

City of Lakeland Ethics Policy

It is the policy of the City of Lakeland to uphold, promote and demand the highest standards of ethics and conduct from all of its employees and officials, whether elected, appointed or hired. All City employees and members of City boards and committees shall maintain the highest standards of personal integrity, truthfulness, honesty and fairness in discharging their public duties, and never abuse their positions or powers for improper or personal gain. Employees are expected to use good judgment and avoid situations that create an actual or perceived conflict between their personal interests and those of the organization. The City of Lakeland requires that the transactions employees participate in are ethical and within the law, both in letter and in spirit.

1. Public Service is a Public Trust, requiring City of Lakeland employees and officials to place loyalty to the constitution of the United States and the Florida Constitution, federal and state laws and ethical principles above private gain for themselves or others.
2. Employees and officials shall not hold financial interests that conflict with their conscientious performance of public duty.
3. Employees shall not engage in financial transactions using non-public official information or allow the improper use of such information to further any private interest or private gain.

4. Employees shall not, except as otherwise permitted by ordinance or express City of Lakeland policy, solicit or accept any gift, service, or favor valued over \$100 from any person or entity seeking official action from, doing business with, or conducting activities regulated by the City, or whose interests may be affected by the performance or nonperformance of the employee's or official's public duties. Procurement employees are prohibited from accepting any gifts, services, or favors regardless of value. A "procurement" employee is anyone who has the authority to approve purchases over \$1500. Gifts between employees in recognition of a special event (such as birthday, holiday, or anniversary of service, etc.) are permitted if the value of the gift is of nominal and reasonable value and is unsolicited by the receiver of the gift. "Gift" is defined as compensation, objects or services of value such as a meal or a service performed for an employee such as home maintenance or lawn care.
5. Employees shall never discriminate unfairly by the dispensing of special favors or privileges to anyone, whether for remuneration or not; and never accept favors or benefits under circumstances which might be construed as influencing the performance of their public duties.
6. Employees shall put forth honest effort in the performance of their public duties, remaining impartial and responsible to the public.

7. Employees shall make no promises of any kind (beyond those which the City has officially authorized them to make) binding upon the duties of their office, since an employee or official has no private word which can be binding on public duty.
8. Employees shall protect and conserve City property and services, and shall not use them for other than authorized purposes or for personal benefit or gain.
9. Employees shall seek to find and employ efficient and economical ways of accomplishing their public duties, and shall disclose waste, fraud, abuse, discrimination or harassment (sexual or otherwise) and corruption to appropriate authorities.

Employees are encouraged to seek assistance from their managers with any legal or ethical concerns. However, this may not always be possible. As a result, employees may contact the Employee Relations Dept. or the City Attorney's Office to report anything that they cannot discuss with their manager.

REFERENCE: Administrative Directive

ORIGINAL EFFECTIVE DATE: January 3, 2005
