

**CODE OF CORE VALUES AND ETHICS**

***Goals of the Code of Core Values and Ethics***

- To make Placentia a better community, built on mutual respect and trust
- To promote and maintain the highest standards of personal and professional conduct among all involved in City government - elected officials, City staff, volunteers, and members of the City's commissions and committees

**Preamble**

The proper operation of democratic government requires that decision-makers be independent, impartial, and accountable to the people they serve. The City of Placentia has adopted this Code of Core Values and Ethics (hereinafter "Code") to promote and maintain the highest standards of personal and professional conduct in the City's government. All elected and appointed officials, City employees, volunteers, and others who participate in the city's government are required to pledge to this Code, understand how it applies to their specific responsibilities, and practice its eight core values in their work. Because we seek public confidence in the City's services and public trust of its decision-makers, our decisions and our work must meet the most demanding ethical standards and demonstrate the highest levels of achievement in following this code.

**Purpose**

The purpose of this Code is to set a standard of conduct for all elected officials, officers, employees, and members of advisory commissions and committees of the City of Placentia. This policy is not intended to supersede or invalidate any statute, ordinance, or civil service rule or regulation.

**Applicability**

This Code shall apply to all elected officials, appointed officials, employees, and members of advisory commissions, and committees, and volunteers of the City of Placentia, herein called "Representatives".

**Core Values**

Representatives of the City shall be ***ethical***. This means they should endeavor to practice the following core values:

**1. As a Representative of the City of Placentia, I will be *ethical*.**

**In practice, I will:**

- a) Be trustworthy, acting with the utmost integrity and moral courage.
- b) Be truthful, do what I say I will do, and be dependable.

- c) Make impartial decisions, free of bribes, unlawful gifts, narrow political interests, and financial and other personal interests that impair my independence of judgment or action.
- d) Be fair, distributing benefits and burdens according to consistent and equitable criteria.
- e) Extend equal opportunities and due process to all parties in matters under consideration. If I engage in unilateral meetings and discussions, I do so without making voting decisions.
- f) Show respect for persons, confidences, and information designated as “confidential.”
- g) Use my title(s) only when conducting official City business, for information purposes, or as an indication of background and expertise, carefully considering whether I am exceeding or appearing to exceed my authority.

**2. As a Representative of the City of Placentia, I will be *professional*.**

**In practice, I will:**

- a) Apply my knowledge and expertise to my assigned responsibilities and to the interpersonal relationships that are part of my job in a consistent, confident, competent, and productive manner.
- b) Approach my job and work-related relationships with a positive attitude.
- c) Keep my professional knowledge and skills current and growing.

**3. As a Representative of the City of Placentia, I will be *service-oriented*.**

**In practice, I will:**

- a) Provide friendly, receptive, courteous service to everyone.
- b) Be attuned to, and care about, the needs and issues of citizens, public officials, and city workers.
- c) Interact with constituents in an interested, engaged, and responsive manner.

**4. As a Representative of the City of Placentia, I will be *fiscally responsible***

**In practice, I will:**

- a) Make decisions after prudent consideration of their financial impact, taking into account the long-term financial needs of the City, especially its financial stability.
- b) Demonstrate concern for the proper use of City assets (e.g., personnel, time, property, equipment, funds) and follow established procedures.
- c) Make good financial decisions that seek to preserve programs and services for City residents.

**5. As a Representative of the City of Placentia, I will be *organized*.**

**In practice, I will:**

- a) Act in an efficient manner, making decisions and recommendations based upon research and facts, taking into consideration short and long term goals.
- b) Follow through in a responsible way, keeping others informed, and responding in a timely fashion.
- c) Be respectful of established City processes and guidelines.

**6. As a Representative of the City of Placentia, I will be *communicative*.**

**In practice, I will:**

- a) Convey the City's care for and commitment to its citizens.
- b) Communicate in various ways to show that I am approachable, open-minded and willing to participate in dialog.
- c) Engage in effective two-way communication, by listening carefully, asking questions, and determining an appropriate response which adds value to conversations.

**7. As a Representative of the City of Placentia, I will be *collaborative*.**

**In practice, I will:**

- a) Act in a cooperative manner with groups and other individuals, working together in a spirit of tolerance and understanding.
- b) Work towards consensus building and gain value from diverse opinions.
- c) Accomplish the goals and responsibilities of my individual position, while respecting my role as a member of a team.
- d) Consider the broader regional and State-wide implications of the City's decisions and issues.

**8. As a Representative of the City of Placentia, I will be *progressive*.**

**In practice, I will:**

- a) Exhibit a proactive, innovative approach to setting goals and conducting the City's business.
- b) Display a style that maintains consistent standards, but is also sensitive to the need for compromise, "thinking outside the box," and improving existing paradigms when necessary.
- c) Promote intelligent and thoughtful innovation in order to forward the City's policy agenda and City services.

**Ethics Policy**

In addition to the core values described above, the City has established an Ethics Policy to promote the highest standards of personal and professional ethics by individuals charged with carrying on the City's business. This is a "values based" approach to ethical behavior, rather than a rules-based system. It is not intended to address all potential ethical issues which may arise, or to replace the various codes of ethics of professional associations but to supplement those codes.

**Integrity/Honesty**

Representatives shall be honest with fellow officials, the public and others. Representatives shall be prepared to make unpopular decisions when the public's interest requires it. Additionally, Representatives shall take responsibility for their actions and disclose suspected instances of corruption to the appropriate authorities.

