



Town of Sudbury

Select Board

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CODE OF CONDUCT POLICY

(Adopted 12/3/24)

I. Purpose

All individuals elected and/or appointed to a Town board, commission, or committee (hereinafter "Members") are expected to maintain and enforce respectful discourse with their fellow Members, with those who work for the Town, those who volunteer their time and services on behalf of the Town, and members of the public, by striving at every meeting, forum, or other official interaction, to treat every person fairly and with respect regardless of any differences of opinion.

This policy provides an expected standard of conduct for all elected and appointed Members in the Town.

II. Applicability

This policy is intended to apply to all Members acting on behalf of the Town of Sudbury and covers all of their actions and communications whether spoken or written, including, but not limited to, all electronic communications including social media and any other form of "press" interaction (newspapers, for example).

III. Code of Conduct

All Members are expected to act honestly, conscientiously, reasonably, and in good faith at all times with regard to their responsibilities, the interests of the Town, and the welfare of its residents.

Members must refrain from communicating or acting in a disrespectful, abusive and/or threatening manner towards members of the community, other elected or appointed officials, the Town Manager or Town Staff.

A. Conduct Generally and in Relation to the Community

- a. Be well-informed concerning local and state duties as a committee member.
- b. Never purport to represent the opinion or position of your committee except when specifically authorized to do so by a

recorded vote of your committee. If you are not officially representing the opinion or position of your committee, you may state that you are a member of the committee, however you are “speaking for yourself” or “on your own behalf.”

- c. Accept your position as a means of unselfish public service, not to benefit personally, professionally, or financially from your committee position.
- d. Recognize that the chief function of local government at all times is to serve the best interests of the town.
- e. Demonstrate respect for the public that you serve.
- f. Safeguard confidential information.
- g. Conduct yourself so as to maintain public confidence in our local government.
- h. Conduct official business in such a manner that you cannot be improperly influenced in the performance of your official duties.
- i. Unless specifically exempted, conduct the business of the public in a manner that promotes open and transparent government.
- j. Comply as fully as possible with all Town policies, including but not limited to:
 - i. Discriminatory Harassment Policy & Procedures (<https://sudbury.ma.us/hr/town-of-sudbury-discriminatoryharassmentpolicyandprocedures-updated-5-24-23>)
 - ii. Anti-Fraud Policy (<https://sudbury.ma.us/hr/anti-fraud-policy-7-27-11/>)
- k. Comply as fully as possible with all applicable laws, including, but not limited to, the following:
 - i. The Open Meeting Law (G.L. c. 30A, ss. 18-25)
 - ii. Procurement Laws (G.L. c. 30B, c. 149, c. 30, s. 39M)
 - iii. The Ethics/Conflict of Interest Laws (G.L. c. 268A)

B. Conduct in Relation to other elected and appointed officials

- a. Treat all Members with respect despite differences of opinion, keeping in mind that professional respect does not preclude honest differences of opinion but requires respect within those differences.
- b. Participate and interact in official meetings with dignity and decorum fitting those who hold a position of public trust.
- c. Recognize your responsibility to attend all meetings to assure a quorum and promptly notify the Chair should you for any reason be unable or unwilling to attend or continue to serve.
- d. Recognize the expectation of attendance of at least seventy-five percent of committee meetings over a calendar quarter. Members are requested to resign if they cannot meet the attendance expectation. Extenuating circumstances will be taken into consideration; however, Town bylaws and/or state law may apply.
- e. Formal notice to resign from a committee requires written notification to the Town Clerk.
- f. Recognize that action at official meetings is binding and that you alone cannot bind the committee outside of such meetings.
- g. Refrain from making statements or promises as to how you will vote on quasi-judicial matters that will come before the committee until you have had an opportunity to hear the pros and cons of the issue during a public meeting.
- h. Uphold the intent and legal requirements of meetings held in Executive Session and respect the privileged or otherwise protected communication that exists in executive session.
- i. Make decisions only after all facts on a question have been presented and discussed.

C. Conduct in Relation to the Town Manager

- a. Recognize and support the administrative chain of command and refuse to act on complaints as an individual outside that chain of command.
- b. Give the Town Manager full responsibility for discharging their duties and disposition and/or solutions on any particular matter.

- c. Refrain from giving orders or direction to the Town Manager for action as an individual committee member.
- d. Refrain from providing information to the Town Manager that you would not be willing to share with other committee members.

D. Conduct in Relation to Town Staff

- a. Treat all staff as professionals and respect the abilities, experience, and dignity of each individual.
- b. Refrain from giving instructions to or requesting assistance from Town staff but rather channel all such activities through the Town Manager.
- c. Never publicly criticize an individual employee or a Town department. Concerns about staff performance should only be made to the Town Manager through private communication.
- d. Officials who interact with Town staff must do so in a respectful manner and understand that employees should not be expected to take direction from any individual Member on any matter.

IV. Removal from Office for Appointed Officials

In the circumstances of repetitive or extreme misconduct, a Member may recommend the removal of another Member. The recommendation shall first be to the Chair who shall discuss the issue with the identified Member. If the issue is not resolved, it may be further raised with the Town Manager. The Town Manager shall review and recommend to the appointing authority whether removal is warranted, while considering extenuating circumstances.

Formal removal as a Member will be governed by applicable Town bylaws or state law.

V. Distribution and Education

The Town Clerk shall provide a copy of this policy, the Town's Discriminatory Harassment Policy and Procedure, and the Anti-fraud policy to all elected and appointed officials upon administration of the oath of office.

Each Member shall sign a statement that they have received and read this policy and will comply with all requirements set forth in this policy. In the event that any Member declines to sign the form, that fact shall be noted by the Town Clerk on the form.