ETHICAL PRINCIPLES AND VALUES
For Public Servants

I. Honesty

Public servants should be scrupulously and consistently honest by: (1) being truthful, sincere, forthright, and, unless professional duties require confidentiality or special discretion, candid, straightforward and frank; (2) not cheating, stealing, lying, deceiving, acting deviously, nor intentionally misleading another by omission, half-truth or other means.

II. Integrity

Public servants should demonstrate integrity by: (1) acting in ways that are consistent with core beliefs and assuring that practices are congruent with principles; (2) honoring and adhering to the principles of public service ethics, the mission and values of their organizations, and their own moral beliefs with courage and character regardless of personal, political, social and economic pressures; (3) expressing and fighting for their concept of what is right and upholding their convictions to the best of their ability.

III. Promise-Keeping

Public servants should demonstrate trustworthiness by: (1) keeping promises, fulfilling commitments and abiding by the letter and spirit of agreements which bind them; (2) interpreting contracts and other commitments in a fair and reasonable manner and not so as to rationalize noncompliance or create justifications for escaping a commitment; (3) exercising prudence and caution in making commitments, considering unknown or future factors which could make fulfillment of them impossible, difficult or undesirable; (4) seeking to assure that when commitments are made, the nature and scope of the obligations undertaken are clear to all parties.

IV. Loyalty

Public servants should demonstrate loyalty by: (1) advancing and protecting the interests of those with legitimate moral claims arising from personal and institutional relationships; (2) safe-guarding confidential and proprietary information; (3) resolving conflicting loyalty obligations to various parties by placing obligations to the constitution, the institution of government and fundamental principles of representative democracy above their duty to individuals; (4) refusing to subordinate other ethical obligations such as honesty, integrity, fairness and the obligation to make official and managerial decisions on the merits, without favoritism, in the name of loyalty.

V. Fairness

Public servants should demonstrate fairness by: (1) making official and managerial decisions with impartiality and professional objectivity based on consistent and appropriate standards; (2) demonstrating a commitment to justice, the equitable treatment of individuals and appreciation for diversity in all official and managerial actions; (3) exercising official and managerial authority with open-mindedness and a willingness seek out and consider all relevant information, including opposing perspectives; (4) voluntarily correcting personal or institutional mistakes and improprieties and refusing to take unfair advantage of mistakes or ignorance of citizens; (5) scrupulously employing open, equitable, and impartial processes for gathering and evaluating information necessary to decisions.

VI. Caring and Concern for Others

Public servants should demonstrate a concern for the well-being of all those affected by their actions by: (1) striving to carry out official and managerial responsibilities with a firm commitment to maximize benefits and minimize harm; (2) being caring, considerate and, to the extent compatible with official duties, kind, compassionate and generous in all their actions.

VII. Respect for Others

Public servants should demonstrate respect for others by: (1) acknowledging and honoring the right of those affected by official and managerial decisions to autonomy, privacy, and to be treated with dignity; (2) treating others with courtesy and decency; (3) exercising official and managerial authority in a way that provides others with the information they need to make informed decisions about their own lives, about matters within the scope of their professional duties, and information necessary to the exercise of citizenship responsibilities.

VIII. Responsible Citizenship

Public servants should act as responsible citizens and uphold the rule of law by: (1) honoring and respecting the principles and spirit of representative democracy and setting a positive example of good citizenship by scrupulously observing the letter and spirit of laws and rules; and (2) exercising their civic duties and rights by voting and, to the extent compatible with official duties, expressing informed views and demonstrating social consciousness and a commitment to public service.

IX. Pursuit of Excellence

Public servants should seek to perform their duties with excellence by: (1) being diligent, perseverant, reliable, careful, prepared, and informed; (2) giving a full day's work for a full day's pay; (3) continually seeking to develop knowledge, skills and judgment necessary to the performance of their duties.

X. Personal Accountability

Public servants should be accountable by: (1) accepting personal responsibility for the foreseeable consequences of actions and inactions; (2) recognizing their special opportunity and obligation to lead by example; (3) making decisions that take into account long term interests and the need to exercise leadership for posterity.

XI. Public Office as a Public Trust

Public servants should treat their office as a public trust, only using the powers and resources of public office to advance public interests, and not to attain personal benefits or pursue any other private interest incompatible with the public good.

XII. Independent Objective Judgment

Public servants should employ independence objective judgment in performing their duties, deciding all matters on the merits, free from conflicts of interest and both real and apparent improper influences.

XIII. Public Accountability

Public servants should assure that government is conducted openly, efficiently, equitably and honorably in a manner that permits the citizenry to make informed judgments and hold government officials accountable.

XIV. Democratic Leadership

Public servants should honor and respect the principles and spirit of representative democracy and set a positive example of good citizenship by scrupulously observing the letter and spirit of laws and rules.

XV. Respectability and Fitness for Public Office

Public servants should safeguard public confidence in the integrity of government by being honest, fair, caring and respectful and by avoiding conduct creating the appearance of impropriety or which is otherwise unbefitting a public official.

