

Policy:

The guiding principle of ethics in government is that public positions, whether filled through election, appointment, or by hire, may not be used for personal gain or private advantage. The citizens of Vashon –Maury Islands expect Park District staff to perform their public responsibilities in accordance with ethical and moral standards and to conduct the business of the District only in a manner that advances the public’s interest.

The Vashon Park District Board of Commissioners has adopted a Code of Ethics, and all District staff is expected to be familiar with the provisions of the Code of Ethics and to act in a manner consistent with the code.

The Code of Ethics is attached.

Applicability:

Staff Acceptance of Gifts and Gratuities

In general, District employees cannot accept gifts with an aggregate value in excess of \$50 from a single source in a calendar year.

Items that are not considered gifts:

- Items related to the outside business of the recipient which are customary and not related to the recipient’s performance of official duties.
- Items exchanged among employees, or a social event hosted by an employee for co-workers.
- Items an employee is authorized by law to accept.
- Awards, prizes, scholarships, or other items provided in recognition of academic/District achievement.
- Payments by an entity of reasonable expenses incurred in connection with a speech, presentation, appearance or trade mission made in an official capacity.
- Unsolicited flowers, plants, and floral arrangements.
- Unsolicited advertising or promotional items of nominal value.
- Unsolicited tokens or awards of appreciation – plaques, trophies, or desk items.
- Unsolicited items for the purpose of evaluation or review, if the employee has no personal beneficial interest in the use or acquisition of the item by the agency.
- Informational material, publications, or subscriptions related to official duties.
- Food and beverages at hosted receptions where attendance is related to official duties.
- Admission to and the cost of food and beverages consumed at events sponsored by or in conjunction with a civic charitable, governmental or community organization.
- Food and beverages on infrequent occasions in the ordinary course of District business.

Procedures:

- Record gift items by employee, giftor, and with associated value in “Employee Gifts” folder in Administrative office.

Disclosure of Confidential Information

Elected officials and District employees have an obligation to keep confidential any information that is deemed sensitive or confidential, that is acquired as part of their official duties, and that is not available to the general public upon request. Employees shall not disclose confidential information to an unauthorized person. They shall not disclose or use confidential information for personal benefit or to benefit another person. Employees should set the tone for treating confidential or sensitive information with care, and with regard for the impact that it could have on an employee, a situation, or morale.

Use of District Resources for Private Gain or Benefit

Elected officials and District employees are prohibited from using District resources for their own private gain or for the private gain of any person or entity.

Financial Interests in Transactions

Elected officials and District employees are prohibited from having a financial interest in certain contracts and other kinds of transactions involving the District. They are prohibited from being beneficially interested, directly or indirectly, in a contract, sale, lease, purchase, or grant that is made by, through, or under their supervision (in whole or in part), or to accept, directly or indirectly, any compensation, gratuity, or reward from any other person beneficially interested in the contract, sale, lease, purchase, or grant.

Prohibition Against Use of Public Office or Agency Facility in Campaigns

Elected officials and District employees are prohibited from using or authorizing the use of any District facility, either directly or indirectly, for the purpose of assisting in a campaign for election of any person to any office or for the promotion of or opposition to any ballot proposition. District facilities include, but are not limited to, use of stationery, postage, machines, and equipment, use of employees of the District during working hours, office space, parking space, publications of the District, and clientele lists of persons served by the District. These prohibitions may not apply to specific actions taken at open public meetings, statements made at an open press conference, or certain other activities which are part of the normal and regular conduct of the office.

Vashon Park District

CODE OF ETHICS

Vashon Park District is committed to the highest standards of conduct by and among elected officials and employees in the performance of their public duties. Individual and collective adherence to high ethical standards is central to the maintenance of public trust and confidence in government.

While elected officials and employee agree on the need for proper conduct, they may experience personal conflict or differing views of values or loyalties. In such cases, the principles contained in the Code of Ethics provides valuable guidance in reaching decisions which are governed, ultimately, by the dictates of the individual conscience of the public official and his or her commitment to the public good.

Certain of these ethical principles are best expressed as positive statements: actions which should be taken; courses which should be followed; goals which should permeate both public and private conduct. Other principles are expressed as negative statements: actions to be avoided and conduct to be condemned.

The ethical District elected official or employee **should**:

- Properly administer the affairs of the District.
- Promote decisions which only benefit the public interest.
- Actively promote public confidence in District government.
- Keep safe all funds and other properties of the District.
- Conduct and perform the duties of the office diligently and promptly dispose of the business of the District.
- Maintain a positive image to pass constant public scrutiny.
- Evaluate all decisions so that the best service or product is obtained at a minimal cost without sacrificing quality and fiscal responsibility.
- Inject the prestige of the office into everyday dealings with the public, employees and associates.
- Maintain a respectful attitude toward employees, other public officials, colleagues, and associates.
- Effectively and efficiently work with governmental agencies and other organizations in order to further the interest of the District.
- Faithfully comply with all laws, policies, rules and regulations applicable to the District and impartially apply them to everyone.

The ethical District elected official or employee **should not**:

- Engage in outside interests that are not compatible with the impartial and objective performance of his or her duties.
- Improperly influence or attempt to influence other officials to act in his/her own interest.
- Accept anything of value from any source which is offered to, or could reasonably be expected to, influence his/her action as a public official.
- Use any District resource for personal or private benefit or gain.

The ethical District elected official or employee accepts the responsibility that his or her mission is that of servant and steward to the public.