



City of Long Lake

Code of Conduct Policy for City Council and City Advisory Boards

Date of Adoption: _____, 2025

Policy Revised:

I. Purpose

Long Lake residents and businesses deserve a fair, ethical and accountable local government which earns the public's full confidence. Proper and efficient operation of municipal government requires that its public officials and appointed board members be independent, impartial and responsible to citizens and property owners; that municipal governmental decisions and policy are made in accordance with the procedures established by the City; and that municipal public office is never to be used for personal gain. Recognizing these goals, this Code of Conduct is established by Long Lake City Council for the members of the Council and all members appointed to City of Long Lake commissions and advisory boards to reflect a shared responsibility for maintaining a professional environment; providing standards for conduct in city matters; fostering a culture of trust, respect, and candor; committing to eliminating conflicts of interest; and for promoting the public's confidence and faith in the integrity of their City government.

II. Standards of Conduct

Members of the City Council, whether elected or appointed, as well as all members appointed to City commissions and advisory boards (collectively "Members" herein) shall comply with all applicable federal laws, state laws, City ordinances and resolutions, and City policies in the performance of their public duties. Members shall be patient, respectful, polite and courteous to each other, as well as to the public and to members of the City's staff. Recognizing these goals, this Code of Conduct Policy is established for the Members to include the standards of ethical conduct and rules of law set forth in this section.

- a. **Authority.** In statutory cities, powers are granted to City Councils and authority is conferred upon advisory boards as whole bodies, and not to individual members. Members may not represent a personal opinion or position to control that of the City Council, an advisory board, nor the City's government. Under most circumstances, Members cannot individually enforce City ordinances, resolutions or policies, and should refer any enforcement activities to appropriate City staff. Per Minn. Stat. 412.191, the Mayor is a full acting member of the City Council, but also acts as the presiding officer of Council meetings, represents the City ceremoniously, and executes official documents. Advisory boards are presided over by the appointed chair of that board.
- b. **Incompatible Office.** Members may not hold incompatible offices. Pursuant to Minn. Stat. 412.02, subd. 1a and as it may be amended, neither the Mayor nor any City Council member

may be employed by the city. For purposes of this subdivision, "employed" refers to full-time permanent employment. Part-time positions must be analyzed for compatibility of the two positions.

- c. **Conduct at Meetings.** To be effective, Members must come to meetings with an open mind, prepared to think strategically about City issues, and willing to delegate details of implementations to City staff. Members shall not use cell phones, laptops, or any telecommunication device to communicate with others regarding any matters of City business during public meetings, and such devices shall be silenced. Members may not encourage or participate in behavior or communications in a manner that may erode order and decorum at a meeting. Members will not act in an insulting, bullying, belittling, or patronizing manner; and violence or the threat of violence will not be tolerated at any time.
- d. **Open Meeting Law.** Public deliberations and processes regarding City business shall be conducted openly and in a transparent manner, subject to Minnesota's Open Meeting Law (Minn. Stat. Chapter 13D). Members shall not violate the Open Meeting Law.
- e. **Conflict of Interest.** Members shall not participate in a matter before the City Council that affects the Member's financial interests or those of a business with which the Member is associated, unless the effect on the Member or business is no greater than on other Members of the same business classification, profession, or occupation. Though often not prohibited by state law, interested Members should also seek to abstain from any matter in which the specific circumstances may compromise a Member's objectivity. Members should disclose all conflicts of interest and potential conflicts of interest to the board on which they sit and abstain from the board's discussion, debate, and vote upon a matter under review, if a conflict is determined to exist.
- f. **Gifts / Donations.** Members shall not use their public position for personal gain, or to solicit personal gifts or favors. Under Minn. Stat. 471.895, Members may not receive gifts from any "interested person" in conjunction with their duties. A "gift" is defined as money, real or personal property, a service, loan, a forbearance or forgiveness of debt, or a promise of future employment, that is given and received without the giver receiving something of equal or greater value in return. An "interested person" means a person, a representative of a person, or an association that has a direct financial interest in a decision that a Member is authorized to make. Members are to remain mindful that virtually every resident or person doing business in the City could have a direct financial interest in a decision. Except as specifically permitted pursuant to Minn. Stat. 471.895, Members may not accept or receive any gift of substance in any form and under any circumstance.

