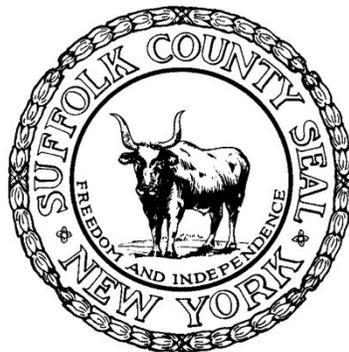


# Code of Ethics Booklet

## ETHICS AND ACCOUNTABILITY

### COUNTY OF SUFFOLK



Revised May 2017

Version 1.4

**CHANGES OF LAW POST REVISION DATE AVAILABLE ONLINE**

## **SUFFOLK COUNTY BOARD OF ETHICS**

“The Mission of the Suffolk County Board of Ethics is to practice and promote ethical literacy and conduct in government through training, transparency, and trust. In order to accomplish the Mission, the Suffolk County Board of Ethics shall maintain confidentiality, adhere to its own Code of Ethics, engage in outreach and training of public officials and employees, and recommend new laws to advance the Mission of ethical compliance.”

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# SUFFOLK COUNTY CHARTER

## ARTICLE XXX. BOARD OF ETHICS

### § C30-1. BOARD OF ETHICS ESTABLISHED.

There is hereby established a Board of Ethics.

### § C30-2. MEMBERSHIP OF THE BOARD.

- A. The Board of Ethics shall consist of five members. Two members will be appointed by the County Executive. The Presiding Officer, Majority Leader and Minority Leader of the Suffolk County Legislature will each appoint one member. The appointment of all members will be subject to approval by the County Legislature. The Board shall elect one of its members to serve as Chairperson.
- B. No more than three members of the Board shall belong to the same political party. No person, while serving as a member of the Board, shall hold any public office, seek election to any public office, be a public employee in any jurisdiction, have business dealings with the County or any elected official, hold any political party office, appear as a lobbyist before the County or make a contribution to any County elected official or candidate for County office.
- C. The two members appointed to the Board by the County Executive shall be appointed to initial terms of two years; the members appointed by the Majority Leader and the Minority Leader shall be appointed for initial terms of three years; the member appointed by the Presiding Officer shall be appointed for an initial term of four years. Thereafter, all members will be appointed for terms of four years.
- D. Any vacancy occurring on the Board other than by expiration of a term shall be filled by nomination of a successor by the appropriate appointing authority within 60 days of the creation of the vacancy. The County Legislature shall act on such nomination within 60 days of an appointment resolution being laid on the table for consideration.
- E. Three members of the Board shall constitute a quorum and the Board shall have the power to act by a majority vote of the entire membership of the Board except as otherwise provided by this article.
- F. Members shall receive compensation of \$200 for each Board meeting they attend; such compensation shall not exceed \$4800 per year. The Board shall meet at least once per month.

**[Amended 11-18-2014 by L.L. No. 1-2015]**

- G. Members may be removed by their appointing authority for substantial neglect of duty, gross misconduct in office, inability to discharge the powers or duties of office or violation of the requirements of Subsection B of this section, after written notice and opportunity to reply. The removal of members appointed by the Presiding Officer, Majority Leader and Minority Leader must be ratified by the adoption of a procedural motion by the County Legislature.

§ C30-3. POWER AND RESPONSIBILITIES.

- A. The Board shall have the authority and responsibility to:
- (1) Provide ethics training and education to Suffolk County's public servants;
  - (2) Render advisory opinions to Suffolk County's public servants on ethics and conflict of interest issues;
  - (3) Make financial disclosure statement forms available to persons required to file pursuant to Chapter 77, Part 1, Article II, of the Suffolk County Code, and review such statements; and
  - (4) Conduct investigations and hearings to determine if ethics violations have occurred and to impose penalties as authorized by local law.
- B. The Board shall promulgate rules as are necessary to implement the provisions of Chapter 77, Part 1, of the Suffolk County Code and to govern its procedures. Such rules shall be made publicly available and posted on the County's website.