"Reprinted with Permission from the Josephson Institute"

"SURVIVING THE ETHICS JUNGLE: ETHICS IN PUBLIC SERVICE"



Announcing

an ETHICS TRAINING VIDEO

for City Employees Covering:

• Conflicts of Interest • Misuse of City Property • Gifts
• Aspirational Ethics Principles

PRODUCED BY THE CITY OF JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA

(ETHICS OFFICERS: Carla Miller and Steve Rohan)

To order or for more information about this video, please contact:

Ethics Office, City of Jacksonville Florida
c/o Stacy Reardon
117 W. Duval St., Room 450
Jacksonville, FL 32202

Phone: 904-630-1212 Ext. 4239
Fax: 904-630-2670
Email: sreardon@coj.net

CHAPTER 602
JACKSONVILLE ETHICS CODE

PART I

602.101 Legislative intent and declaration of policy; aspirational goals. It is declared to be the policy of the city of Jacksonville that all officers and employees of the city or an independent agency are public servants of the people and hold their positions for the benefit of the public. These public servants shall perform efficiently and faithfully their duties under the laws of the federal, state, and local governments. Such officers and employees shall strive to meet the highest standards of ethics consistent with this Code, regardless of personal considerations, recognizing that maintaining the respect of the people must be their foremost concern. This Code shall serve not only as a basis for discipline of public servants who violate these provisions, but also as an aspirational guide for conduct.

The city of Jacksonville consolidated in 1968 in an attempt to create a more responsible government. Since that time, various provisions from state and local law have been created or adapted to guide the ethical behavior of local public servants. This Code coordinates existing laws, adds new provisions outlining guidelines for appropriate behavior, and includes new substantive provisions which impose higher standards and expectations on public servants. Although the people of Jacksonville have learned from and responded to past mistakes, there should be an aspiration to much higher standards.

Ethics is defined as the study of the general nature of morals and moral choices to be made by the individual in his or her relationships with others. Ethics is more than the avoidance of criminal behavior. It is a commitment for public servants to take individual responsibility in creating a government that has the trust and respect of its citizens. There needs to be a proactive approach in strengthening the emphasis on ethics and in guiding city officers and employees in upholding them. To preserve and maintain the integrity of responsible government and its decision-making process, the City of Jacksonville believes it is necessary that the identity, activities and expenditures of certain persons who engage in efforts to influence officers and employees of the city on matters within their official cognizance, either by direct communication or by solicitation of others to engage in such efforts, be publicly and regularly disclosed. The provisions and requirements of this Code shall apply to every person who attempts to influence government action, unless such person is clearly exempt herefrom by an express provision hereof.

With the above in mind, the city of Jacksonville hereby adopts the following goals for the city Ethics Program:

(a) Promulgate and implement a comprehensive approach to ethics and integrity in Jacksonville government.

(b) Promote public confidence in public officers and employees and the ethical operation of government.

(c) Promote and ensure compliance with local, state, and federal ethics law.

(d) Centralize laws and regulations on the ethical conduct of city officers and employees.

(e) Heighten knowledge and understanding of the laws and ethical principles which are the inherent obligations of city officers and employees.

(f) Establish a system to train city officers and employees to encourage compliance with these standards and to also provide for periodic review, education and certification on ethics.

(g) Enact an Ethics Officer system that will continue to evolve and update our city's ethics program and to provide guidance and education to all city departments.

(h) Educate city officers and employees to avoid the appearance of impropriety.

Through this comprehensive code and the above-stated goals, the city will strive to elevate the level of ethics in local government, to provide honest and responsible service to the citizens of Jacksonville, and to maintain the confidence and trust of the public that this government serves.

PART X

ETHICS EDUCATION

602.1001 Ethics Education Program. Officers and employees of the city, as public servants, are considered stewards of the public's trust and should aspire to the highest level of integrity and character. Officers and employees shall be informed of their ethical responsibilities at the start of their work with the city and shall receive updates and training materials on ethics issues throughout the span of their public service, as designated by the city Ethics Officer.

(a) Every officer and employee of the city must be responsible for understanding and complying with the provisions of this Chapter.

(b) Every elected official shall attend an Ethics in Government Program within ninety days of taking office. Upon fulfillment of this requirement, each elected official will be issued a certificate of completion by the Jacksonville Ethics Commission.

(c) Every appointed employee shall attend an Ethics in Government Program within the first six months of his/her employment with the city. Upon fulfillment of this requirement, each appointed employee will be issued a certificate of completion by the city Ethics Officer.

(d) Every employee of the city shall complete an Employee Ethics Training Program within the first six months of his/her employment with the city. Current employees shall complete training as designated in a schedule developed by the city Ethics Officer. Upon fulfillment of this requirement, each employee will be issued a certificate of completion by the city Ethics Officer.

(e) The city Ethics Officer shall provide ethics education materials to appointed officials, and encourage appointed officials to attend an Ethics in Government Program.

(f) The Ethics in Government Program and Employee Ethics Training Program shall be created and delivered by the General Counsel's Office with the assistance of the city Ethics Officer and the Jacksonville Ethics Commission.

