



## **City of Atlanta Board of Ethics Code of Conduct**

### **1. Guiding Principles**

To assure public confidence, the City of Atlanta Board of Ethics commits itself to:

- encourage and promote integrity in government by education and example
- fairly interpret and enforce the city's ethics laws
- conduct all business in a timely and open manner
- make decisions in the city's best interest without consideration of financial or personal interests
- follow the spirit of the ethics law and avoid the appearance of impropriety in conducting official city business
- treat persons appearing before it equally and with courtesy, respect, and honesty
- manage disagreement and conflict with civility

### **2. Acting in city's best interest**

Board members are committed to bringing the City into compliance with the Code of Ethics and instilling a culture of ethics within city government. They will support the mission, goals, and work of the board; instill in the public a sense of confidence about their work; and strive to reach the right decisions in interpreting and enforcing the Code of Ethics.

### **3. Avoiding the appearance of impropriety**

Board members will refrain from using their official position to secure special advantage or benefit for themselves or others and seek to avoid situations that may give the impression of impropriety. When uncertain about the right thing to do, they will seek guidance from the board and ethics officer.

### **4. Public education**

Board members will strive to educate the public about the board's role, decisions, and opinions, keep their appointing authority informed about the work of the board, and explain the board's functions and procedures to citizens.

### **5. No acceptance of gifts from city officials and employees**

Board members agree they will not seek any favor or accept any personal gain that would influence, or appear to influence, the conduct of their official duties. They agree that they will not accept any gratuity from any city official or employee.

### **6. Handling of conflicts of interest**

Board members will seek to participate in every official action of the board. Board members will not knowingly vote or participate in any matter in which they have a financial or personal interest or when they believe that it would be inappropriate to participate due to special circumstances. The member will publicly disclose the nature of the disqualifying interest at the meeting in which the matter is considered, abstain from voting or participating in the matter, and complete a Conflict of Interest Disclosure Report online within seven days of the meeting. Any board member who is disqualified from participating on three separate matters within any 12-month period will consider whether continued service on the board is in the best interest of the City.

## **7. Fair and impartial hearings**

To ensure an impartial and fair hearing, board members agree that they will not publicly discuss specific complaints that have been filed with the Ethics Office or matters that may come before the Board of Ethics and will not prejudge any matter prior to the hearing.

## **8. Doing business with the City**

Board members will attempt to refrain from entering into any contract to provide goods and services to the City of Atlanta or representing private interests or persons before any city agency. Prior to their engaging in business with the City or appearing before a city agency, board members will ask the board and ethics officer for help in identifying any potential conflict of interest and setting reasonable conditions on their work with the City. Members understand that other persons employed at their firm, company, or college retain the right to do business with the City and appear before city agencies.

## **9. Political activities**

During their term on the board, members agree to refrain from engaging in city election political activities, making campaign contributions to candidates in city elections, attending fundraising events held on behalf of candidates for municipal office, or rendering services for any candidate. Members understand that they may engage in political activities and make contributions to candidates running for office in other jurisdictions.

## **10. Candidates for elective office**

Board members agree to resign from the board when they publicly announce their candidacy or file as a candidate for any elective office, whether city, county, state, or federal.

## **11. Disclosure of interests**

In the interest of transparency and full disclosure, members will each year complete a statement disclosing any interest they have in a transaction or matter that is before the City when that interest could be reasonably view as affecting their objectivity or independence.

## **12. Post-service restrictions**

Board members of the Board of Ethics agree that they will not appear before the board on behalf of any private interest on any advisory opinion, request for outside employment, or enforcement matter that was pending in the ethics office while they served on the board. In addition, they agree to wait two years after they leave the board before accepting compensation for any services rendered on behalf of any person, business, or association in relation to any case, proceeding, or application involving the Board of Ethics, Ethics Office, or Code of Ethics. Former board members may provide pro bono services as counsel or consultants to the board at any time.

## **13. Meeting attendance**

Board members who miss three or more regular monthly meetings within any 12-month period will consider whether they have sufficient time to devote to their service on the board.

## **14. Annual review**

The board will review its actions annually to see if it has adhered to this Code of Conduct.

Adopted January 21, 2010