§ C30-4. STAFFING; FACILITIES.

- A. The Board, by a majority vote of the Board's entire membership, shall appoint an executive director, a secretary, independent counsel and such other staff as may be necessary to exercise its powers and fulfill its obligations. The power to appoint and retain an executive director, a secretary, independent counsel and other staff shall be subject only to available appropriations provided therefor in the County operating budget, and the actual appointment and filling of such positions shall not be subject to approval by the County Executive or the Budget Office. The Board shall be deemed the appointing authority for all such personnel. The executive director, a secretary, independent counsel and support staff shall not be part of the Suffolk County Department of Law and shall not be supervised by the Department of Law; however, the Freedom of Information Law ("FOIL") appeals officer in the Department of Law shall serve as the FOIL appeals officer for the Board of Ethics. The Board, its staff and funding shall be treated as a separate agency for purposes of presentation and adoption in the annual County operating budget.
- [Amended 8-21-2012 by L.L. No. 45-2012]; [Amended 4-25-2017 by L.L. No. 10-2017]**

- B. The Board may delegate authority to the executive director and independent counsel and such delegation shall be defined in writing, provided that the executive director and independent counsel shall not be authorized to issue written advisory opinions, promulgate rules, issue subpoenas, issue final determinations of violation or make final recommendations of, or impose, penalties.
- C. The Board's office(s) shall not be sited in a building occupied by either the County Executive or the County Legislature.

§ C30-5. TRANSITION PROVISIONS.

**[Added 8-21-2012 by L.L. No. 45-2012]**

- A. Any reference to the Suffolk County Ethics Commission, its members, chairman or executive director in any other resolution, local law, charter law, ordinance, rule, or regulation of the County of Suffolk or in any state or federal law, rule, or regulation shall be construed in the first instance as reference to the Board of Ethics, its members, chairperson or executive director, anything in any other law, rule or regulation to the contrary notwithstanding.
- B. For calendar year 2012 only, the Board, by a supermajority vote of its total membership, may extend the deadline referenced in any local law, charter law, resolution, rule or regulation applicable to the Board to a date deemed appropriate by the Board; provided, however, that the deadline for filing financial disclosure statements may not be extended beyond December 31, 2012 and no other 2012 deadline may be extended beyond June 30, 2013.
- C. All property and equipment heretofore associated with, and utilized by, the Ethics Commission but inventoried to the Law Department, and all other property, equipment and records and confidential files associated with, and utilized by, the Ethics Commission wherever situated, shall be transferred and delivered to the Board of Ethics. For purposes of this subdivision, records and confidential files shall be construed broadly to include, but not be limited to, financial disclosure forms, opinions, requests for opinions, budgets, procurement documents, contracts, vouchers, requisitions, records of accounts, if any, and correspondence, notes and documents in any form whatsoever created or used in the ordinary course of business of the Ethics Commission.

# SUFFOLK COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE CODE

## Article XXX. BOARD OF ETHICS

**[Added 10-11-2011 by L.L. No. 56-2011** *Editor's Note: This local law also repealed former Art. XXX, Code of Ethics, as amended.*]

### § A30-1. DEFINITIONS.

**As used in this article, the following terms shall have the meanings indicated:**

**COUNTY EMPLOYEE** All elected officials and public servants who are employed by the County and compensated for their services. This term shall not include members of the County's occupational licensing boards.

**ELECTED OFFICIAL** A person holding office as County Executive, District Attorney, Clerk, Comptroller, Treasurer, Sheriff or member of the County Legislature.

