

## ICMA Code of Ethics with Guidelines

The ICMA Code of Ethics was adopted by the ICMA members in 1924, and most recently amended by the membership in June 2017. The Guidelines for the Code were adopted by the ICMA Executive Board in 1972, and most recently revised in June 2017. The mission of ICMA is to create excellence in local governance by developing and fostering professional local government management worldwide.

In 2018, the City of Arvada Leadership Team reviewed and adopted the following guidelines and code of ethics standards to further the City's mission and govern member conduct. Every member of the Leadership Team, shall:

**Tenet 1.** Be dedicated to the concepts of effective and democratic local government by responsible elected officials and believe that professional general management is essential to the achievement of this objective.

**Tenet 2.** Affirm the dignity and worth of the services rendered by government and maintain a constructive, creative, and practical attitude toward City affairs and a deep sense of social responsibility as a trusted public servant.

### GUIDELINE

**Advice to Officials of Other Local Governments.** When members of LT advise and respond to inquiries from elected or appointed officials of other local governments, they should inform the administrators of those communities.

**Tenet 3.** Demonstrate by word and action the highest standards of ethical conduct and integrity in all public, professional, and personal relationships in order that the LT may merit the trust and respect of the elected and appointed officials, employees, and the public.

### GUIDELINES

**Public Confidence.** LTs should conduct themselves so as to maintain public confidence in their position and profession, the integrity of the City, and in their responsibility to uphold the public trust.

**Influence.** LT members should conduct their professional and personal affairs in a manner that demonstrates that they cannot be improperly influenced in the performance of their official duties.

**Appointment Commitment.** LT members who accept an appointment to a position should report to that position. This does not preclude the possibility of LT members considering several

offers or seeking several positions at the same time. However, once a member of LT has accepted a formal offer of employment, that commitment is considered binding unless the employer makes fundamental changes in the negotiated terms of employment.

**Credentials.** A LT member's resume for employment shall completely and accurately reflect the member's education, work experience, and personal history. Omissions and inaccuracies must be avoided.

**Professional Respect.** LT members should show professional respect for all persons working within the City. Professional respect does not preclude honest differences of opinion; it does preclude attacking a person's motives or integrity.

**Reporting Ethics Violations.** When becoming aware of a possible violation of the Code of Ethics, LT members are encouraged to report possible violations to the City Manager. In reporting the possible violation, members may choose to go on record as the complainant or report the matter on a confidential basis.

**Confidentiality.** LT shall not discuss or divulge information with anyone about pending or completed ethics cases, except as specifically authorized by the Rules of Procedure for Enforcement of the Code of Ethics.

**Seeking Employment.** LTs should not seek employment for a position that has an incumbent who has not announced his or her separation or been officially informed by the appointive entity that his or her services are to be terminated. LTs should not initiate contact with representatives of the appointive entity. LTs contacted by representatives of the appointive entity body regarding prospective interest in the position should decline to have a conversation until the incumbent's separation from employment is publicly known.

**Relationships in the Workplace.** LT should not engage in an intimate or romantic relationship with any elected official or board appointee, employee they report to, one they appoint and/or supervise, either directly or indirectly, within the organization. This guideline does not restrict personal friendships, professional mentoring, or social interactions with employees, elected officials and Board appointees.

**Tenet 4.** Recognize that the chief function of the City at all times is to serve the best interests of all of the people.

## **GUIDELINE**

**Length of Service.** A minimum of two years generally is considered necessary in order to render a professional service to the City. 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 City and the LT 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 LT, 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.

**Tenet 5.** Submit policy proposals to elected officials; provide them with facts and advice on matters of policy as a basis for making decisions and setting community goals; and uphold and implement City policies adopted by elected officials.

## **GUIDELINE**

**Conflicting Roles.** LT members who serve multiple roles – working as both City attorney and City manager for the same community, for example – should avoid participating in matters that create the appearance of a conflict of interest. They should disclose the potential conflict to the governing body so that other opinions may be solicited.

**Tenet 6.** Recognize that elected representatives of the people are entitled to the credit for the establishment of City policies; responsibility for policy execution rests with LT.

**Tenet 7.** Refrain from all political activities which undermine public confidence in professional administrators. Refrain from participation in the election of the members of the employing legislative body.

