

PART II - CODE  
Chapter 2 - ADMINISTRATION  
ARTICLE VII. - ETHICS  
DIVISION 3. - CODE OF ETHICS  
Subdivision III. - City Code of Ethics

**Subdivision III. - City Code of Ethics**

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**Sec. 2-766. - Definitions.**

The following words, terms and phrases, when used in this article, shall have the meanings ascribed to them in this section, except where the context clearly indicates a different meaning:

*Board* applies to boards, commissions, authorities, and other public bodies that are subject to the provisions of the Home Rule Charter of the city, except the city council.

(Code 1956, § 22B-21)

**Cross reference**— Definitions generally, § 1-2.

**Sec. 2-767. - Application.**

The code of ethics for the city shall apply to all officials of the government of the city, whether elected or appointed; to all employees, whether classified or unclassified; and to members and/or employees of all boards, agencies, commissions, advisory committees, public trusts, and public benefit corporations of the city.

(Code 1956, § 22B-1)

**Sec. 2-768. - Purpose.**

The code of ethics is established to remind each public official and employee that individually and collectively, public officials and employees must adhere to high ethical standards not simply to avoid

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sanctions or criticism, but because it is the right thing to do. Standards and guidelines established by or pursuant to the code of ethics should be construed and implemented with sensitivity, integrity, and a good faith commitment to advance rather than evade or circumvent the evident or stated spirit and purpose of ethical rules. Public officials and employees should not give unduly narrow or legalistic constructions to specific provisions of applicable ethics codes, standards, or rules and regulations.

(Code 1956, § 22B-3)

**Sec. 2-769. - Responsibility of public office.**

Public officials and employees are agents of public purpose and hold office for the benefit of the public. They are bound to uphold the constitution of the United States and the constitution of this state and to carry out impartially the laws of the nation, state and city and thus to foster respect of all government. They are bound to observe in their official acts the highest standards of morality and to discharge faithfully the duties of their office regardless of personal considerations, recognizing that the public interest must be their primary concern.

(Code 1956, § 22B-2)

**Sec. 2-770. - Nonpartisanship and nondiscrimination.**

Public officials and employees should take action and make decisions based on the merits, objectively and without partisanship. In taking action and making decisions, public officials and employees should not discriminate against any person because of racial, ethnic, religious, political, sexual or personal prejudice or because of age, disability or sexual orientation.

(Code 1956, § 22B-4)

**Sec. 2-771. - Development of internal standards.**

Each department, board, office, or other agency of city government is encouraged to develop internal minimum standards of ethical conduct or behavior for situations or transactions that may be unique to the particular department, board, office or other agency. The opinions of employees and customers of the agency should be sought and used in the development of such internal standards, rules, regulations and guidelines for ethical conduct. Members of all boards and commissions of the city shall act as prudent administrators.

(Code 1956, § 22B-5)

**Sec. 2-772. - Freedom from reprisal and disclosure of improper acts.**

(a) Any public employee who reports information which the employee reasonably believes is a violation of any ordinance, statute, policy, order, rule, regulation or other ethical mandate shall be free from discipline or reprisal for reporting such acts of alleged impropriety. An employee with authority to hire and fire, supervisor, agency head, or elected official may not subject to reprisal any public employee because of such employee's efforts to disclose such acts of alleged impropriety.

(b) The provisions of this section are in addition to the protection afforded by the state code of governmental ethics and the rules of the city civil service commission to public employees who report acts of impropriety to the employee's agency head, civil service, the ethics review board, or the state board of ethics for elected officials or commission on ethics for public employees.

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(Code 1956, § 22B-6; M.C.S., Ord. No. 17,613, § 1, 6-20-96)

**Sec. 2-773. - Matters of public information.**

The state Public Records Law, R.S. 44:1 et seq. applies to public records of all departments, boards, offices and other agencies of city government. With certain exceptions, the records and documents in the possession of city government officials and employees are public records that citizens, the news media, and other interested parties are entitled to review and copy. When citizens make a request to review public documents, city officials and employees should respond with courtesy and as expeditiously as possible within the requirements of the state Public Records Law. Officials and employees who have questions as to whether particular information is confidential under the state Public Records Law should contact their supervisor or request assistance from the law department. The chief administrative officer shall advise all officials and employees of the provisions and requirements of the state Public Records Law.

(Code 1956, § 22B-7)

**Sec. 2-774. - Other laws, rules, and policies related to standards of conduct.**

City officials and employees should be generally aware that laws, rules, and policies established by the federal and state government and agencies thereof and by the chief administrative officer and supervisors in city government prescribe standards of conduct for government and city employees. Some of these rules, laws, and policies are the following:

- (1) The state Code of Governmental Ethics, R.S. 42:1101 et seq., popularly known as the State Ethics Code.
- (2) The state Dual Office Holding Law, R.S. 42:61 et seq.
- (3) Civil Service Law, La. Const., art. 10, and the rules of the city civil service commission.
- (4) Policy and circular memoranda issued by the chief administrative officer.
- (5) Departmental rules and regulations issued by department heads and supervisors.
- (6) The state Public Records Act, R.S. 44:1 et seq., sometimes referred to by citizens as the Freedom of Information Act.
- (7) The state Open Meetings Law, R.S. 42:4.1 et seq., popularly known as the Sunshine Law.

