



TOWN OF GRANTHAM NEW HAMPSHIRE

OFFICE OF THE SELECTMEN
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Ethics Policy

For Town Officials, Board Members, Employees & Volunteers

It is the policy of the Town of Grantham to uphold, promote and demand the highest standards of ethics and conduct from all Town officials, board members, employees, and volunteers, whether elected, appointed or hired. Town officials, board members, employees, and volunteers shall maintain the highest standards of personal integrity, truthfulness, honesty, and fairness in discharging their public duties and never abuse their positions of trust for improper or personal gain. All shall look to these principals for guidance.

THE PRINCIPLES OF ETHICS:

1. There shall be no conflict of interest
2. There shall be a duty to recuse
3. There shall be a duty to disclose
4. There shall be no unfair personal use of town property
5. There shall be no misuse of confidential information
6. There shall be no improper gifts
7. All shall expect to receive fair and equal treatment

PURPOSE:

The purpose of these principles is to establish guidelines for the ethical standards of conduct for Town officials, board members, employees, and volunteers.

We expect our Town officials, board members, employees, and volunteers:

1. To act in the best interests of the Town.
2. To disclose any personal, financial, or other interests in matters affecting the Town that come before them for action.
3. To remove themselves from decision making if they have a conflict of interest or even the appearance of one.
4. To be independent, impartial, and responsible to their fellow townspeople in their actions.

We expect the Town's decisions and policies to be made through the proper channels of government.

We expect any public position in our Town not to be used for personal gain. It is important that the public has confidence in the integrity of its government and that Town officials, board members, employees, and volunteers know and understand the contents of this document and can thus have an opportunity to protect their personal reputation.

EXPLANATION OF THE ETHICAL PRINCIPLES:

1. *There Shall be No Conflicts of Interest* – Town officials, board members, employees, and volunteers of the Town of Grantham shall avoid conflicts of interest or even the appearance of a conflict of interest.

Town officials, board members, employees, and volunteers shall not participate in any matter in which they, or members of their family, have a personal interest that may directly or indirectly affect or influence the performance of their duties. In such instances, they should recuse themselves from discussion and decision-making. Recusal means to remove oneself completely from all further participation in the matter in question.

Town officials, board members, employees, and volunteers who have been recused shall immediately leave the room or shall seat themselves with the other members of the public who are present. When recused they shall not participate in further discussions unless they clearly state for the record that they are doing so only as a general member of the public. As a recused person they shall not deliberate or vote on the matter in question.

2. *There shall be a Duty to Recuse in Quasi-Judicial Action* – A “quasi-judicial action” is any action where the board or committee is acting like a judge or a jury. For example, when a board or committee has a duty to notify the potential parties, hear the parties and can only decide on the matter after weighing and considering such evidence and arguments as the parties chose to lay before such a board or committee, they are involved in a quasi-judicial action. The work of the Planning and Zoning boards is largely a quasi-judicial action. Not only do Town officials, board members, employees, and volunteers have such a duty to recuse themselves as outlined in the section above, they should recuse themselves in a quasi-judicial action if they would not be a qualified to sit as a juror in that case. For example, jurors are not qualified to sit in a case if they have advised or assisted either party in a matter being decided or are prejudiced to any degree regarding the pending matter or believe they cannot for any reason be totally fair and impartial.
3. *There Shall be a Duty to Disclose* – Town officials, board members, employees and volunteers shall not participate in the conduct of business on behalf of the Town or enter into discussion or deliberation of any matter without first publicly and on the record stating all dealings, interests and relationships and any other possible conflicts that may exist with the parties or the issue under consideration.
4. *There shall be no Unfair Use of Town Property* – No Town officials, board members, employees, and volunteers shall use Town property, services, or labor personally or make the same available to other residents upon request on equal terms.
5. *There Shall be no Misuse of Confidential Information* – No Town officials, board members, employees, and volunteers shall use any confidential information acquired by virtue of that individual’s official position for personal benefit or for the benefit of any other person or business.

In addition, no Town officials, board members, employees, and volunteers shall violate the privacy of others by publicizing, gossiping or discussing confidential information acquired in the course of official duties.
6. *There Shall be no Improper Gifts* – No Town official, board member, employee or volunteer shall accept a gift with a value over \$25.00 (or allow acceptance of such gift by a family member) from

any individual, group or corporation that has or is likely to have matters pending before the Town, board, committee or commission on which the official or employee serves.

7. *All Shall Expect to Receive Fair and Equal Treatment* – Acting in their official capacity, all Town officials, board members, employees and volunteers shall give each-and-every person fair and equal treatment. No Town officials, board members, employees and volunteers shall in the course of their official duties, give or deny any person special consideration, advantage or treatment as a result of the person's public status, position, sex, race, religion, creed, sexual orientation or national origin.

EDUCATION:

1. At the time that each newly elected or appointed official, board member or commissioner takes the oath of office, the Town Clerk/Tax Collector shall provide a copy of these ethical principles.
2. It shall be the responsibility of Administrative Assistant to provide new employees or volunteers a copy of these ethical principles.
3. The Board of Selectmen reserves the right to require ethics training as needed to all Town officials, board members, employees and volunteers so they may familiarize themselves with the provisions of these ethical principles.

APPROVED AND ADOPTED

BY THE Board of Selectmen August 28, 2019

Warren Kimball

Warren Kimball, Chairman

Constance A. Jones

Constance Jones

Peter Garland