**PUBLIC SERVANT** All officials, officers and employees of the County, whether paid or unpaid.

### § A30-2. TRAINING AND EDUCATION.

- A. The Board of Ethics shall have the responsibility of informing public servants and assisting their understanding of the conflicts of interest requirements set forth in Chapter 77, Part 1, Article I, of the Suffolk County Code. In fulfilling this responsibility, the Board shall develop a plain-language guide to conflict of interest rules and conduct at least two ethics training seminars in each even-numbered year and one training seminar in each odd-numbered year. The Board is authorized to update the ethics training program and ethics booklet as appropriate and necessary.
- B. All elected officials shall receive mandatory ethics training at the first available ethics training seminar after the elected official takes office.
- C. All County employees appointed by elected officials, including department heads and division heads, shall receive mandatory ethics training at the first available training seminar conducted after the effective date of their appointment.
- D. All County employees hired or qualified to serve by the County of Suffolk after the effective date of this article shall receive the ethics booklet prepared by the Board at their orientation session and shall sign a statement that they have received the booklet and understand that they must abide by the conflict of

interest rules contained therein during their employment with the County. Such statement shall be maintained in the employee's personnel file.

- E. Public servants who are not County employees shall receive the ethics booklet from their appointing authority within 30 days after they are qualified to serve the County and shall sign a statement that they have received the booklet and understand that they must abide by the conflict of interest rules contained therein during the time of their service with the County. Such statement shall be maintained by the public servant's appointing or supervising authority.
- F. The failure of a public servant to receive the training, to receive the ethics guide, or to sign the statement required by this section shall have no effect on the duty of the public servant to comply with the requirements of Chapter 77, Part 1, of the Suffolk County Code.
- G. The Board may utilize interactive on-line, web-based technologies to satisfy the ethics training requirements set forth herein and to publish and distribute the ethics booklet and training materials.  
**[Added 8-21-2012 by L.L. No. 45-2012]**

### § A30-3. ADVISORY OPINIONS.

- A. The Board will render advisory opinions with respect to all matters covered by Chapter 77, Part 1, Article I, of the Suffolk County Code or any other applicable provision of law governing conflicts of interest, on the request of a public servant or a supervisory official of a public servant. The request shall be in such form as the Board may require and shall be signed by the person making the request. The Board may ask a person who is seeking an advisory opinion to appear before the Board to provide further information pertinent to the requested opinion. The opinion of the Board will be based on such facts as are presented in the request or subsequently submitted in a written, signed document or which are adduced when the person requesting the opinion appears before the Board.
- B. Advisory opinions shall be issued only with respect to proposed future conduct or action by a public servant. A public servant whose conduct or action is the subject of an advisory opinion shall not be subject to penalties or sanctions by virtue of acting or failing to act due to reasonable reliance on the opinion, unless material facts were omitted or misstated in the request for an opinion. The Board may amend a previously issued advisory opinion after giving reasonable notice to the public servant that it is reconsidering its opinion.

- C. The Board will issue a requested advisory opinion within 45 days after it has completed fact finding. If the Board is unable to issue the advisory opinion within 45 days, it shall so advise the person who requested the opinion before the forty-five-day period has expired. In no event shall the Board issue an advisory opinion more than 90 days after it has completed its fact finding.
- D. Requests for advisory opinions shall be confidential, but the Commission shall make public its advisory opinions with such deletions as may be necessary to prevent disclosure of the identity of any public servant or other involved party. The advisory opinions shall be indexed by subject matter and cross-indexed by County Code section, and such index shall be maintained on an annual and cumulative basis.
- E. For the purpose of this section only the term public servant includes a prospective or former public servant and a supervisory official includes a supervisory official who will supervise a prospective public servant or a supervisory official who supervised a former public servant.  
**[Added 6-4-2013 by L.L. No. 28-2013]**

§ A30-4. FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE.

The Board shall make financial disclosure statement forms available to all persons required to file pursuant to the requirements of Chapter 77, Part 1, Article II, of the Suffolk County Code. The Board shall review and maintain these statements and otherwise administer and enforce the financial disclosure requirements in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 77, Part 1.

§ A30-5. COMPLAINTS; REFERRALS.

