

CHAPTER XXVI CODE OF ETHICS

SECTION I PURPOSE

The purpose of this code is to provide an educational tool and to establish guidelines and community expectations for the ethical standards of conduct for town officials, board members and employees. ¹¹

- Town officials, board members and employees (defined as an elected town official, a volunteer appointed by the Town Council, and a person who is an employee of the Town, one who is paid for their service, but who is not an independent contractor - individually and collectively know hereafter as Community Officials) shall act in the best interest of the town. ¹⁰
- Community Officials shall remove themselves from decision making if they have a conflict of interest. (A conflict is when a Community Official votes or acts on a matter in which they have a direct, immediate and definite personal and pecuniary interest, which is capable of being demonstrated.) ^{1,8}
- Community Officials shall be impartial, and responsible to the community in their actions. ^{10,11}
- The town's official decisions and policies shall be made through the proper channels of government as established by the Town Charter and Ordinances, and State Statutes. ^{1,8}
- Public office, a volunteer position or town employment shall not be used for personal gain. ^{1,7,8,9,10}

This code establishes guidelines and expectations regarding potential ethical issues, and it establishes a course of action for bringing complaints.

C. Town Councilors and Town Manager: To avoid any actual or perceived conflict of interest in the awarding of business and contracts with the Town, no person serving as a Town Councilor or Town Manager shall take part at any stage in any negotiations, or vote on any contract or agreement between the Town and any individual or entity in which he/she or his/her immediate family has any direct or indirect financial or gainful interest, however small. Compliance with this provision shall be a condition of holding office pursuant to Article 6 of the Town Charter.

- D. Immediate Family: “Immediate family” is defined for purposes of this policy to include spouse, civil union partner, children, parents, stepparents, stepchildren, brothers, sisters, half-brothers, half-sisters, immediate in-laws, grandparents, grandchildren, or other person living in the household of the prospective employee, Town employee, elected official, elected or appointed member of any Town board or commission, or Town Manager.
- E. Effective Date: The provisions of this policy shall become effective on passage by the Town Council and shall apply to all those elected, appointed or employed in any capacity by the Town after date of passage. The Town Manager shall take appropriate measures to limit the circumstances under which employees are supervised by members of their immediate family. To the extent such conflicts cannot be avoided, the Town Manager shall review and approve any performance evaluations, disciplinary actions, or changes in job status in order to assure that the public’s interests are served.

SECTION III CODE PROVISIONS

A. No Conflicts of Interest

Community Officials of the Town shall avoid conflicts of interest. In such instances, you shall recuse yourself from discussion and decision-making. (Recusal means to remove yourself completely from all further participation in the matter in question.) 1.8

Community Officials or members of their families having professions outside their relationship with the Town that routinely do business with the Town of Londonderry shall not be awarded any work, of any value, except that it be done through a complete and open competitive procurement process. (Family is defined as a Community Official's lineal ascendants, lineal descendants, adoptions, siblings and offspring, a Community Official's spouse, the spouse's lineal ascendants, lineal descendants, adoptions, siblings and offspring, members of the same household, and participants in a Civil Union as defined under RSA 457-A.) **2.8.9**

B. A Duty to Recuse in Quasi-Judicial Actions

C. A Duty to Disclose

D. No Unfair Personal Use of Town Property

E. No Misuse of Confidential Information

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F. No Improper Gifts

G. A Duty to Cooperate

All Community Officials shall cooperate with the Appointing Authority regarding any complaint or inquiry alleging violation of this Code of Ethics.

Any resident of the Town who believes that a Community Official has violated this Ordinance may report the alleged violation to the Community Official's Appointing Authority using the attached form. The Appointing Authority is:

- A. For all employees, the Town Manager ¹³
- B. For the Town Manager, the Town Council ¹³
- C. For all appointed board, committee and commission members, the Town Council ¹²
- D. For a member of an Elected Body, the Elected Body on which the member serves. An elected body, other than the Town Council¹⁵, has no disciplinary authority over the actions of its individual members. Citizens, however may utilize Section 7.6 of the Town Charter, Recall of Officeholders. ⁶

The Appointing Authority shall investigate alleged violations and act as appropriate within the procedures established within state statute, the Town's Personnel Policy and/or Collective Bargaining Agreements.

This Ordinance shall be made available to all Community Officials upon their submittal of a letter of interest to serve the community or filing for elective office. Upon election or appointment, the Community Official shall then sign a form acknowledging receipt of same. At least annually, the Town Council shall schedule sessions with Community Officials to review this Ordinance.

The provisions of this Code of Ethics shall not be interpreted so as to prevent:

- A. Any Community Official who is a resident of the Town of Londonderry from fully participating in any Town Meeting;
- B. Acceptance of donations for the expressed purpose of financing a political campaign, provided such contributions are reported in accordance with all state and federal laws which pertain to such donations; 9
- C. Participation in a matter which relates to a person or business from which a Community Official has merely purchased goods or services, if the individual in question has no other conflict of interest relating to that person or business;
- D. Police officers, fire fighters, and other emergency personnel from acting in the course of their official capacities when responding to emergencies in accordance with the rules and regulations of their departments; and,
- E. Supervisors of Town employees from appropriately carrying out personnel policies.
- F. Any Community Official who provides volunteer services to a charitable organization from participating in a matter which involves an individual who may have made a contribution to that charitable organization. (Adopted 09-15-08)

Employees and volunteers under the direction of the Leach Library Board of Library Trustees, and Community Officials elected, hired or appointed by the Londonderry School District, School Board and/or Superintendent are not subject to the provisions of this code.

This Code is adopted pursuant to RSA 31:39-a; which requires that affected officers and employees shall be exempt from the provisions of this Ordinance. The exemption shall be for a period no less than one year. As all of this Code's provisions are rooted in current state statutes or current local ordinance, this provision does not allow community officials to rely upon the exemption and disregard the underlying regulation.

1. **Town Charter, Article 6, Conduct of Officials**
2. **Town Charter, Section 6.3 Disqualification from Decision Making Process**
3. **Town Charter, Section 6.4 Private Use of Town Property and Personnel**
4. **Town Charter, Section 6.7 Misuse of Information**
5. **Town Charter, Section 6.5 Acceptance of Gifts and Gratuities**
6. **Town Charter, Section 7.6 Recall of Officeholder**
7. **Municipal Code, Title VI, Chapter XXV, Fraud Policy**
8. **Municipal Code, Title VI, Chapter VI, Section X Ethics in Public Purchasing**
9. **RSA 640 Corrupt Practices**
10. **RSA 643 Abuse of Office**
11. **RSA 31:39-a, Conflict of Interest Ordinance**
12. **RSA 673:13 Removal of Members, Local Land Use Boards**
13. **Town Charter, Article 4, Town Manager**
14. **Town Charter, Section 6.2 Conflicts of Interest**
15. **Town Charter, Section 3.3 B. Removal of Councilors**

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