

## CENTRAL COAST REGIONAL DISTRICT POLICIES

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### E-7 - Ethical Standards of Conduct for Elected Officials

**Preamble:** In keeping with the Regional Districts core values of accountability, good governance, professionalism, integrity and productivity, the District seeks to foster the sustainable socioeconomic and environmental wellbeing of the Central Coast through the professional and efficient delivery of mandated regional and community services,

To help achieve this goal, the board of directors has committed to strive to adhere to a code of conduct so as to ensure that public business is conducted with integrity, in a fair, honest and open manner, and that members respect one another, staff, and the public and recognize the unique role and contribution each person has in making the Regional District a better place to work and live;

**Policy:** Elected officials shall:

**1. Act in the Public Interest**

Recognizing that the Regional District seeks to maintain and enhance the quality of life for all District residents through effective, responsive and responsible government, members will conduct their business with integrity, in a fair, honest and open manner.

**2. Comply with the Law**

Members shall comply with all applicable federal, provincial, and local laws in the performance of their public duties. These laws include, but are not limited to: the *Constitution Act*; the *Provincial Human Rights Code*; the *Criminal Code*, the *Local Government Act*; *Community Charter*; laws pertaining to financial disclosures, and employer responsibilities; and relevant District bylaws and policies.

**3. Conduct of Members**

The conduct of members in the performance of their duties and responsibilities with the Regional District must be fair, open and honest. Members shall refrain from abusive conduct, personal charges or verbal attacks upon the character or motives of other members of the Board of Directors, committees, the staff or the public.

**4. Respect for Process**

Members shall perform their duties in accordance with the policies and procedures and rules of order established by the Board of Directors governing the deliberation of public policy issues, meaningful involvement of the public, and implementation of policy decisions of the Board by District staff. Members of committees shall be aware of the mandate of their respective committee, and act in accordance with it.

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- 5. Conduct of Public Meetings**  
Members shall prepare themselves for public meetings; listen courteously and attentively to all public discussions before the body; and focus on the business at hand. They shall not interrupt other speakers; make personal comments not germane to the business of the body; or otherwise disturb a meeting.
- 6. Decisions Based on Merit**  
Members shall base their decisions on the merits and substance of the matter at hand, rather than on unrelated considerations.
- 7. Communication**  
Subject to paragraph 10, members shall publicly share substantive information that is relevant to a matter under consideration by the Board or a committee, which they may have received from sources outside of the public decision-making process.
- 8. Conflict of Interest**  
Members shall be aware of and act in accordance with Part 4 Division 6 of the *Community Charter*, and shall fulfill all parts of their *Oath of Office*.
- 9. Gifts and Favours**  
Members shall not accept any money, property, position or favour of any kind whether to be received at the present or in the future, from a person having, or seeking to have dealings with the Regional District, save for appropriate refreshments or meals, except where such a gift or favour is authorized by law, or where such gifts or favours are received as an incident of the protocol, social obligation or common business hospitality that accompany the duties and responsibilities of the member. A member may participate in Regional District programs open to the public and may purchase Regional District property or goods offered for public sale.
- 10. Confidential Information**  
Members shall respect the confidentiality of information concerning the property, personnel or legal affairs of the Regional District. They shall neither disclose confidential information without proper authorization, nor use such information to advance their personal, financial or other private interests.
- 11. Use of Public Resources**  
Members shall not use public resources, which are not available to the public in general, such as staff time, equipment, supplies or facilities, for private gain or personal purposes.

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**12. Advocacy**

Members shall represent the official policies or positions of the Regional District to the best of their ability when designated as delegates for this purpose. When presenting their individual opinions and positions, members shall explicitly state they do not represent the Board of Directors, a committee or the Central Coast Regional District, nor will they allow the inference that they do.

**13. Policy Role of Members**

Members shall respect and adhere to the Board-Chief Administrative Officer structure of government as practiced in the Central Coast Regional District. In this structure, the Board determines the policies of the District with the advice, information and analysis provided by the public, committees, and District staff. Members, therefore, shall not interfere with the administrative functions of the District or with the professional duties of staff; nor shall they impair the ability of staff to implement Board policy decisions.