**Accountability/Responsibility**

Representatives shall hold a high standard and be accountable to the public, stakeholders, and other institutions. Such persons are required to be an agent of the democratic process, thus receive input, explain actions, accept results of the body's decisions, and engage in continuous improvement. Representatives are prudent stewards of public resources and actively consider the impact of their decisions on the financial and social stability of the City and its residents.

**Respect**

Representatives shall treat fellow officials, staff and the public with courtesy and civility, even when there is disagreement on what is best for the community. Representatives shall actively listen, ask questions, seek diverse opinions and participate in added value discussion for the purpose of consensus building, and make decisions and recommendations based upon research and facts involving staff and stakeholders, taking into consideration short and long-term goals. Furthermore, Representatives shall support a positive work environment for City staff and others who serve the City.

**Fairness**

Representatives shall be impartial when making decisions, avoiding the temptation to favor those who have supported the covered person and disfavor those who have not. They shall support the public's right to know and will promote their meaningful participation in the conduct of the public's business. Furthermore, Representatives shall treat all persons, claims, and transactions in a fair and equitable manner, and make decisions based on the merits of the issue, with attention to due process.

**Comply with the Law**

Representatives shall comply with the laws of the Nation, the State of California, and City in the performance of their public duties. These laws include, but are not limited to: the United States and California Constitutions; United States and California codes, regulations, interpretive administrative findings and relevant case law, City ordinances, City norms and procedures, and the City's personnel and policy manuals. These laws include, but are not limited to, topics relating to ethics and conduct, including conflicts of interest, financial disclosure regulations, and campaign finance contribution limitations and reporting requirements. Additionally, certain City professionals are guided by particular rules regarding ethics provided by their professional organizations.

**Act in the Public Interest**

Recognizing that stewardship of the public interest must be their primary concern, Representatives shall work for the common good of the people of the City and not any private or personal interest, and they shall assure fair and equal treatment of all persons, claims, and transactions coming before the City, including the City Council, commissions, and committees.

**Conflict of Interest**

In order to assure their independence and impartiality on behalf of the common good, Representatives shall not use their official positions to influence government decisions in which they have a material financial interest or personal relationship which may give the appearance of a conflict of interest. In accordance with the law, Representatives shall disclose investments, interests in real property, sources of income, and gifts, and they shall abstain from participating in deliberations and decisions-making where conflicts may exist. (See California Government Code §§ 1090 *et seq.*, 81000 *et seq.*, 82000 *et seq.*, 87100 *et seq.*; 87407; California Health & Safety Code §§ 33130 *et seq.*; California Penal Code §68; 2 Code of California Regulations §§ 18700 *et seq.*)

**Regulations Regarding Personal Advantages and Perquisites**

Representatives shall comply with the requirements of the United States and California Constitutions; United States and California codes, regulations, interpretive administrative findings and relevant case law, relating to the acceptance and reporting of gifts, loans, and other possible perquisites of office. (See California Constitution, Art. XII, § 7; Gov. Code §§ 3204, 8314, 36501 *et seq.*, 82000 *et seq.*, 87200 *et seq.*, 87400 *et seq.*; 89001, 89500 *et seq.*; Pen. Code § 424 *et seq.*; 2 Code of Cal. Regs. §§ 18700 *et seq.*, 18930 *et seq.*)

**Confidential Information**

Representatives shall respect the confidentiality of information concerning City property, personnel or proceedings of the City. They shall neither disclose confidential information without proper legal authorization, nor use such

information to advance their personal interests. (See Gov. Code §§54963, 82000 *et seq.*)

**Use of Public Resources**

Representatives shall not use public resources not available to the public in general, such as City staff, time, equipment, supplies or facilities, for private gain. Representatives shall not utilize the City's name or logo for the purpose of endorsing any political candidate. (See Gov. Code §§ 3204, 8314, 89001, 89500 *et seq.*; Pen. Code § 424 *et seq.*; 2 Code of Cal. Regs. §§ 18901.)

**Representation of Private Interests**

In keeping with their role as stewards of the public interest, members of the City Council shall not appear on behalf of the private interests of third parties before the City Council or any board, commission, committee, or proceeding of the City, nor shall members of boards, commissions and committees appear before their own bodies or before the City Council on behalf of the private interests of third parties related to the areas of service of their bodies.

**Advocacy**

Representatives shall represent the official policies or positions of the City Council, commission or committee to the best of their ability. When presenting their individual opinions and positions, Representatives shall explicitly state they do not represent their body or the City of Placentia, nor will they allow the inference that they do.

**Governmental Transparency Laws**

Representatives are governed by relevant government transparency laws, including, but not limited to, the California Brown Act (Gov. Code §§ 54950 *et seq.* and California Public Records Act (Gov. Code §§ 6250 *et seq.*)

**Positive Workplace Environment**

City Council Members, Commissioner and Committee Members shall support the maintenance of a positive and constructive workplace environment for City employees, for persons dealing with the City, and for each other as well. These persons shall recognize their special role in dealings with City employees and refrain from creating the perception of inappropriate direction to staff.

**Enforcement**

Any official found to be in violation of this Code may be subject to censure by the City Council. Any member of an advisory commission, or committee found to be in violation may be subject to dismissal. In the case of an employee, appropriate action shall be taken by the City Administrator or by an authorized designee.

**Additional Guidance on Ethical Behavior**

Although not part of this Code, the City encourages all employees to follow the values set forth in the Athenian Oath. This oath, which was recited by citizens of ancient Athens nearly 2,000 years ago, is frequently referenced by civic leaders in modern times as a timeless code of civic responsibility, honesty, moral courage and community service.

**ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF RECEIPT OF POLICY NO. 352**

I have read and understand POLICY NO. 352 CODE OF CORE VALUES AND ETHICS.

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Print Name

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Signature