(g) The programs shall include topics as determined necessary to explain the provisions of this chapter, the Florida Statutes concerning ethics and general ethics issues. Topics may include but are not limited to:

(1) Ethics in government and aspirational goals;
(2) Campaign finances;
(3) Gifts;
(4) City contracts;
(5) Potential conflicts with city employees/ businesses;
(6) Jacksonville Ethics Commission;
(7) Public Records Law;
(8) Reporting procedures;
(9) Punishment and discipline procedures;
(10) Awards and incentives.

PART XI

ETHICS OFFICERS

602.1101 City Ethics Officer position established. The position of city Ethics Officer is hereby established. The city Ethics Officer is to be appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by the Council.

602.1102 Mission and duties of the city Ethics Officer. The mission of the city Ethics Officer is to encourage each of the officers and employees of the city to act ethically in all actions. This mission requires that the city Ethics Officer not only encourage compliance with various laws, but more importantly, encourage each employee and officer to adhere to the highest standards of ethical behavior as set forth in aspirational goals of section 602.101 of this Code. In pursuing that broad mission, the duties of the city Ethics Officer include, but are not limited to the following:

(a) Develop policies, programs and strategies to deal with all ethics-related matters;

(b) Develop training and education programs in coordination with the General Counsel and the Jacksonville Ethics Commission;

(c) Assist in the selection of departmental ethics officers;

(d) Assist departmental and agency ethics officers in training and education;

(e) Conduct meetings with any or all of the departmental and agency ethics officers as well as senior management to discuss or provide advice on ethics issues;

(f) Obtain copies of all reports and disclosures made pursuant to State law by persons subject to this Code if such reports and disclosures are substantially similar to reports and disclosures required under this Code and if a person may rely on such State report or disclosure pursuant to Section 602.455 to eliminate filing similar information under this Code;

(g) Maintain a directory of where all reports and disclosures filed pursuant to this Code may be obtained;

(h) Encourage compliance with the spirit and letter of ethics laws;

(i) Review periodically this Code and other applicable laws and regulations and recommend to the Ethics Commission appropriate changes to this Code;

(j) The city Ethics Officer shall be the liaison between the Ethics Commission and the officers and employees of the city;

(k) The city Ethics Officer may seek formal opinions from the Jacksonville Ethics Commission on interpretation of his or her duties or of this Code; and

(l) Accomplish other duties as requested by the Mayor.

602.1103 Designation of department ethics officer. The head of each executive department of the city shall appoint an employee to the position of department ethics officer with the concurrence of the city Ethics Officer. Appointment of additional personnel will be at the discretion of the Mayor. Each department ethics officer's duties are in addition to his or her principal operational role within the department.

The head of the department shall communicate the selection of the department's ethics officer to all employees in the department, while emphasizing his/her personal support for the person and the program. Employees should be encouraged to communicate directly with the Ethics Officer on issues or questions that are ethics-related.

602.1104 Responsibilities of the department ethics officer. Specific responsibilities assigned to the department ethics officer include, but are not limited to the following:

(a) Conduct periodic meetings with the department director, senior management, and employee groups to discuss or provide advice on ethics issues.

(b) Conduct a review of and disseminate within his/her department the appropriate city and department policies and regulations that relate to the Code of Ethics for employees.

(c) Assist the city Ethics Officer in the formulation of ethics awareness training sessions, conferences, and seminars that are developed for and presented to department employees.

(d) Assist the department head in the development of an overall internal ethics plan.

(e) Report compliance with the ethics code to the city Ethics Officer.

(f) Make recommendations for improvement in training to the city Ethics Officer.

(g) Accomplish such other duties as are delegated by the city Ethics Officer, including conducting investigations or complaints as authorized by the city Ethics Officer.

602.1105 Reporting of violations by Council Auditor. The Council Auditor, in addition to the reporting requirements of Section 102.103, Jacksonville Ordinance Code, shall, when he or she has reasonable grounds to believe that a violation of the city’s Ethics Code has occurred, report the facts relating to the probable violation in writing to the General Counsel and the city’s
Ethics Officer.

ETHICS DEFINITIONS

Throughout the ages, man has struggled with the subjects of right and wrong and ethics and justice.

The dictionary defines ethics as “the study of the general nature of morals and of the specific moral choices to be made by the individual in his relationship with others.”

The same dictionary defines justice as “conformity to moral right, or to reason, truth or fact,” or “the administration of law”.

As you can see, these terms have become confused.

ETHICS consists simply of the actions an individual takes on himself. It is a personal thing. When one is ethical, it is done by himself. Ethics actually consists of rationality toward the highest level of survival for the individual, the future race, the group and mankind. Ethics are reason.

JUSTICE is the action taken on the individual by the group when he fails to take these actions on himself. Justice is used when the individual’s unethical and destructive behavior begin to impinge too heavily on others.

MORALS should be defined as a code of good conduct laid down out of the experience of the race to serve as a uniform yardstick for the conduct of individuals and groups. Morals are actually laws.

The individual can be trusted with ethics, and when he is taught to be ethical, justice no longer becomes the all-important subject that it is made out to be.

Excerpted from “The Basics of Ethics” and “Ethics, Justice and the Dynamics”, by L. Ron Hubbard (c) 1982, 1989 L. Ron Hubbard Library.