- A. Whenever a written complaint is received by the Board alleging a violation of Chapter 77, Part 1, Article I, of the Suffolk County Code or other applicable provision of law governing conflicts of interest by a public servant or former public servant, it shall:

  - (1) Dismiss the complaint if it determines that there is no reasonable cause to believe that a public servant has committed a violation; or
  - (2) Make an initial determination that there is reasonable cause to believe that a public servant has violated a provision of Chapter 77, Part 1, or other applicable provision of law; or
  - (3) Refer an alleged violation to the head of the agency served by the public servant if related disciplinary charges are pending against the public servant.

- B. A public servant or supervisory official of such public servant may request the Board to review and make a determination regarding a past or ongoing action of such public servant. Such request shall be reviewed and acted upon by the Board in the same manner as a complaint received by the Board under Subsection A of this section.
- C. The Board, on its own motion, may review a past or ongoing action of a public servant, in the same manner as a complaint received by the Board under Subsection A of this section.
- D. The Board's staff may answer inquiries regarding the procedure involved in making a complaint alleging an ethical violation; however, the executive director, independent counsel and support staff shall not assist any person or entity, other than the Board and its members, in the preparation of a complaint against a public servant alleging a violation of the County's Code of Ethics or other applicable provision of law governing conflicts of interest. In the event the Board receives a complaint of misconduct in a form or format that is not acceptable to the Board, the Board's staff shall notify the complainant of the defect and advise the complainant of the proper form and procedures for lodging a complaint.  
**[Added 8-21-2012 by L.L. No. 49-2012]; [Amended 4-25-2017 by L.L. No. 10-2017]**
- E. It shall be unlawful for any person to make a complaint or threaten to make a complaint to the Board against a public servant, or to offer to withdraw a complaint against a public servant, in order to improperly influence that public servant's vote, opinion, judgment, action, decision or exercise of discretion as a public servant. Such conduct will constitute a violation punishable by a fine of not more than \$1,500, or imprisonment of not more than 15 days, or both.  
**[Added 8-21-2012 by L.L. No. 49-2012]**

§ A30-6. HEARINGS.

- A. If the Board makes an initial determination, based on a complaint, review of a financial disclosure statement or other information available to the Board, that there is reasonable cause to believe that a public servant or former public servant has violated a provision of Chapter 77, Part 1, Article I, of the Suffolk County Code or other applicable provision of law, the Board shall notify the public servant of its determination in writing. The notice shall contain a statement of the facts upon which the Board relied for its determination of reasonable cause and a statement of the provisions of the law allegedly violated. The Board shall also inform the public servant of the Board's procedural rules. The public servant shall have a reasonable time to respond and shall have the right to be represented by counsel or any other person.

- B. If, after receiving the public servant's response, the Board determines that there is no reasonable cause to believe that a violation has occurred, the Board shall dismiss the matter and inform the public servant of its decision in writing. If, after considering the public servant's response, the Board determines there remains reasonable cause to believe that a violation has occurred, the Board shall direct a hearing to be held or hold a hearing on the record to determine whether a violation has occurred, or shall refer the matter to the appropriate agency if the public servant is subject to the jurisdiction of any state law or collective bargaining agreement which provides for the conduct of disciplinary proceedings.
- C. If the Board determines, after a hearing or the opportunity for a hearing, that a public servant has committed a violation, it shall issue a decision and order setting forth its conclusions and imposing such penalties as it deems appropriate and, when appropriate, may refer the matter to the District Attorney or other appropriate law enforcement agency. If the Board determines, after a hearing or the opportunity for a hearing, that a public servant has not violated provisions of Chapter 77, Part 1, it shall issue a decision setting forth its conclusion.
- D. The Board shall issue its decisions within 45 days after the completion of a hearing. If the Board is unable to issue its decision within this forty-five-day period, it shall so advise the public servant prior to the expiration of the forty-five-day period. In no event, shall the Board issue its decision more than 90 days after the completion of a hearing.
- E. Hearings of the Board shall not be public unless requested by the public servant. The order and the Board's findings and conclusions shall be made public.
- F. Nothing contained in this section shall prohibit the appointing officer of a public servant from terminating or otherwise disciplining such public servant, where such appointing officer is authorized to do so; provided, however, that such action shall not preclude the Board from exercising its powers and duties under this article with respect to the actions of any such public servant.

