

## Chapter 2 ADMINISTRATION

### ARTICLE V. - ETHICS ORDINANCE

#### Sec. 2-276 Statement of Purpose:

Public Office is a public trust. The trust of the public is essential for government to function effectively. Public policy developed by government officials affects every citizen of the municipality, and it must be based on honest and fair deliberations and decisions. This process must be free from threats, favoritism, undue influence, and all forms of impropriety so that the confidence of the public is not eroded. By enacting this Ordinance, this municipality seeks to avoid any loss of trust and to maintain and increase the confidence of our citizens in the integrity and fairness of their government.

- 1) Declaration of Policy: There is hereby enacted a policy of ethics for elected and appointed officials of the Town of Coventry. The purpose of this Ordinance is to establish suitable ethical standards of conduct for all such officials by prohibiting acts or actions incompatible with the best interests of the Town of Coventry.
- 2) Definition: This Ordinance shall be applicable to all officials of the Town of Coventry. The term "official" when used throughout this Ordinance shall mean with respect to the government of the Town of Coventry, CT, any holder of public office, elected or appointed, paid or unpaid, and any member of any board, commission, or committee. It shall not mean any employee of the Town who is covered by any other policy.

#### Sec. 2-277 Conflicts of Interest.

- a) No public official shall engage in or participate in any business or transaction, including outside employment with a private business, or have an interest, direct or indirect, which is incompatible with the public discharge of their official responsibilities in the public interest or which would tend to impair their independent judgment or action in the performance of their official responsibilities.
- b) No public official may accept any gratuity, gift, favor, or promise thereof regardless of amount, nor any promise of future position, from any person, when it is the intent of the official and the person offering the same, to influence the official in the exercise of their judgment on behalf of the Town.
- c) No public official shall accept or solicit anything of value exceeding \$25.00, whether in the form of a gift or the promise of a gift, from any person, firm or corporation which to his knowledge is involved in business dealings with the Town. For purposes of this section, a gift shall not include certificates of appreciation, plaques and ceremonial gifts and/or awards.
- d)
  - 1) A public official shall refrain from voting upon or otherwise participating in any matter on behalf of the municipality if the business with which they, or an immediate family member, are associated, has a financial or personal interest in the transaction or contract, including, but not limited to, the sale of real estate, material, supplies, or services to the municipality.
  - 2) If such participation is within the scope of the public official's official responsibility, they shall be required to provide written disclosure, which sets forth in detail the nature and

extent of such interest, to the Town Council, and if serving on a board or commission, the Chair of said board or commission.

- 3) Notwithstanding the prohibition in subsection d (1), a public official may vote or otherwise participate in a matter if it involves a determination of general policy and the interest is shared with a substantial segment of the population of the Town.
- e)
- 1) Except for a public official who receives no compensation for their service to the municipality, other than per diem payments and reimbursement of expenses, no public official shall appear on behalf of private interests before any board, agency, or committee of the municipality.
  - 2) Except for a public official who receives no compensation for their service to the municipality, other than per diem payments and reimbursement of expenses, no public official shall represent private interests against the interest of the municipality in any litigation to which the municipality is a party.
- f) Nothing contained in this Ordinance shall prohibit or restrict a public official from appearing before any board or commission of the municipality on their own behalf, or from being a party in any action, proceeding, or litigation brought by or against the public employee or public official to which the municipality is a party.
  - g) No public official shall disclose confidential information concerning municipal affairs, nor shall they use the information for the financial interests of themselves or others.
  - h) No public official shall request, use, or permit the use of municipality-owned vehicles, equipment, facilities, materials, or property for personal convenience or profit, except when such are available to the public generally, or are provided as municipal policy for the use of such public official in the conduct of official business.
  - i) No public official, or a business with which they are associated, or any member of their immediate family shall enter into a contract with the municipality unless it is awarded in accordance with the town's purchasing policy.

#### Sec. 2-278 Complaint.

Whenever a complaint of a violation of this Ordinance is received, in writing and signed by the complainant, the Town Manager shall designate an individual to conduct an investigation and report their findings to the Town Manager upon completion of the investigation. If there is reason to believe that a violation of this Ordinance has occurred, the Town Manager shall refer the matter to the Town Council who shall initiate the procedure set forth in Section 10-4 of the Town Charter.

#### Section 2-279 Penalties.

Violation of any provision of this Ordinance shall constitute grounds for, and may be punished by: public censure and reprimand; Removal as detailed in Section 10-4 of the Town Charter; and/or any other remedy as provided by law including restitution of any pecuniary benefit received because of the violation committed.

#### Sec. 2-280 Distribution of Ordinance.

The Town Clerk shall cause a copy of this Ordinance to be distributed to every public official within 60 days after enactment of this Ordinance. Each public official shall be furnished a copy before entering

the duties of their office or employment. A signed receipt for all copies shall be returned to the Town Clerk and retained on file.