Gifts may be made to the City of Long Lake as a municipal government, but all such gifts must be accepted by resolution of the City Council adopted at a public meeting.

- g. **Disclosure of Information.** Members may not disclose to the public any information that was gained through their position if the information was not classified as public data or was discussed at a closed session; nor may any Member disclose information received, discussed, or decided in conference or consult with the City's legal counsel that is protected by the attorney-client privilege unless a majority of the City Council has authorized the disclosure.

- h. **Working With the Community.** The overarching principles for working with the community held by the City Council and all City advisory boards are to:
- Never grant any special consideration, treatment, privilege, or advantage;
 - Respect the sensitivity of personal information;
 - Be available to all parties on an equal basis;
 - Keep the common good as the highest purpose to focus on achieving constructive solutions for the public benefit;
 - At meetings, honor the applicable board's rules regarding public comment or testimony, clearly communicate the rules, and listen to what the public has to say;
 - Be cautious not to prejudge or decide on an issue before the board has had a chance to deliberate as a body; and to
 - Maintain awareness of the role of an individual Member versus the role of the board when participating in community meetings or events.
- i. **Intergovernmental Relations.** City Council members shall represent positions approved by the Council to the best of their ability when working with legislative bodies, federal or state agencies, the school board, Hennepin County, or other local governmental unit. If an individual City Council member's opinion differs from the City's position, or differs from a matter agreed upon by the full Council, when offering that opinion members shall explicitly state that they do not represent their City Council or the City of Long Lake, nor will they allow the inference that they do. Advisory board members are not authorized to make positional statements on behalf of the City Council and care shall be taken by advisory members when expressing a position to accurately clarify whether such position is that of the individual member or of the board on which the member sits.
- j. **Fair Treatment for Employees.** Members shall not cause City employees to suffer recriminations, abuse, or humiliation for acting in a forthright, proper, honest and candid manner in performing their duties. Members shall treat employees with respect and not attempt to dictate the precise details by which employees perform their duties.
- k. **City Logo.** Members shall not use the City's name or any City logo for personal or private benefit, or for the purpose of endorsing any particular business or political candidate. Members may not modify any City logo in any way.
- l. **Use of Public Property.** No Member shall request or permit the use of City-owned vehicles, equipment, materials or property for personal convenience or profit, except when such items are available to the public generally or are provided by the City for the Member's use while in the conduct of City business.

III. **Compliance and Enforcement**

This Code of Conduct Policy expresses standards of ethical conduct expected by and for Members of the Long Lake City Council and all City advisory boards. Members themselves have the primary responsibility to assure the public that ethical standards are understood and met, and that the public can continue to have full confidence in the integrity of their local government. Members agree to hold themselves and each other accountable, and when there is a suspected violation of either the law or this Policy, any Member may file a written complaint with the City Administrator

alleging a violation has occurred. The complaint must contain supporting facts for the allegation. Upon receipt of a written complaint, the City Administrator shall engage the City's legal counsel to review the complaint and offer an advisory opinion or initiate an investigation. The City Council may hold a hearing within 30 days after a written complaint has been received by the City Administrator or upon the Council's own volition. The Member accused must have the opportunity to be heard at any such hearing. If, after a hearing, the City Council finds that a violation of law or standard has occurred or does exist, the Council may censure the member, refer the matter for criminal prosecution, direct the Member not to participate in a decision, or other action as deemed appropriate in consultation with the City's legal counsel.

IV. Policy Subject to Change

This Policy is created at the discretion of the City Council and is subject to change or termination at any time by majority vote of the Long Lake City Council.