## **GUIDELINES**

**Elections of the Governing Body.** LT should maintain a reputation for serving equally and impartially all members of the governing body of the City, regardless of party. To this end, they should not participate in an election campaign on behalf of or in opposition to candidates for the governing body.

**Elections of Elected Executives.** LT shall not participate in the election campaign of any candidate for mayor or elected county executive.

**Running for Office.** LT members shall not run for elected office or become involved in political activities related to running for elected office, or accept appointment to an elected office. They shall not seek political endorsements, financial contributions or engage in other campaign activities.

**Elections.** LT members share with their fellow citizens the right and responsibility to vote. However, in order not to impair their effectiveness on behalf of the City they serve, they shall not participate in political activities to support the candidacy of individuals running for any City, county, special district, school, state or federal offices. Specifically, they shall not endorse

candidates, make financial contributions, sign or circulate petitions, or participate in fund-raising activities for individuals seeking or holding elected office.

**Elections relating to the Form of Government.** LT may assist in preparing and presenting materials that explain the form of government to the public prior to a form of government election. If assistance is required by another community, LT members may respond.

**Presentation of Issues.** LT may assist their governing body in the presentation of issues involved in referenda such as bond issues, annexations, and other matters that affect the government entity's operations and/or fiscal capacity.

**Personal Advocacy of Issues.** LT members share with their fellow citizens the right and responsibility to voice their opinion on public issues. LT may advocate for issues of personal interest only when doing so does not conflict with the performance of their official duties.

**Tenet 8.** Make it a duty continually to improve the LT member's professional ability and to develop the competence of associates in the use of management techniques.

## **GUIDELINES**

**Self-Assessment.** Each LT member should assess his or her professional skills and abilities on a periodic basis.

**Professional Development.** Each LT member should commit at least 40 hours per year to professional development activities that are based on professional requirements, needs or skills.

**Tenet 9.** Keep the community informed on City affairs; encourage communication between the citizens and all City officers; emphasize friendly and courteous service to the public; and seek to improve the quality and image of public service.

**Tenet 10.** Resist any encroachment on professional responsibilities, believing LT should be free to carry out official policies without interference, and handle each problem without discrimination on the basis of principle and justice.

## **GUIDELINE**

**Information Sharing.** LT should openly share information with the governing body while diligently carrying out LT's responsibilities as set forth in the City charter.

**Tenet 11.** Handle all matters of personnel on the basis of merit so that fairness and impartiality govern LT decisions, pertaining to pay adjustments, promotions, and discipline.

## **GUIDELINE**

**Equal Opportunity.** All decisions pertaining to pay adjustments, promotions, and discipline should prohibit discrimination because of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, sexual orientation, political affiliation, disability, age, or marital status. It should be the LT's personal and professional responsibility to actively recruit and hire a diverse staff throughout their departments/work systems.

**Tenet 12.** Public office is a public trust. LT members shall not leverage his or her position for personal gain or benefit.

## **GUIDELINES**

**Gifts.** LT shall not directly or indirectly solicit, accept or receive any gift if it could reasonably be perceived or inferred that the gift was intended to influence them in the performance of their official duties; or if the gift was intended to serve as a reward for any official action on their part. The term "Gift" includes but is not limited to services, travel, meals, gift cards, tickets, or other entertainment or hospitality. Gifts of money or loans from persons other than the City jurisdiction pursuant to normal employment practices are not acceptable.

LT should not accept any gift that could undermine public confidence. De minimus gifts may be accepted in circumstances that support the execution of the member's official duties or serve a legitimate public purpose. In those cases, the LT member should determine a modest maximum dollar value based on guidance from the governing body or any applicable state or local law. The guideline is not intended to apply to normal social practices, not associated with LT's official duties, where gifts are exchanged among friends, associates and relatives.

**Investments in Conflict with Official Duties.** LT should refrain from any investment activity which would compromise the impartial and objective performance of their duties. LT should not invest or hold any investment, directly or indirectly, in any financial business, commercial, or other private transaction that creates a conflict of interest, in fact or appearance, with their official duties.

In the case of real estate, the use of confidential information and knowledge to further a LT member's personal interest is not permitted. Purchases and sales which might be interpreted as speculation for quick profit should be avoided (see the guideline on "Confidential Information"). Because personal investments may appear to influence official actions and decisions, or create the appearance of impropriety, LT should disclose or dispose of such investments prior to accepting a position in a local government. Should the conflict of interest arise during employment, the LT member should make full disclosure and/or recuse themselves prior to any official action by the governing body that may affect such investments.