### § A30-7. INVESTIGATIONS.

The Board may conduct any investigation necessary to carry out the provisions of this article and Chapter 77, Part 1, of the Suffolk County Code. Pursuant to this power, the Commission may administer oaths and affirmations, subpoena witnesses, compel their attendance and require the production of any books or records which it may deem relevant or material to the investigation. Such subpoenas may only be issued by a supermajority vote of the entire membership of the Board.

## § A30-8. CONFIDENTIALITY.

**[Amended 8-21-2012 by L.L. No. 49-2012]**

- A. Except as otherwise provided by this article, testimony received or any other information obtained by a member of the Board or the staff of the Board in connection with the preparation of an advisory opinion or the investigation of a complaint or referral, or the conduct of a hearing related to a complaint or referral, is confidential and shall not be disclosed by any such individual to any person or entity outside the Board. In no event shall financial disclosure statements filed with the Board pursuant to Chapter 77, Article II, of the Suffolk County Code be deemed confidential. However, the Board shall provide all documents requested by the Suffolk County Legislature or a duly authorized committee of the Legislature that is exercising oversight of the Board of Ethics. Such a request for records must be approved by a 2/3 vote of the Legislature via a procedural motion.

**[Amended 4-25-2017 by L.L. No. 10-2017]**

- B. Any unauthorized disclosure of confidential information by a member of the Board, or the executive director, independent counsel or staff of the Board, shall be a violation punishable by a fine of not more than \$1,500, or imprisonment of not more than 15 days, or both.

## § A30-9. DISCLOSURE OF POTENTIAL CONFLICT.

**[Added 8-21-2012 by L.L. No. 49-2012** *Editor's Note: This local law also renumbered former § A30-9 as § A30-10.***]**

A member of the Board shall disclose to the full Board any personal or business relationship he or she may have with a public servant who has requested an advisory opinion or who is the subject of a complaint pending before the Board. If the member does not recuse himself or herself from participating in that particular matter or proceeding, he or she shall file a written statement with the Board explaining why he or she is able to participate fairly, objectively and in the public's interest.

## § A30-10. ANNUAL REPORT.

The Board shall prepare and submit a report to the County Executive and the County Legislature no later than March 1 each year, summarizing the activities of the Board during the preceding calendar year.

# SUFFOLK COUNTY CODE

## Chapter 77. ETHICS AND ACCOUNTABILITY

### PART 1. CODE OF ETHICS AND FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE

#### ARTICLE I. CODE OF ETHICS

##### § 77-1. DEFINITIONS.

**When used in this Part 1, the following terms shall have the meanings indicated:**

**AGENCY** A department, division, bureau, board, commission, advisory committee, office or other agency of County government.

**AGENCY SERVED BY A PUBLIC OFFICIAL** A. In the case of a County employee, the agency employing such employee; or B. In the case of other public servants, the agency which exercises control of the public servant or the agency to whom the public servant reports.

**APPEAR** To make any communication, for compensation, other than those involving ministerial matters.

**ASSOCIATED** A person or firm associated with a public servant includes a spouse, domestic partner, child, parent or sibling; a person with whom the public servant has a business or other financial interest; and each firm in which the public servant has an interest.

**BOARD** The Board of Ethics.

**BUSINESS DEALINGS WITH THE COUNTY** Any transaction with the County involving the sale, purchase, rental, disposition or exchange of any goods, services, or property, or any license, grant or benefit, and any performance with respect to any of the foregoing, but shall not include any transaction involving the public servant's residence or any ministerial matter.

**COUNTY** The County of Suffolk or any agency of the County of Suffolk.

**COUNTY EMPLOYEE** All elected officials and public servants who are employed by the County and compensated for their services, but shall not include members of occupational licensing boards.

