

**CODE OF CONDUCT FOR ELECTED OFFICIALS AND MEMBERS OF APPOINTED
BOARDS, COMMISSIONS, AND COMMITTEES**

Sec. _____. Statement of purpose.

The citizens and businesses of the City of Rome are entitled to have fair, ethical and accountable local government that has earned the public's full confidence for integrity. The City of Rome's strong desire to fulfill this mission therefore requires that:

Public officials comply with both the letter and spirit of the laws and policies affecting the operations of government;

Public officials be independent, impartial and fair in their judgment and actions;

Public office be used for the public good, not for personal gain;

Deliberations and processes be conducted openly, unless legally confidential.

Deliberations, open and closed, shall be conducted in an atmosphere of respect and civility.

To this end, the City Commission has adopted this code of conduct for elected officials and members of appointed boards, commissions, and committees to assure public confidence in the integrity of local government and its effective and fair operation.

Sec. _____. Act in the public interest.

Recognizing that stewardship of the public interest must be their primary concern, members will work for the common good of the people of the City of Rome and not for any private or personal interest, and they will assure fair and equal treatment of all persons, claims and transactions coming before the City of Rome Commission, boards, and committees.

Sec. _____. Comply with the law.

Members shall comply with the laws of the nation, the State of Georgia, and the City of Rome in the performance of their public duties. These laws include, but are not limited to: the United States and Georgia constitutions; laws pertaining to conflicts of interest, election campaigns, financial disclosures, employer responsibilities, and open processes of government; and city ordinances and policies.

Sec. _____. Conduct of members.

The professional and personal conduct of members must be above reproach and avoid even the appearance of impropriety. Members shall refrain from abusive conduct, harassment, personal charges or verbal attacks upon the character or motives of other members of Commission, boards, and committees, the staff or public.

Sec. _____. Respect for process.

Members shall perform their duties in accordance with the processes and rules of order established by the City Commission and boards, and committees governing the deliberation of public policy issues, meaningful involvement of the public, and implementation of policy decisions of the City Commission by city staff.

Sec. _____. Conduct of public meetings.

Members 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 other speakers, making personal comments not germane to the business of the body, or otherwise interfering with the orderly conduct of meetings.

Sec. _____. Decisions based on merit.

Members shall base their decisions on the merits and substance of the matter at hand.

Sec. _____. Communications.

Members shall publicly share substantive information that is relevant to a matter under consideration by the Commission, boards, and committees which they may have received from sources outside the public decision-making process.

Sec. _____. Ethics.

Members shall comply with all requirements the ethics laws of the State of Georgia, the City Charter and City Ordinance. Members, if they have questions about these laws, are encouraged to seek advice from the city attorney regarding the interpretation and application of these laws.

Sec. _____. Advocacy.

Members shall represent the official policies or positions of the City Commission, board, or committee 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 their body or the City of Rome, nor will they allow the inference that they do.

Sec. _____. Policy role of members.

Members shall respect and adhere to the Commission-manager structure of the city as outlined in the city's policies and procedures and follow the City Charter with respect to the city manager's relationship with the City Commission. In this structure, the City Commission determines the policies of the city with the advice, information and analysis provided by the public, boards, commissions, and committees and city staff. Except as provided by the city ordinance, members therefore shall not interfere with the administrative functions of the city or

the professional duties of city staff; nor shall they impair the ability of staff to implement Commission policy decisions.

Sec. _____. Positive work place environment.

Members shall support the maintenance of a positive and constructive work place environment for city employees and for citizens and businesses dealing with the city. Members shall recognize their special role in dealings with city employees and refrain from creating the perception of inappropriate direction to staff.

Sec. 2-362. Implementation.

As an expression of the standards of conduct for members expected by the city, this code of conduct is intended to be self-enforcing. It therefore becomes most effective when members are thoroughly familiar with it and embrace its provisions. For this reason, standards shall be included in the regular orientations for candidates for City Commission, applicants to boards, commissions, and committees and newly elected and appointed officials. Upon adoption of this code, annual thereafter and when sworn in, members entering office shall sign a statement affirming they have read and understood the city code of conduct. In addition, the code of conduct shall be reviewed bi-annually by the City Commission, boards, commissions, and committees, and the City Commission shall consider recommendations from boards, commissions, and committees and update it as necessary in November of even-numbered years.

Sec. _____. Compliance and enforcement.

This code of conduct expresses standards of conduct expected for members of City Commission, boards, commissions, and committees. Members themselves have the primary responsibility to assure that standards are understood and met, and that the public can continue to have full confidence in the integrity of government. The chairs of boards, commissions, and committees and the mayor have the additional responsibility to intervene when members' actions appearing to be in violation of the code of conduct are brought to their attention. The City Commission, by a vote of a majority of its members, may impose sanctions on members whose conduct does not comply with the city's standards, such as reprimand, formal censure, removal from meeting (if the member's conduct is disruptive or impedes the orderly conduct of business at the meeting), or removal from any position or assignment to which the member has been appointed by City Commission. The City Commission also may act to remove members of boards, commissions, and committees from office. The Commission shall not, however, have the power to remove a duly-elected official from office except as may be permitted by State law.

The City of Rome Code of Conduct
for Elected Officials and Members
of Appointed Boards, Commissions,
and Committees

STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

As a member of the City Commission or of City board, commission or committee, I agree to uphold the Code of Conduct for elected and appointed officials adopted by the City Commission and conduct myself by the following model of behavior. I will:

Recognize the worth of individual members and appreciate their individual talents, perspectives and contribution;

Help create an atmosphere of respect and civility where individual members, City staff and the public are free to express their ideas and work to their full potential;

Conduct my personal and public affairs with honesty, integrity, fairness, and respect for others;

Respect the dignity and privacy of individuals and organizations;

Keep the common good as my highest purpose and focus on achieving constructive solutions for the public benefit;

Avoid and discourage conduct, which is divisive or harmful to the best interests of the City;

Treat all people with whom I come in contact in the way I wish to be treated.

Before I speak or act I will ask myself the following four questions:

1. Is it the truth?
2. Is it fair to all concerned?
3. Will it build goodwill between all concerned?
4. Will it be beneficial to all concerned?

I affirm that I have read and that I understand the City of Rome's Code of Conduct.

Date: _____

Signature: _____

Position: _____