

“ETHICS MATTER: DO THE RIGHT THING!”

MCMA
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ETHICS IN ACTION

- Values guide ethical conduct and decisions
- Ethical conduct builds trust
- Trust is the key ingredient for your success



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Think It Through



“It was like when you make a move in chess and just as you take your finger off the piece, you see the mistake you've made, and there's this panic because you don't know yet the scale of disaster you've left yourself open to.”

Kazuo Ishiguro

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LET'S EXPLORE

ISSUES THAT BUILD OR ERODE TRUST

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POLITICAL NEUTRALITY IS IN OUR DNA

1924:

No City Manager should take an active part in politics.

Today:

Refrain from all political activities which undermine public confidence in professional administrators.

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BIG "P" CANDIDATE POLITICS

- Stay out of campaigns for any publicly elected office including:
 - Your current governing body
 - Your former governing body
 - Any other local office: school board, magistrate, etc
 - State
 - Federal

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BIG "P" CANDIDATE POLITICS....DO NOT

- Donate to a candidate*
- Donate to political parties/organizations that raise candidate funding*
- Explore, seek, run or accept an elected office
- Sign a petition
- Endorse a candidate on social media
- Wear or display candidate t-shirts, yard signs, bumper stickers

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CANDIDATE POLITICS



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NAVIGATING THE SMALL “P” ISSUES



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SMALL “P” POLITICS...CAN I?

- Speak out on an issue related to my employment?
- Publicly express my opinion on a public issue?
- Support an issue of personal interest?
- Join an issue-oriented organization?
- Actively fundraise?
- Donate money?
- Issue a public statement to support the cause and/or organization?

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SUPPORTING OUR ISSUES

Presentation of Issues

Members may assist their governing body in the presentation of issues involved in referenda such as bond issues, annexations, and other matters that affect the government entity's operations and/or fiscal capacity.

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GIVING VOICE TO YOUR VALUES

Personal Advocacy of Issues

Members share with their fellow citizens the right and responsibility to voice their opinion on public issues. Members may advocate for issues of personal interest only when doing so does not conflict with the performance of their official duties.

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MANAGE FROM THE MIDDLE GROUND

- Listen to all perspectives
- Focus on the issue and merits of your position
- Disconnect the issue from an elected official or political party
- Consider your role

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THE APPROACH

WHAT IMPACT DOES VOICING YOUR OPINION HAVE ON YOUR ROLE?

- Convenor or facilitator on community issues
- Neutral mediator to resolve disputes
- Source of facts, objective and credible recommendations
- Service provider
- Leader

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CONFLICTS OF INTEREST



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GO? NO GO?

- Am I taking some official action, directing an employee, or using a city resource to do anything that involves my spouse, child, parent, friend, or sibling?
- Do I have a personal connection to a work issue?
- Will I gain from an official decision?
- Am I leveraging my position for personal gain?
- How will my conduct appear to others?

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CASE STUDY IN MANAGING THE OPTICS

- Cycling is your thing
- Join a casual cycling group
- Great social outlet beyond cycling
- One cycling buddy announces that she is running for town council
- If she wins, what should you do? Is this an ethics issue for you?

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PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS AT WORK

Members should not engage in an intimate or romantic relationship with any elected official or board appointee, employee they report to, one they appoint and/or supervise, either directly or indirectly, within the organization.

This guideline does not restrict personal friendships, professional mentoring, or social interactions with employees, elected officials and Board appointees.

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APPEARANCES MATTER



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INTEGRITY

Tenet 3.

Demonstrate by word and action the highest standards of ethical conduct and integrity in all public, professional, and personal relationships in order that the member may merit the trust and respect of the elected and appointed officials, employees, and the public.

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PROFESSIONAL OBLIGATIONS

- Commit to a two-year tenure
- Accurately state your credentials
- Exercise restraint, civility, and caution on social media
- Support and respect your colleagues...don't
 - Jump the gun
 - Dance on the grave of your predecessor
 - Interfere with their work



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PRESERVING THE INTANGIBLES

“It takes 20 years to build a reputation and five minutes to ruin it. If you think about that you’ll do things differently.”

Warren Buffett

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FOUNDATIONAL PRINCIPLES OF THIS PROFESSION

“The City Manager is the administrator for all the people, and in performing his duty he should serve without discrimination.”

ICMA Code of Ethics 1924



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BE PROACTIVE

- Review the ICMA Code of Ethics & Guidelines @ icma.org/ethics
- Confidential advice
 - Talking about an ethics misstep doesn't trigger a review
 - In an ethics hole? Strategy to extricate you!
- ETHICS MATTER!



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CORE VALUES OF PUBLIC SERVICE

- Integrity
- Equity and Fairness
- Trust and Honor
- Commitment
- Competency
- Political Neutrality
- Democracy



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PRINCIPLE IS INCONVENIENT

"It's this gap between the short-term and the long-term that makes a principle valuable. If your guiding principle is do whatever benefits you right now, you don't have principles of much value.

But it's the valuable principles that pay off, because they enable forward motion, particularly when it feels like there are few alternatives.

We embrace a culture based on principles because it's that structure and momentum that enables connection and progress to happen in the first place."

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