

TOWN OF GOUVERNEUR CODE OF ETHICS

Adopted JANUARY 11, 2012

A. Government officers and employees should strive to conduct themselves in accordance with the ethical principles set forth in the following Code of Ethics. In all actions, as a government officer or employee:

1. A Town officer or employee should serve the people and uphold the rule of law, always seeking to promote effective and democratic government.
2. A Town officer or employee shall demonstrate a dedication to the highest ideals of honor, honesty, and integrity, thereby promoting public confidence in the honor, honesty, and integrity of the government.
3. A Town officer or employee should make decisions and act solely on the basis of merit, with fairness and impartiality and in conformity with the law, and, except as provided by law, shall give no preference to anyone because of their wealth, position, or status or because of their relationship to the Town officer or employee personally.
4. A Town officer or employee shall impress upon all with whom the Town officer or employee deals with that the Town officer or employee performs his or her duties free of improper influence.
5. A Town officer or employee should show respect to the public, to his or her superiors, subordinates, and co-workers, and to all with whom the Town officer or employee deals with.
6. A Town officer or employee should give a full day's work for a full day's pay.
7. A Town officer or employee should maintain confidential information to which the Town officer or employee is privy as a result of his or her government position and shall never use or disclose that information for personal gain or private purposes.
8. A Town officer or employee should conserve public resources.
9. A Town officer or employee should make no private promises in carrying out his or her official duties, as his or her position is a public one.
10. A Town officer or employee should never solicit any gifts or favors and shall accept no gifts or favors that might compromise, or appear to compromise, his or her independence as a public servant.
11. A Town officer or employee should refrain from any personal, private, financial, business, or political activities that might undermine the public's confidence in the government and shall never use his or her official position for private gain.
12. A Town officer or employee should so conduct his or her private investments, private employment, and personal relationships and actions that they will never be in conflict with his or her official duties.
13. A Town officer or employee should resist any attempts by anyone to undermine the professionalism, honesty, and integrity of the public service.
14. A Town officer or employee should promptly inform the appropriate authority of any interests or actions by anyone that violates these principles.

B. It is the policy of the Town of Gouverneur Board that all officers and employees must avoid conflicts or potential conflicts of interest. A conflict or a potential conflict exists whenever an officer or employee has an interest, direct or indirect, which conflicts with their duty to the Town or which could adversely affect an individual's judgment in the

discharge of his or her responsibilities. All Town officers and employees shall comply with the following Ethics Code.

1. **Misuse of office.** A Town officer or employee may not take an action or fail to take an action as a government officer or employee if doing so might financially benefit

- (a) him or herself; or
- (b) a relative; or
- (c) any person or entity for which a Town officer or employee is an attorney, agent, broker, employee, officer, director, trustee, or consultant; or
- (d) any person or entity with which a Town officer or employee has a financial relationship; or
- (e) any person or entity with which a Town officer or employee had a financial relationship during the previous twelve months; or
- (f) any person or entity from which a Town officer or employee received a gift, or any goods or services for less than fair market value, during the previous twelve months; or
- (g) any person or entity that was a major campaign contributor during the previous twenty-four months.

2. **Misuse of government resources.** A Town officer or employee may not use government letterhead, personnel, equipment, supplies, or resources for a non-governmental purpose nor may a Town officer or employee do personal or private activities during times when he or she is required to work for the government.

3. **Gifts.**

- (a) A Town officer or employee may not request or accept a gift from any person or entity
 - (1) that the Town officer or employee knows, should know, or could reasonably learn, is doing business with the government or intends to do business with the government or has done business with the government during the previous twelve months, or
 - (2) that the Town officer or employee knows, should know, or could reasonably learn, has or is seeking a license, permit, grant, or benefit from the government.
- (b) A Town officer or employee also may not buy goods or services for less than fair market value from any of these persons or entities.

4. **Compensation.** A Town officer or employee may not request or accept any thing from any person or entity other than the government for doing his or her government job.

5. **Solicitation of subordinates.** A Town officer or employee may not knowingly ask, directly or indirectly, a subordinate to make contributions to any person, entity, or campaign or to do any political activity.

6. **Coercive political solicitation.** A Town officer or employee may not use his or her government position to make threats or promises for the purpose of trying to get anyone to do any political activity or make a political contribution.

