, and files the statement, described in R.C. 102.04 (D);
- Hold or benefit from a contract with, authorized by, or approved by, the Township (the Ethics Law does except some limited stockholdings, and some contracts objectively shown as the lowest cost services, where *all* criteria under R.C. 2921.42 are met);
- Vote, authorize, recommend, or in any other way use his or her position to secure approval of a Township contract (including employment or personal services) in which the official, employee, family member, or anyone with whom the official or employee has a business or employment relationship, has an interest;
- Solicit or accept honoraria (see R.S. 102.01(H) and 102.03(H));
- During public service, and for one year after leaving public service, represent any person, in any fashion, before *any* public agency, with respect to a matter in which the official or employee personally participated while serving with the Township;
- Use or disclose confidential information protected by law (including, without limitation, the use or disclosure of any information discussed within an Executive Session of the Board of Township Trustees) , unless appropriately authorized; or

- Use, or authorize the use of, his or her title, the name “Anderson Township,” or any acronyms associated with Township operations, or any logo associated with the Township, all of which are trademarked, in a manner that suggests impropriety, favoritism, or bias by the Township or the official or employee.

For purposes of this policy:

- “Anything of value” includes anything of monetary value, including, but not limited to, money, gifts, food or beverages, social event tickets and expenses, travel expenses, golf outings, consulting fees, compensation, or employment. “Value” means worth greater than *de minimis* or nominal, e.g. meals should not exceed the cost of a dinner at a family style restaurant that does not serve alcohol such as Bob Evans;
- “Anyone doing business with the Township” includes, but is not limited to, any person, corporation, or other party that is doing or seeking to do business with, regulated by, or has interests before the Township.

Ethics Education

Providing ethics education and information is an inherent part of good ethics governance. Therefore, Anderson Township will provide educational sessions and/or informational materials to officials and employees at least annually.

Assistance

The Ethics Commission is available to provide advice and assistance regarding the application of the Ethics Law and related statutes. The Commission may be contacted at 614.466.7090. The Commission’s website address is: www.ethics.ohio.gov. An Anderson Township Ethics Panel consisting of the Township Administrator or Assistant Administrator and one representative from each department shall also be formed. In order to ensure employees at every level are adequately represented, no more than one management level employee (department head or assistant department head) shall serve at any given time. The Township Law Director shall serve as advisor to the Panel.

The Ethics Panel will:

- Serve as a resource for employees;
- Assist with securing ethics training for officials and employees;
- Compile and post a list of commonly asked questions and answers which employees may refer to;
- Establish an email address where employees may submit questions.

The Ethics Panel will not:

- Accept requests for information or assistance involving existing or potential employee disciplinary matters;
- Interpret the Ohio Ethics Law and related statutes or offer legal advice;
- Serve as a resource for officials as they shall receive guidance from the Township's Law Director.

Penalties

Failure of any Township official or employee to abide by this Ethics Policy, or to comply with the Ethics Law, related statutes and policies of the Anderson Township Board of Township Trustees, will result in discipline, which may include dismissal, as well as any potential civil or criminal sanctions under the law.

Changes

This Ethics Policy may be changed only by a majority vote of the Anderson Township Board of Township Trustees after consultation with the Township Administrator and Law Director.

Adopted by the Anderson Township Board of Township Trustees this 21st day of March, 2013, by Resolution No. 13-0321-01.

/s/ Kenneth G. Dietz
Kenneth G. Dietz
Fiscal Officer