

ETHICS CODE MENU/WORKSHEET

INSTRUCTIONS:

Review

- 1) Review **values** menu. Are any values that are important to public service missing?

Mark

- 2) Mark the box next to the **four values** you think are most important for public servants.
(Please feel free to write in additional values in the space provided.)

The group will have a discussion on which values belong in the agency's code.

Review

- 3) For those four values, review the "**expressions**" of what those values mean in practice. (Please feel free to write in additional expressions in the space provided.)

Mark

- 4) Mark the box next to the two expressions of each value you think are most important for your jurisdiction.

The group will have a discussion on which expressions belong in the agency's code.

Think

- 5) Think about **positive examples** of this kind of behavior in action.

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**Which four values are most important to you
in your public service?**

☐ Integrity/Honesty

☐ Responsibility/Community Service

☐ Fairness

☐ Respect for fellow officials, staff and the public

☐ Compassion

☐ Proper efficient use of public resources
(another form of responsibility)

☐ Loyalty to the Agency

☐ Vision

☐ _____

☐ _____

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Instructions: In the table below, please identify *two* expressions of ethical values in the left-hand column that are most important to you as a public official. The expressions are derived from the ethics codes of the agencies identified in parentheses. Please feel free to modify these expressions or add your own in the space provided.

Integrity/Honesty



Which two expressions are most important?

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- ☐ I am honest with my fellow elected officials, the public and others. *(Santa Clara)*
 - ☐ I do not promise what I believe to be unrealistic. *(Santa Clara)*
 - ☐ I am prepared to make unpopular decisions when my sense of the public's best interests requires it. *(Santa Clara)*
 - ☐ I take responsibility for my actions, even when it is uncomfortable to do so. *(Ventura)*
 - ☐ I credit others' contributions to moving our community's interests forward. *(Sunnyvale)*
 - ☐ I do not knowingly use false or inaccurate information to support my position or views. *(Ventura)*
 - ☐ I do not leave false impressions. *(Ventura)*
 - ☐ I support ethics within my agency. *(Mountain View)*
 - ☐ I disclose suspected instances of corruption to the appropriate authorities. *(Mountain View)*
 - ☐ _____
 - ☐ _____

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Responsibility/Community Service



Which two expressions are most important?

- ☐ I do not accept gifts, services or other special considerations because of my public position.
(International City/County Management Association)
- ☐ I refrain from any action that might appear to compromise my independent judgment.
(Santa Clara)
- ☐ I support merit-based processes for the award of public employment and public contracts.
(International City/County Management Association)
- ☐ I excuse myself from participating in decisions when my or my family's financial interests may be affected by my agency's actions. *(International City/County Management Association)*
- ☐ As a representative of the community, I serve as a model of leadership and civility.
(Fresno)
- ☐ I do not use information that I acquire in my public capacity for personal advantage.
(International City/County Management Association)
- ☐ Consistent with my role as a steward of the public trust, I do not represent third parties' interest before either my agency or those of neighboring jurisdictions. *(Sunnyvale)*

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Fairness



Which two expressions are most important?

- ☐ I support the public's right to know and participate in the conduct of the public's business.
(Woodside)
- ☐ I am impartial when making decisions, avoiding the temptation to favor those who have supported me and disfavor those who have not. (Pinole)
- ☐ I promote non-discrimination in public agency decisionmaking. (Pinole)
- ☐ I recognize that I am an agent for the democratic process, not the owner of authority. (Pinole)
- ☐ I provide services at or above established standards without favoritism or prejudice. (Ventura)
- ☐ I will promote meaningful public involvement in the agency's decision-making processes.
(American Institute of Certified Planners)
- ☐ I treat all persons, claims and transactions in a fair and equitable manner.
(Mountain View)
- ☐ If I receive substantive information that is relevant to a matter under consideration from sources outside the public decision-making process, I publicly share it with my fellow governing board members and staff. (Sunnyvale)
- ☐ I make decisions based on the merits of the issue. (Sunnyvale)

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Respect for fellow officials, staff and the public



Which two expressions are most important?