7. **Political solicitation of vendors, contractors, and licensees.** A Town officer or

employee may not ask any person or entity that he or she knows, or could reasonably learn, does or intends to do business with the government or has or is seeking a license, permit, grant, or benefit from the government and a Town officer or employee may not ask any person he or she knows, or could reasonably learn, has done business with the government during the previous twelve months to make any political contribution or to do any political activity.

8. Political activity by high-level officials. If a Town officer or employee is an elected government official he or she may not directly or indirectly ask any Town employee to contribute to the political campaign of a Town officer or employee running for public office or to the political campaign of anyone running for elective government office.

9. Confidential information. A Town officer or employee may not disclose confidential information acquired in the course of his or her official duties or use such information to further his or her personal interest or use it for any non-government purpose, even after the Town officer or employee leaves government service.

10. Appearances and representation. A Town officer or employee may not communicate with his or her government agency on behalf of a private person or entity nor may a Town officer or employee represent a private person or entity in a matter that is before his or her government agency.

11. Prohibited outside positions. A Town officer or employee may not be an attorney, agent, broker, employee, officer, director, trustee, or consultant who will receive a direct personal benefit or direct financial gain for anyone that the Town officer or employee knows or should know is doing business or seeking to do business with the government.

12. Post-Town employment.

(a) A Town officer or employee may not seek or obtain any non-government employment or discuss possible future employment with anyone that is doing business with his or her Town agency.

(b) A Town officer or employee may never accept any thing to work on any particular matter that he or she personally and substantially worked on while with the Town.

(c) For one year after leaving Town service, a Town officer or employee may not accept any thing from any person or entity to communicate with his or her former agency of the Town.

Exclusion: Communications by former government officers or employees with his or her former government agency during the first year following termination of his or her government service is permissible where the former government officer or employee is a consultant directly to the former agency.

13. Prohibited ownership interests. A Town officer or employee may not own any part of a business or entity that the Town officer or employee knows, or could reasonably learn, is doing business or seeking to do business with the government or that the Town officer or employee knows, or could reasonably learn, has or is seeking a license, permit, grant, or benefit from the government nor may his or her spouse nor may any of his or her children who are less than 18 years old. Exclusion: An ownership interest or the dealing with the government otherwise prohibited shall not create a conflict of interest if

determined by rule of the Board of Ethics upon application.

14. Lawyers and experts. A Town officer or employee may not be a lawyer or expert against the government's interests; nor may a Town officer or employee receive any thing from anyone to act as a lawyer or expert against the government's interests. A Town officer should not encourage or promote legal action against the government.

15. Purchase of office. A Town officer or employee may not give or promise to give any thing to any person or entity for being elected or appointed to government service or for receiving a promotion or raise.

16. Hiring and supervision of relatives. No officer or employee of the Town shall hire or induce others to hire a relative of such officer or employee nor shall any officer or employee of the Town directly supervise or evaluate the work of any relative employed by the Town except:

- (a) as required by the Civil Service Law or rules promulgated there under; or
- (b) pursuant to a supervisory arrangement that began prior to the effective date of this subdivision; or

(c) with the written approval of the Board of Ethics. In determining whether to approve the request of an officer or employee to hire or supervise a relative, the Board shall consider, among other things, the nature of the relationship at issue and any steps that have been taken to ensure objectivity in any such hiring decision, salary determination, evaluations, recommendations for promotions and increases and other aspects of a supervisory relationship. Neither such request for Board approval nor the determination of the Board shall be confidential. Nothing in this subdivision, nor any approval issued by the Board pursuant to this subdivision, shall relieve an employee of the continuing requirement to exercise his job duties in the best interests of the County, without giving raises, promotions or other beneficial terms or conditions of employment based on private interests or personal relationships, and the Board may continue to enforce such requirement, as it deems appropriate, whether or not it has approved the hiring or supervision of a relative.

17. Avoidance of conflicts. A Town officer or employee may not knowingly request, negotiate for, or accept any interest, employment, or thing that would result in a violation of this Ethics Code.

18. Improper conduct. A Town officer or employee may not take any action or have any position or interest that conflicts with his or her government duties.

19. Inducement of others. A Town officer or employee may not cause, try to cause, or help another officer or employee of the government to do any thing that would violate any provision of this Ethics Code.

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