

## TOWN OF CONCORD

### APP #13 STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

#### CODE OF ETHICS

The Town of Concord is committed to upholding the highest ethical standards in the conduct of the public's business. This commitment requires that employees treat citizens, the general public, and their fellow employees with respect and courtesy at all times. The commitment to ethical government also requires that employees:

- Uphold and inspire public confidence and respect
- Uphold all relevant town, state, and federal laws and regulations
- Conduct themselves at all times according to the principles of honesty, integrity, impartiality and courtesy
- Ensure that they behave appropriately in their positions, never using their positions or giving the appearance of using their positions to secure advantage or favor for themselves, their family, or friends

#### POLICY

It is expected that all employees shall be familiar with and comply with this policy and with the ethical code it supports. Employees are reminded that compiling an all-inclusive list of ethical and behavioral standards is impossible. The following gives employees a general sense of the behavior expected of them and is not intended as a complete set of guidelines. Employees are encouraged to seek guidance and/or clarification via their department head whenever any question arises as to appropriate behavior. Depending upon the issue, the question may require forwarding to the Personnel Office or to the Town Manager's Office.

#### A. Personal Integrity

##### 1. The Massachusetts Conflict of Interest Law

All new employees are given a copy of the Massachusetts Conflict of Interest Law (Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 268A) when hired. In addition, employees may refer to their department head for contents of the law. The law covers all municipal employees to ensure that their private interests do not conflict with their public obligations. The law is broadly

written to prevent employees from becoming involved in situations which could result in a conflict -- or even give the appearance of a conflict.

**EMPLOYEES MUST FAMILIARIZE THEMSELVES WITH AND ABIDE BY THE MASSACHUSETTS CONFLICT OF INTEREST LAW AT ALL TIMES.**

Employees have a responsibility to ensure that other Town employees also comply with the law and this policy, and they must report any violations of ethical conduct to the department head or Town Manager's Office.

An employee with any questions regarding a violation, an appearance of a violation or a potential violation of the Conflict of Interest Law should seek guidance from his or her supervisor, the department head, the Personnel Office, or the Town Manager's Office immediately.

**2. Acceptance of Gifts**

Employees shall not under any circumstances seek, solicit, or accept any gift, gratuity, loan, reward or fee where there is any direct or indirect connection or the appearance thereof between the solicitation or acceptance and their employment, except as may be specifically authorized by their department head.

Any other gift, gratuity, fee or reward that is not specifically authorized, which comes into the possession of any employee, shall be forwarded to the department head, along with a written account of the related circumstances.

APP #19 Acceptance of Gifts outlines the procedures that must be followed according to law in accepting gifts of funds, and real or personal property in behalf of the Town. The requirements vary according to the value and nature of the gift, so employees who receive such gifts should refer to the guidelines of APP #19 to assure compliance.

**3. The Massachusetts Conscientious Employees Act**

The Massachusetts Conscientious Employees Act protects from retaliation any employee who objects to, discloses, or provides information about his or her employers activities, policies, or practices that the employee reasonably believes to be in violation of law or regulation, which pose a risk to the public health, safety, or environment. The law also protects employees when filing complaints of alleged illegal practices by another employer with whom the public employer is doing business. Employees are encouraged to immediately report to department heads or to the Town Manager, Assistant Town Manager, or Personnel Administrator any activity, policy, or practice being conducted by the Town which is believed to violate the law or constitute a risk to health, safety, or the environment.

#### **4. Honesty and Impartiality**

Employees must act with honesty, integrity and impartiality in the performance of their duties.

Employees must make decisions and recommendations without discrimination and provide accurate, balanced input, information, analyses and recommendations in a timely manner. Employees must not knowingly give any false or misleading reports, whether oral or written.

Employees are prohibited from publicly endorsing products as a representative of the Town. When asked for their opinions on services available in the community, employees will be fair and impartial in providing information.

#### **B. Violations**

An employee who violates any provision of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination. Depending on the nature of the situation, employees should also be aware that they may be subject to state or federally imposed penalties or even criminal charges.

Distribution:     Department Heads  
                      All Town Employees