

## **TENET 1: ACT IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST**

Recognizing that stewardship of the public interest must be their primary concern, Public Officials will work for the common good of the people of Geneva and not for any private or personal interest. They will assure fair and equal treatment of all persons, claims, and transactions appearing before Public Officials.

## **TENET 2: COMPLIANCE WITH THE LAW**

Public Officials shall comply with the laws of the nation, the State of New York, and the City of Geneva in the performance of their public duties. These laws include, but are not limited to the U.S. and New York Constitutions, the Geneva City Charter and City Code, and other laws, rules, regulations, and policies pertaining to conflict of interest, elections, financial disclosures, employer responsibilities, and open process of government.

## **TENET 3: CONDUCT OF PUBLIC OFFICIALS**

The professional and personal conduct of Public Officials must be above reproach, and avoid even the appearance of impropriety. Public Officials shall refrain from abusive conduct, personal charges, or verbal attacks upon the character or motives of other Public Officials.

## **TENET 4: RESPECT FOR PROCESS**

Public Officials shall perform their duties in accordance with processes established by the City Council, City Manager, or other appointing authority governing the deliberation of public policy issues, meaningful involvement of the public, and implementation of policy decisions.

## **TENET 5: CONDUCT OF PUBLIC MEETINGS**

Public Officials shall prepare themselves for public issues, listen courteously and attentively to all public discussions before the body, and focus on the business at hand. They shall refrain from interrupting speakers, making personal comments not germane to the business of the body, or otherwise interfering with the orderly conduct of meetings.

## **TENET 6: DECISIONS BASED ON MERIT**

Public Officials shall base their decisions on the merits and substance of the matter at hand, rather than on unrelated considerations.

## **TENET 7: COMMUNICATION**

Public Officials shall share substantive information with the public that is relevant to a matter under consideration by public bodies when they have received information from sources outside of the public decision-making process.

## **TENET 8: CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

In order to assure their independence and impartiality on behalf of the common good, Public Officials shall not use their official positions to influence government decisions in which they have a material financial interest, or where they have an organizational responsibility or personal relationship which may give the appearance of a conflict of interest. In accordance with applicable law, members shall disclose investments, interests in real property, sources of income, and gifts; and they shall abstain from participating in deliberations and decision making where conflicts may exist.

## **TENET 9: GIFTS AND FAVORS**

Public Officials shall not take any special advantage of services or opportunities for personal gain, by virtue of their public office which are not available to the public in general. They shall refrain from accepting any gifts, favors, or promises of future benefits which might compromise their independence of judgment or action or gives the appearance of being compromised.

## **TENET 10: CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION**

Public Officials shall respect the confidentiality of information as protected under the New York Open Meetings and Open Records laws, concerning the property, personnel, or other affairs of the City. They shall neither disclose confidential information without proper legal authorization, nor use such information to advance their personal, financial, or other private interests.

## **TENET 11: — USE OF PUBLIC RESOURCES**

Public Officials shall not use public resources not available to the public in general, such as City staff time, equipment, supplies, or facilities for private gain or personal use.

## **TENET 12: REPRESENTATION OF PRIVATE INTERESTS**

In keeping with their role as stewards of the public interest, Public Officials shall not appear on behalf of private interests of third parties before any proceeding of a City body.

## **TENET 13: ADVOCACY**

Public Officials shall represent the official policies or positions of their body to the best of their ability when designated as delegates for this purpose. When presenting their individual opinions and positions, Public Officials shall specifically state that they do not represent their body or the City of Geneva, nor will they allow the inference that they do.

## **TENET 14: ROLE OF PUBLIC OFFICIALS**

City Councilors shall respect the role of the City Manager, and vice versa. Councilors will determine policy with the advice, information, and analysis provided by the public, boards, commissions, and committees, and City Staff. Except as provided for by the Charter, Councilors shall not interfere with the administrative functions of the City or the professional duties of the City staff; nor shall they impair the ability of staff to implement Council policy.

## **TENET 15: INDEPENDENCE OF BOARDS, COMMISSIONS, AND COMMITTEES**

Because of the value of independent advice of boards, commissions and committees to the public decision-making process, Councilors shall refrain from using their position to unduly influence the deliberations or outcomes of board, commission, or committee proceedings.

## **TENET 16: POSITIVE WORKPLACE ENVIRONMENT**

Public Officials shall support the maintenance of a positive and constructive workplace environment for City employees, appointees, elected officials, and businesses dealing with the City. Public Officials shall recognize their special role in dealing with City employees to in no way create the perception of inappropriate direction to staff.

## **TENET 17: IMPLEMENTATION**

As an expression of the standards of conduct for Public Officials expected by the City, the Code of Ethics is intended to be self-enforcing. It therefore becomes most effective when Public Officials are thoroughly familiar with it and embrace its provisions. For this reason, ethical standards shall be included in regular orientations for candidates for City Council, applicants for boards, commissions, and committees, newly elected and appointed officials, and City staff. Public Officials shall sign a statement affirming that they read and understood the Code of Ethics. In addition, the Code of Ethics shall be annually reviewed by City Council and all boards, commissions, and committees. City Council shall consider amendments to the Code of Ethics as recommended by the public and by Public Officials at its annual review of the document.