(Code 1956, § 22B-8)

**Sec. 2-775. - Dissemination of code of ethics.**

The provisions of the code of ethics for the city shall be distributed to each elected or appointed official and employee of the city. Upon election or appointment to office or employment with the city, all public servants shall be given a copy of the code of ethics. The chief administrative office shall establish rules providing for the dissemination of the code of ethics.

(Code 1956, § 22B-9)

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**Sec. 2-776. - Specific prohibitions.**

The provisions of sections 2-777 through 2-783 shall be considered as specific prohibitions applicable to city officials and/or employees and/or board members as the case may be.

(Code 1956, § 22B-21)

**Sec. 2-777. - Prohibited financial interests.**

No city officer or employee shall have a financial interest in any contract with the city, and no contract for professional or other services shall be awarded on the basis of fee kickbacks. For purposes of this section, the word "contract" shall include remunerative contracts to provide goods or services to the city or for public work and shall not include:

- (1) A contract with the city which a city official or employee is required to enter in order to receive state or federally-funded grants, loans or other public assistance, or
- (2) A sale of abandoned property, as defined by R.S. 33:4720.12(1), to a city employee, when said sale is approved by the mayor, the director of the department by which the employee is employed, and the city attorney, and when such sale is for the purposes of rehabilitation.

(Code 1956, § 22B-21(a); M.C.S., Ord. No. 20966, § 1, 2-6-03)

**Sec. 2-778. - Leases, concessions restricted.**

No lease or concession shall be granted to any corporation in which one or more city officers, employees, or board members hold or control the majority financial interest.

(Code 1956, § 22B-21(b))

**Sec. 2-779. - Borrowing from, interest in contractors.**

No member, officer or employee of a board shall borrow money or receive anything of value from any contractor doing business with the board. No member, officer or employee of a board shall have any interest in any contract let by the board of which he is a member.

(Code 1956, § 22B-21(c))

**Sec. 2-780. - Forfeiture of board membership.**

Any member of a board who shall qualify as a candidate for any public elective office or who shall accept an appointive office or position of public employment for which compensation is paid by the city shall forfeit membership on the board. The provisions of this paragraph shall not apply to ex officio board members nor to any board member who serves in such capacity by virtue of an elective office in city government.

(Code 1956, § 22B-21(d); M.C.S., Ord. No. 22810, § 1, 9-6-07)

**Sec. 2-781. - Political activities.**

With regard to employees in classified service, the provisions of section 4-1504 of the Charter and article 10, section 9 of the state constitution prohibit certain political activities.

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(Code 1956, § 22B-21(e))

**Sec. 2-782. - Recusal of board members.**

Except as otherwise provided in this subdivision, no member of a board, commission, advisory committee, or other entity covered by this article who is excepted from the provisions of R.S. 42:1112 of the state code of governmental ethics with regard to voting or participating in a transaction involving a charitable, religious, nonprofit educational, public service, or civic organization because of the provisions of R.S. 42:1123(1) shall vote on or participate in a transaction otherwise prohibited by R.S. 42:1112 and, in such a case, the member shall, verbally or in writing at a public meeting, announce his recusal from participation in the transaction and the reason for recusal. The intent of this section is to require recusal of board, commission, or committee members who serve on the boards of certain nonprofit corporations in cases where a conflict of interest arises. The provisions of this section shall not apply to the council. The council may provide in its rules and regulations for the recusal of its members.

(Code 1956, § 22B-21(f))

**Sec. 2-783. - When financial interests permitted.**

Nothing in this subdivision shall deprive city officials or employees from having a financial interest in any activity or enterprise which is not in conflict with their respective positions or with any provisions of this article, the city Code, the Charter, applicable civil service or departmental rules, or applicable state or federal law.

(Code 1956, § 22B-21)

**Sec. 2-784. - Filing complaints.**

(a) Any person may file a complaint concerning violations of this article with the ethics review board, the office of municipal investigation, or municipal court.

(b) Any qualified elector of the city may file a written complaint in the form of an affidavit with any member of the city council concerning violations of this article involving a member of the city council.

(c) Subject to the provisions of applicable law, members of the city council receiving complaints in the form prescribed in subsection (b) of this section may request an executive conference of all members of the city council to consider the complaint and may proceed in accordance with the Charter.

(d) Complaints concerning violations of this subdivision involving the mayor shall follow the same procedure as for those involving a councilmember, as authorized under section 3-124 of the Charter, except that a majority vote of the elected membership of the council shall be required to call a public hearing and to adopt a resolution of censure for violations under this subdivision.

(Code 1956, § 22B-30; M.C.S., Ord. No. 17,613, § 1, 6-20-96)

**Secs. 2-785—2-810. - Reserved.**