**14. Positive Work Place Environment**

~~Members shall treat other members, the public and Regional District staff with respect and shall be supportive of the personal dignity, self-esteem and wellbeing of those with whom they come in contact during the course of their professional duties. Members shall be aware of and act in accordance with the Central Coast Regional District Harassment Policy, E-8.~~

**16. Implementation**

~~The Central Coast Regional District Code of Conduct is intended to be self-enforcing. Members should view the Code as a set of guidelines that express collectively the standards of conduct expected of them. It, therefore, becomes most effective when members are thoroughly familiar with the Code and embrace its provisions.~~

~~Members elected or appointed to the Board of Directors will be requested to sign the Member Statement affirming they have read and understood the Central Coast Regional District Code of Conduct. In addition, the Board of Directors shall review annually the Code of Conduct, and shall consider recommendations from staff or committees, and update the Code as necessary.~~

**17. Compliance and Enforcement**

~~The Central Coast Regional District Code of Conduct expresses standards of ethical conduct expected for members of the District Board of Directors. Members themselves have the primary responsibility to assure that these ethical standards are understood and met, and that the public can continue to have full confidence in the integrity of the governance of the District.~~

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~~The Board of Directors may impose sanctions on members whose conduct does not comply with the District's ethical standards, such as motion of censure. The Board of Directors~~

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~~may also rescind the appointment of a member to a committee for breaching the Code of Conduct.~~

~~To ensure procedural and administrative fairness, a member who is accused of violating any provision of the Code of Conduct with the exception of paragraph 14 shall have a minimum of one week, or the time between two consecutive meetings, whichever is greater, to prepare his or her case to respond to these allegations. Before considering a sanction, the Board must ensure that a member has:~~

~~19. received a written copy of the case against him or her;~~

~~21. a minimum of one week, or the time between two consecutive meetings, whichever is greater, to prepare a defence against any allegations; and~~

~~an opportunity to be heard.~~

### Positive Workplace Environment

Members shall treat other members, the public and Regional District staff with respect and shall be supportive of the personal dignity, self-esteem and wellbeing of those with whom they come in contact during the course of their professional duties. Members are subject to and shall act in accordance with the Central Coast Regional District Workplace Discrimination, Bullying and Harassment Policy, E-\_\_\_\_\_.

### 16. Implementation [Note: there is no #15, so this section and the next could be re-numbered accordingly]

Members elected or appointed to the Board of Directors are expected to become familiar with and comply with this Code of Conduct. Members will be expected to sign the Member Statement affirming they have read and understood this Code of Conduct. In addition, the Board of Directors shall annually review the Code of Conduct, shall consider recommendations from staff or committees, and update the Code as necessary.

### 17. Compliance and Enforcement

If a Member learns of, witnesses, or experiences conduct by another Member which they believe to be a breach of this Code of Conduct, the Member may submit a complaint to [the Board/Board Chair/CAO?].

The [Board/Chair/CAO] will determine whether it is necessary to investigate the matter further and whether to appoint a third-party investigator or to investigate the matter

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internally. In some cases, the Board may already have sufficient evidence to establish a breach of the Code of Conduct without having to conduct a formal investigation.

A Member who is alleged to have breached the Code of Conduct must be informed that a complaint has been made and must be given an opportunity to respond to the allegations before a formal determination is made by the Board.

If a Member is alleged to have breached the Central Coast Regional District Workplace Discrimination, Bullying and Harassment Policy, the complaint resolution procedures set out in that policy will apply.

If the Board determines that a Member has breached the Code of Conduct, the Board may impose one or more of the following sanctions on the Member at an in-camera meeting:

- (a) a motion of censure;
- (b) removal of the Board Member from appointments such as chairperson, committees, commissions or other advisory bodies;
- (c) require a written apology from the Board Member;
- (d) where the breach is a breach of the Workplace Discrimination, Bullying and Harassment Policy, any of the remedies listed therein; and
- (e) any other measure permitted by the *Community Charter, the Local Government Act, or other applicable legislation.*

Prior to considering any sanctions against the Member, the Board must ensure the Member has:

1. Received a written summary explaining why the Board has concluded that the Member breached the Code of Conduct;
2. Been given a minimum of one (1) week to prepare a statement in response; and
- ~~23.~~3. Been given an opportunity to make oral or written submissions to the Board.

The procedures outlined in Policy E-8, Harassment, have been adopted by the Board for dealing with a complaint under Policy E-8 (see paragraph 14, above).

A violation of this Code of Conduct shall not be considered a basis for challenging the validity of a Board decision.

**Adopted:** Nov 12, 1997  
**Amended:** June 14, 2012  
**Amended:** December 12, 2013  
**Amended:** March 10, 2016  
**Amended:** November 14, 2019  
**Amended:** October 14, 2021

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