

City of Winder Personnel Policy Manual

Title: Ethics and Conduct

Date Issued: 03/2013

Policy: 040



Mayor



City Administrator

40.10 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to summarize fundamental principles of ethical conduct that are applicable to all employees of the City to better serve our community. While some of these standards may be detailed in other policy documents having a specific application to a particular circumstance, many other standards have been observed as good practice.

40.11 Code of Conduct

- A. Employees shall not grant special consideration, treatment, or advantage to any citizen beyond that which is available to every other citizen.
- B. No employee shall accept outside employment or engage in any private business, if such outside employment or private business would interfere with the normal conduct of the employee's position.
- C. Equipment, tools, materials and supplies are City property and shall not be used except in the conduct of official City business. Equipment provided by the City shall remain the property of the City of Winder and shall be utilized only in the conduct of official city business.

40.12 Gifts and Gratuities

- A. To ensure the highest level of objectivity in dealing with local businesses, vendors, suppliers, contractors and agencies and to avoid the appearance of impropriety, employees and their immediate family are not permitted to accept personal benefits, solicited or unsolicited, of any kind. It is particularly important that inspectors, contracting officers and enforcement officers guard against relationships which might be construed as evidence of favoritism, coercion, unfair advantage or collusion.
- B. These limitations are not intended to prohibit the acceptance of articles of negligible value which are distributed to the general public, nor to prohibit employees from accepting social courtesies which promote good public relations, nor to prohibit employees from obtaining loans from regular lending institutions (provided the services are available to the general public).

40.13 Political Activity

- A. No City employee shall be appointed, promoted, demoted, favored, or discriminated against with respect to employment in the personnel system because of his political opinions or affiliations.
- B. No employee shall hold an elected office in any Barrow County government or in any City within Barrow County. The City Administrator shall work with the Mayor and Council to determine if there are any conflicts of interest before an employee can seek an appointment/elected position to any elected position. Any employee seeking elective office may be requested to take a leave of absence from date of announcement through duration of campaign. If elected, the employee may be required to separate from City employment. The City Administrator has the final discretion on whether or not to hold a position open if a campaign is scheduled for more than (30) thirty days in which leave of absence is requested.
- C. The City would view a direct relationship with a City elected official as a conflict of interest if the employee holds a position as the City Administrator or as a Department Head and would require the employee to resign in the event that a spouse, parent, or child was to be elected to a City Council/Mayor position. *Any relationships occurring prior to the adoption of this policy would be allowed to continue.*
- D. No employee shall publicly endorse any candidate or associate with the campaign of anyone running for an elected position while on-duty, or while representing the City.
- E. Equipment, materials and supplies belonging to the City, including the City's letterhead, use of computers, or coping machines, shall not be used in support of political activities.
- F. The employee when off-duty has the right to contribute to, hold membership in, serve as an officer of, support a political party, support or campaign for State, or national political candidates, maintain political neutrality, or attend political meetings.
 - 1. Employees are expected to respect the views of others and not promote politics while on-duty.
 - 2. Wearing political advertisement that can be considered offensive or controversial to the public or co-workers is not permitted while on City time. The Department Head and/or the City Administrator will have the sole discretion to determine offensive, inappropriate, or controversial advertisement.
 - 3. No political advertisement or items of controversy shall be placed on City vehicles or on City property.

40.14 **Confidentiality**

All employees, while employed with the City, may not give or make available to anyone, or use for his or her own benefit, information of a confidential nature derived from association or employment with the City, without written authorization from the City Administrator. Employees are expected not to divulge confidential information pertaining to customers' records, personnel matters or other sensitive business and are expected to use confidential information only in the performance of their duties. Employees should be discreet with confidential information and not discuss it in places where it can be overheard, such as in restaurants or other public areas.

40.15 **Contract and financial obligations**

- A. No employee shall engage in any business or transaction or have a financial or other personal interest, direct or indirect, which is incompatible with the proper discharge and performance of his/her official duties. Nor shall they participate in the negotiation or in the making of any contract with any business or entity in which he/she has a financial or direct interest.
- B. It is deemed a conflict of interest to represent other private interests in any action or proceeding against the City of Winder or any portion of its government.

40.16 **Collections and Solicitations**

Employees are not allowed to collect donations for a non-city sponsored cause or sell merchandise to the public during working hours unless authorized by the Mayor and Council.

40.17 **Reporting suspected or known violations**

- A. Employees who suspect or have evidence of violations of this policy, other policies or other illegal or unethical business or workplace conduct by other employees, have an obligation to contact their immediate Department Head regarding the suspected or known violation.
- B. In the event that the Department Head is suspected of unethical behavior, the City Administrator or the Personnel Officer should be contacted.
- C. If the City Administrator is suspected of unethical behavior, the employee should contact the Mayor.