This guideline is not intended to prohibit an LT member from having or acquiring an interest in, or deriving a benefit from any investment when the interest or benefit is due to ownership by the member or the LT member's family of a de minimus percentage of a corporation traded on a recognized stock exchange even though the corporation or its subsidiaries may do business with the City.

**Personal Relationships.** In any instance where there is a conflict of interest, appearance of a conflict of interest, or personal financial gain of an LT member by virtue of a relationship with any individual, spouse/partner, group, agency, vendor or other entity, the member shall disclose the relationship to the organization. For example, if the member has a relative that works for a developer doing business with the City, that fact should be disclosed.

**Confidential Information.** LT shall not disclose to others, or use to advance their personal interest, intellectual property, confidential information, or information that is not yet public knowledge, that has been acquired by them in the course of their official duties. Information that may be in the public domain or accessible by means of an open records request, is not confidential.

**Private Employment.** LT should not engage in, solicit, negotiate for, or promise to accept private employment, nor should they render services for private interests or conduct a private business when such employment, service, or business creates a conflict with or impairs the proper discharge of their official duties.

Teaching, lecturing, writing, or consulting are typical activities that may not involve conflict of interest, or impair the proper discharge of their official duties. Prior notification of the appointing authority is appropriate in all cases of outside employment.

**Representation.** LT should not represent any outside interests before any agency, whether public or private, except with the authorization of or at the direction of the appointing authority they serve.

**Endorsements.** LT should not endorse commercial products or services by agreeing to use their photograph, endorsement, or quotation in paid or other commercial advertisements, marketing materials, social media, or other documents, whether the member is compensated or not for the member's support.

Members may, however, provide verbal professional references as part of the due diligence phase of competitive process or in response to a direct inquiry.

LT may agree to endorse the following, provided they do not receive any compensation: (1) books or other publications; (2) professional development or educational services provided by nonprofit membership organizations or recognized educational institutions; (3) products and/or services in which the City has a direct economic interest.

LT member observations, opinions, and analyses of commercial products used or tested by the City are appropriate and useful to the profession when included as part of professional articles and reports.

COPYRIGHT © 2017 BY THE INTERNATIONAL CITY/COUNTY MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.



## City of Arvada Code of Ethics

**The mission of the City of Arvada is a dedication to delivering superior services and enhancing the lives of everyone in our community. To further this mission, certain principles, as enforced by the Rules of Procedure, shall govern the conduct of every member of the Leadership Team (LT), who shall:**

1. Be dedicated to the concepts of effective and democratic local government by responsible elected officials and believe that professional general management is essential to the achievement of this objective.
2. Affirm the dignity and worth of the services rendered by government and maintain a constructive, creative, and practical attitude toward City affairs and a deep sense of social responsibility as a trusted public servant.
3. Be dedicated to the highest ideals of honor and integrity in all public and personal relationships in order that the LT may merit the respect and confidence of the elected officials, of other officials and employees, and of the public.
4. Serve the best interests of the people.
5. Submit policy proposals to elected officials; provide them with facts and advice on matters of policy as a basis for making decisions and setting community goals; and uphold and implement local government policies adopted by elected officials.
6. Recognize that elected representatives of the people are entitled to the credit for the establishment of City policies; responsibility for policy execution rests with the LT.
7. Refrain from all political activities which undermine public confidence in professional administrators. Refrain from participation in the election of LT members of the employing legislative body.



8. Make it a duty continually to improve the LT's professional ability and to develop the competence of associates in the use of management techniques.

9. Keep the community informed on City affairs; encourage communication between the citizens and all City officers; emphasize friendly and courteous service to the public; and seek to improve the quality and image of public service.

10. Resist any encroachment on professional responsibilities, believing the LT should be free to carry out official policies without interference, and handle each problem without discrimination on the basis of principle and justice.

11. Handle all matters of personnel on the basis of merit so that fairness and impartiality govern a LT's decisions pertaining to appointments, pay adjustments, promotions, and discipline.

12. Public office is a public trust. An LT member shall not leverage his or her position for personal gain or benefit.

---

Signature

Date

Adopted by the City of Arvada Leadership Team in 2018.