

Sec. 2-56. - Ethical standards.

- (a) *Declaration of policy*. It is declared that high ethical standards among city officers and employees are essential to the conduct of good representative government and that a code of ethics for the guidance of public officers and employees will help them avoid conflicts and will promote and strengthen the confidence of the residents of the city in their public officers and employees. The purpose of this section is to establish guidelines for ethical standards of conduct for all city officers and employees by setting forth those acts or actions that are incompatible with the public interest and which compromise, or appear to compromise public trust in the fairness, independence and integrity of city officers and employees and their official actions.
- (b) *Definitions*. The following words, terms and phrases, when used in this section, shall have the meanings ascribed to them in this subsection, except where the context clearly indicates a different meaning:

Public employee means any person excluded from the definition of a public officer who is employed by the city.

Public officer means those persons serving a statutory elected or appointed office, and all members of boards, committees and commissions of the city, whether paid or unpaid.

- (c) *Adoption of statutes*. The provisions of the following-listed statutes, including any future revisions or amendments thereto, describing and defining regulations with respect to the conduct and ethics of government officials, employees and candidates, including the penalty to be imposed and the procedure for prosecution, are hereby adopted and, by reference, made a part of this section as if fully set forth herein. Any act required to be performed or prohibited by any of the following-listed statutes incorporated herein by reference is required or prohibited by this section. Statutes adopted:
- (1) Wis. Stats. § 19.59, Codes of ethics for local government officials, employees and candidates.
 - (2) Wis. Stats. § 946.10, Bribery of public officers and employees.
 - (3) Wis. Stats. § 946.11, Special privileges for public utilities.
 - (4) Wis. Stats. § 946.12, Misconduct in public office.
 - (5) Wis. Stats. § 946.13, Private interest in public contract prohibited.
- (d) *Specific conflicts of interest*.
- (1) *Use of public property*. No public officer or public employee shall use or permit the use of city vehicles, equipment, materials or property for personal convenience or profit, except when such items are available for use by the public generally or except when the use of such items is authorized by the council.
 - (2) *Conflicts of interest and disclosure of interest*. Except as provided herein, no public

officer or public employee shall engage in any business transaction with the city, or have a financial or other personal interest, direct or indirect, which is incompatible with the proper discharge of his official duties or which will tend to impair his independence or judgment or action in the performance of his official duties. Any public officer or employee who has a substantial financial interest, including employment, in any business entity entering into, proposing to enter into or bidding on any transaction with the city, or as part of his official duties will be making an official decision or recommendation significantly affecting a business competitor, client or regular customer, shall disclose such interest to the council (or committee, board or commission thereof as appropriate) to be recorded in the minutes of that body. Upon such disclosure, it is advised that the public officer or employee abstain from voting on the matter and from participating in the discussion of the matter.

- (3) *Representing private interests.* No public officer or public employee, including persons or firms engaged to provide professional services to the city, shall represent, for compensation, private interests before the city council or any city board, commission or committee without disclosure of the private business relationship and explicit consent of the council.
- (4) *Disclosure of confidential information .* No public officer or public employee shall, without proper authorization of the city council, disclose confidential information concerning the property, government or affairs of the city nor shall he use such information to advance financial or private interest of himself or others.
- (5) *Gifts and favors.* No public officer or public employee shall accept anything of value whether in the form of gift, service, loan or promise from any person, who, to the knowledge of the public officer or public employee, has a direct financial interest in any transaction or official business with the city, which may tend to impair the public officer's or public employee's independence of judgment or action in the performance of his official duties. It is not, however, a conflict of interest for any public officer or employee to receive a gift of gratuity that is an unsolicited item of nominal intrinsic value.
- (6) *Award and administration of contracts .* No employee, officer or agent of the city shall participate in the selection, award, or administration of a contract if a conflict of interest, real or apparent, would be involved. Examples of such conflicts would arise when the employee, officer or agent, or any member of their immediate family or their partner, or an organization which employs, or is about to employ, any of them, has a financial or other interest in a firm to whom a city contract is awarded. No city employee, officer or agent shall solicit or accept gratuities, favors or anything of monetary value from existing or potential contractors or subcontractors.