

# City of Irving Policies and Procedures

## Ethics

### POLICY

This policy is to set forth guidelines for ethical behavior and does not purport to be all inclusive. All elected officials, Council appointees and employees of the City of Irving have a responsibility to Irving citizens to conduct City business in an ethical manner, safeguard all assets of the municipality, and comply with all applicable federal and state laws, the City of Irving Charter, and local rules and regulations. Additionally, the City Council may require appointed boards and commissions to adhere to this policy.

### PROCEDURE

All employees must be familiar with and conform to all standards of conduct as detailed in this policy and this manual.

Examples of ethical behavior include honesty, integrity, fairness, loyalty, respect, and accountability. Conversely, non-ethical values include dishonesty and placing personal happiness, status, or gain above the good of the many.

The questions below focus on the pertinent aspects of ethical behavior and provide a quick test with which employees should judge situations:

- Is the action legal?
- Is it right?
- Who will be affected?
- Does it fit the City of Irving values?
- How will I feel afterwards?
- How will it look in the newspaper?
- Will it reflect poorly on the City of Irving?

Employees and officials faced with a situation they are unsure of how to handle should ask for guidance from their manager, Human Resources or the City Attorney's Office.

The appearance of wrongdoing can sometimes be as damaging to an organization as actual wrongdoing. City officials and employees must always be aware of how their actions may be perceived even if their behavior is innocent and their intentions are good.

### ETHICAL STANDARDS

1. A City official or employee shall obey and shall not engage in any conduct prohibited by the laws of the United States, Texas, or any other state or political subdivision wherein the conduct of the employee occurred.

2. A City official or employee shall not accept or solicit any gift, favor, or service that might reasonably tend to influence him or her in the discharge of official duties or that the official or employee knows or should know is being offered with the intent to influence his or her official conduct.
3. A City official or employee shall not intentionally or knowingly solicit, accept, or agree to accept any benefit for having exercised his or her official powers or performed his or her official duties in favor of another.
4. A City official or employee shall not transact any business in his or her official capacity with any business entity of which he or she is related, an officer, agent, or member, or in which the official or employee owns a substantial interest. Substantial interest is defined in Texas Local Government Code, Chapter 171.002.
5. A City official or employee shall not disclose confidential information acquired by reason of his or her official position.
6. A City official or employee shall not use privileged information obtained in the course of his or her duties for personal benefit.
7. A City employee shall conduct himself or herself in accordance with the Conflict of Interest policy contained in this manual. City officials shall conduct themselves in accordance with the Conflict of Interest requisites of Texas Local Government Code, Chapter 171.
8. A City official shall make the required disclosures under Chapter 171 of the Texas Local Government Code.
9. A City official or employee shall not make personal investments that could reasonably be expected to create a substantial conflict between this private interest and the public interest. Financial interest can arise from property ownership, business investment, leadership in a business entity or receipt of income and gifts.
10. A City official or employee shall not accept other employment or compensation that could reasonably be expected to impair independence of judgment in the performance of his City duties. It is never permissible to accept a gift in cash or cash equivalent such as stocks, or other forms of marketable securities of any amount. A City employee is expected to comply with the Gifts and Gratuities policy contained in this manual.
11. A City official or employee shall not discriminate against or favor any individual on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, genetics, disability, or any other legally protected category with regard to appointed positions or employment with the City.
12. A City official or employee shall not engage in sexual or any other prohibited harassment as defined in the City's policy contained in this manual (Sexual and Other Prohibited Harassment).
13. A City official or employee shall not use City property, equipment, or supplies for personal reasons. Incidental use of City of Irving property (such as telephones, computers, and Internet access) is permissible, provided such use complies with applicable policies and does not result in additional cost to the City or hinder work performance.
14. A City official or employee is expected to serve as a model of leadership and civility to the community and treat all members of the public, each other, and the issues before them with respect. In order to promote the highest standards of respect and integrity, all City officials and employees should practice civility and decorum in discussions, debates and, in dealing with both the public and coworkers. Courtesy and respect build goodwill and are vital for establishing a healthy work environment. A City official or employee should treat others as they would like to be treated.
15. A City official or employee shall maintain accurate business documents and records. No one may knowingly enter false information on a document. No one without the authority to do so may alter, destroy, or expunge information on any record or document.

16. A City official or employee shall be familiar with and conform to the City of Irving's policy on Fraud, Waste and Abuse.
17. A City official or employee shall immediately report any suspected violation of this policy in accordance with the complaint procedure outlined herein.

### **COMPLAINT PROCEDURE**

Any person who believes a violation of this policy has occurred should immediately report the matter to one of the following:

- Immediate Supervisor and/or Department Manager or Director
- Fraud, Waste and Abuse Hotline (888) 223-9524
- City Internal Auditor (972) 721-4842
- Employee Relations (972) 721-2696-3514
- City Attorney (972) 721-2541
- City Manager (972) 721-2521

Persons who call the Fraud Hotline may remain anonymous. Information provided by the caller will be treated as confidential and privileged to the extent permitted by law.

Reports of suspected violations should contain as much detail as possible since facts and documentation will aid in the investigation.

### **INVESTIGATION**

Reported complaints will be investigated by one or more of the following: Internal Auditor, Employee Hotline Committee, Human Resources, City Attorney's Office, City Manager, Mayor and/or City Council. The appropriate personnel shall conduct and/or direct a timely and impartial investigation. If necessary, outside investigators may be used. Relevant evidence shall be gathered and evaluated, and a recommendation made regarding the appropriate remedy and/or disciplinary action.

### **RETALIATION**

Retaliation against employees or officials who make a good faith charge or report of conduct prohibited by this policy is prohibited. Acts of retaliation must be reported immediately as set out above.

### **RESPONSIVE ACTION**

Misconduct under this policy will be dealt with appropriately. Discipline will be imposed upon any employee who is found to have engaged in conduct prohibited by this policy. Likewise, disciplinary action will be imposed in situations where claims of prohibited conduct were false, fabricated or exaggerated. Misconduct by officials and/or commission and board members will be handled in accordance with appropriate laws, procedures, and/or provisions for the specific board or commission.