- ☐ I treat my fellow officials, staff and the public with patience, courtesy and civility, even when we disagree on what is best for the community. *(Mountain View)*
- ☐ I focus on the merits in discussions of issues, not personalities, character or motivations. *(Mountain View)*
- ☐ I respect others' time by coming to meetings prepared and offering observations only when I believe it will move the discussion forward. *(Mountain View)*
- ☐ I work towards consensus building and gain value from diverse opinions. *(Santa Clara)*
- ☐ I make decisions and recommendations based upon research and facts, taking into consideration short and long-term goals. *(Santa Clara)*
- ☐ I respect the distinction between the role of office holder and staff. *(Mountain View)*
- ☐ I follow through on my commitments, keeping others informed, and responding in a timely fashion. *(Santa Clara)*
- ☐ I am approachable, open-minded and willing to participate in dialog and I work to convey this to others. *(Santa Clara)*
- ☐ I engage in effective two-way communication by listening carefully, asking questions, and determining an appropriate response that adds value to conversations. *(Santa Clara)*
- ☐ In my interactions with constituents, I am interested, engaged, and responsive. *(Santa Clara)*
- ☐ I involve staff in meetings with individuals, those with business before the agency, officials from other agencies and legislators to ensure proper staff support and to keep staff informed. *(Mountain View)*
- ☐ I support a positive work environment for agency staff and others who serve the agency. *(Sunnyvale)*
- ☐ When campaigning, I avoid personal attacks on issues unrelated to my fellow candidates' ability to discharge the duties of the office that we both seek. *(California Code of Fair Campaign Practices)*

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Compassion



Which two expressions are most important?

- ☐ I recognize government's responsibilities to society's less fortunate. (*American Institute of Certified Planners*)
- ☐ I am sensitive to the fact that some people in the community are intimidated by public officials and public agencies and try to make their interactions with our agency as stress-free as possible. (*Sunnyvale*)
- ☐ I convey the agency's care for and commitment to its community members. (*Santa Clara*)
- ☐ I am attuned to, and care about, the needs and issues of citizens, public officials and agency workers. (*Santa Clara*)
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____

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Proper/efficient use of public resources (another form of responsibility)



Which two expressions are most important?

- ☐ I recognize that the responsibility for making both large and small decisions about the use of public resources is a public trust. *(Santa Clara)*
- ☐ I actively promote the efficient and economical use of public resources. *(Santa Clara)*
- ☐ I do not use public resources, such as agency staff time, equipment, supplies or facilities, for private gain or personal purposes. *(Sunnyvale)*
- ☐ I make decisions after prudent consideration of their financial impact, taking into account the long-term financial needs of the agency, especially its financial stability. *(Santa Clara)*
- ☐ I make decisions on hiring and contracting based on merit and value to the agency, rather than favoritism and/or family or personal relationships. *(International City/County Management Association)*
- ☐ I demonstrate concern for the proper use of agency assets (such as personnel, time, property, equipment, funds) and follow established procedures. *(Santa Clara)*
- ☐ I provide friendly, receptive, courteous service to everyone. *(Santa Clara)*
- ☐ I make good financial decisions that seek to preserve programs and services for agency residents. *(Santa Clara)*

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Loyalty to the Agency



Which two expressions are most important?

- ☐ I respect the confidentiality of information concerning the agency's property, personnel or affairs. *(Santa Clara)*
- ☐ I do not disclose confidential information without proper legal authorization. *(Mountain View)*
- ☐ I represent the official policies or positions of the agency to the best of my ability when authorized to do so. *(Mountain View)*
- ☐ When presenting my individual opinions and positions, I explicitly state that my opinions do not represent the agency's position and I will not allow the inference that they do. *(Sunnyvale)*
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____

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Vision



Which two expressions are most important?

- ☐ I exhibit a proactive, innovative approach to setting goals and conducting the agency's business. *(Santa Clara)*
- ☐ I 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. *(Santa Clara)*
- ☐ I promote intelligent and thoughtful innovation in order to forward the agency's policy agenda and agency services. *(Santa Clara)*
- ☐ I consider the broader regional and statewide implications of the agency's decisions and issues. *(Santa Clara)*
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____

THREE DIMENSIONS OF AN ETHICS CODE

(Based on Santa Clara Model)

Core Value	Potential Expressions/ What This Value Looks Like	Examples of When This Issue Arises
Community Service/ Pursuit of public's interests as opposed to personal interests	I do not accept gifts, services or other special considerations because of my public position.	When someone invites me to dinner because of my position, I will either decline or pay for my part of the meal.
Respect for fellow officials, staff and the public	I treat my fellow officials, staff and the public with courtesy and civility, even when we disagree on what is best for the community.	During meetings, I will listen actively, attentively and politely to all speakers, even those that are arguing against the position I believe is right.
Vision	I consider the broader regional and statewide implications of the agency's decisions and issues.	When I sit on regional boards as a representative of my agency, I balance what will serve my jurisdiction's interests best against what will maximize benefits for those served by the regional board as a whole.