

 City of WHITewater		Ethics Policy			
Owner:	HR Manager	Approving Position:	Common Council	Pages:	3
Issue Date:	12/22/2011	Revision Date:	12/23/2021	Review Date:	
Special Instructions:	Previously part of the Employee Conduct and Ethics Policy which are now separate policies				

I. PURPOSE

Because Whitewater believes strongly in good government, the City Council has passed an ordinance that provides that the business of the City and thus the conduct of its employees be ethical. This means that employees must be impartial and responsible to the citizens of Whitewater and decisions and policies are best made through the proper channels of open government. It means that public employees should not use their positions for personal gain. It means that Whitewater wants its citizens to have confidence in the integrity of its government. Whitewater has created an Ethics Committee that through due process handles complaints regarding ethics violations.

II. GUIDELINES

A. Ethical Standards for Employees - The following is a listing of guidelines that establish ethical standards for employees.

1. Responsibility of Public Office - Employees are bound to uphold the law, to observe the highest standards of law in the exercise of the duties of their positions, and they should faithfully discharge their duties without bias, and they must put the public interest first at all times.
2. Dedicated Service- Employees should be loyal to the objectives expressed by the voters and the programs developed to attain these objectives and employees shall adhere to the rules of work and performance established as the standard for their positions.
3. Fair and Equal Treatment – No employee shall request or permit unauthorized use of City owned vehicles, equipment, materials or property for personal convenience or profit. No employee shall grant any special consideration, treatment, or advantage to any citizen beyond that which is available to every other citizen.

Employee Conduct and Ethics

4. Conflict of Interest – No employee shall in the discharge of their duties be involved in any business or transaction directly or indirectly in which they have a financial or personal interest.
5. Specific Conflicts Enumerated – No employee shall engage in or accept private employment or render any service for private interest when such employment or service is incompatible with the proper discharge of official duties or would tend to impair independence of judgment or action in the performance of official duties, unless otherwise permitted by law and unless disclosure is made as hereinafter provided.
6. Disclosure of Confidential Information – No employee shall without proper authorization, disclose confidential information concerning the property, government or affairs of the City, nor shall such information be used to advantage the financial or other private interests of the employee or others.
7. Gifts and Favors
 - a. No employee shall accept any gift whether in the form of service, loan, thing, or promise, from any person which may tend to impair their independence of judgment or action in the performance of their duties or provide in the discharge of their duties any improper favor, service or thing of value. (Gifts received by an employee under unusual circumstances should be referred to the Ethics Committee within ten (10) days of receipt for recommended disposition.) EXCEPTION: Advertising or promotional items having a value of ten dollars (\$10.00) or less per gift shall be exempt.
 - b. No employee may solicit or accept, either directly or indirectly, from any person or organization, money or anything of value if it could reasonably be expected to influence the employee's official actions or judgments or be considered a reward for any action or inaction on the part of the employee.
 - c. An employee is not to accept hospitality if, after consideration of the surrounding circumstances, it could reasonably be concluded that such hospitality would not be extended were it not for the fact that the guest, or a member of the guest's immediate family, was an employee.
8. Representing Private Interest Before City Agencies or Courts - No employee shall appear on behalf of any private person (other than him or herself, his or her spouse, or minor children) before any City Agency, Board, Commission, or the Common Council if the employee or any Board, Commission, or Committee of which the employee is a member has any jurisdiction, discretion, or control over the matter which is the subject of such representation.
9. Ad Hoc Committee Exception – No violation of this Section shall exist, however, where an individual serves on an ad hoc committee charged with the responsibility or addressing an issue or topic in which that individual or the employee or client of that

Employee Conduct and Ethics

individual, has an interest so long as the individual discloses to the ad hoc committee that such interest exists.

10. Contracts with the City – No employee who in their official capacity participates in the making of a contract in which the employee has a private pecuniary interest, direct or indirect, or performs in regard to that contract with some function requiring the exercise of discretion on their part, shall enter into any contract with the City unless it falls within the confines of WI State Statutes or the following: The contract is awarded through a process of public notice and competitive bidding or the Common Council waives the requirement of this section after determining that this is the best interest of the City to do so. Or, the contract is for the designation of a public depository of public funds.
11. Any employee who has a financial or personal interest in any proposed legislative action of the Common Council or any Board, Commission, or Committee upon which the employee has any influence or input or of which the employee is a member that is to make a recommendation or decision upon any item which is the subject of the proposed legislative action shall disclose on the records of the Common Council or the appropriate Board, Commission or Committee the nature and extent of such interest.