**ELECTED OFFICIAL** A person holding office as County Executive, District Attorney, Clerk, Comptroller, Treasurer, Sheriff or member of the County Legislature.

**FIRM** A sole proprietorship, joint venture, partnership, corporation or any other form of business enterprise.

**INTEREST** A financial interest in a firm or a position with a firm held by a public servant, the public servant's spouse, domestic partner or unemancipated child.

**LOBBYIST** A person or firm registered as a lobbyist with the County of Suffolk pursuant to Chapter 580 of the Suffolk County Code or any successor statute thereto.

**MEMBER** A member of the Board of Ethics.

**MINISTERIAL MATTER** An administrative act, including the issuance of a license, permit or other permission of the County, which is carried out in a prescribed manner and which does not involve substantial personal discretion.

**OWNERSHIP INTEREST** An interest in a firm held by a public servant, or the public servant's spouse, domestic partner or unemancipated child, which exceeds 5% of the firm or an investment of \$25,000 in cash or other form of commitment, whichever is less, and any lesser interest in a firm when the public servant, or the public servant's spouse, domestic partner or unemancipated child, is an officer of the firm or exercises managerial control or responsibility regarding such firm, but shall not include interests held in any pension plan, deferred compensation plan or mutual fund, the investments of which are not controlled by the public servant, the public servant's spouse, domestic partner or unemancipated child.

**PARTICULAR MATTER** Any case, proceeding, application, request for a ruling or benefit, determination, contract, investigation, charge, accusation, arrest or similar action which involves a specific party or parties.

**POLITICAL PARTY OFFICER** A chairperson of any County political party committee elected pursuant to § 2-112 of New York Election Law or the chairperson of any duly constituted Town political party committee.

**POSITION** A position in a firm, such as an officer, director, trustee or employee, or any management position, or as an attorney, agent, broker or consultant to the firm, which does not constitute an ownership interest in the firm.

**PUBLIC SERVANT** All officials, officers and employees of the County, whether paid or unpaid.

**SPOUSE** A husband or wife of a public servant who is not legally separated from such public servant.

**SUPERVISOR** Any person having the authority to control or direct the work of a public servant.

**UNEMANCIPATED CHILD** Any son, daughter, stepson or stepdaughter who is under the age of 18, unmarried and living in the household of the public servant.

§ 77-2. PROHIBITED INTERESTS IN FIRMS DOING BUSINESS WITH THE COUNTY.

- A. No public servant shall have an ownership interest in a firm which such public servant knows is engaged in business dealings with the department or agency served by such public servant.
- B. No County employee shall have an ownership interest in a firm which such employee knows is engaged in business dealings with the County.
- C. An individual who, prior to becoming a public servant, has an ownership interest which would be prohibited under this section, shall either:
- (1) Divest of the ownership interest; or
  - (2) Terminate the business dealing with the County; or
  - (3) Disclose to the Board such ownership interest and comply with its order.
- D. A public servant who has an ownership interest and did not know of a business dealing which would cause the interest to be prohibited, but has subsequently gained knowledge of such business dealing; or a public servant who holds an ownership interest which, subsequent to the public servant's acquisition of the interest, enters into a business dealing which would cause the ownership interest to be prohibited; or a public servant, who, by operation of law, obtains an ownership interest which would be prohibited shall disclose to the Board such ownership interest. Further, the public servant will, within 15 days of knowing of the business dealing, either:
- (1) Divest of the ownership interest; or
  - (2) Terminate the business dealing with the County; or
  - (3) Ask the Board to determine whether such ownership interest, if maintained, would be in conflict with the proper discharge of the public servant's official duties.
- E. When an individual discloses an ownership interest to the Board pursuant to Subsection C of this section, or a public servant requests that the Board make a determination regarding an ownership interest pursuant to Subsection D, the Board shall issue an order setting forth its determination as to whether or not

such interest, if maintained, would be in conflict with the proper discharge of the public servant's official duties. In making such determination, the Board shall take into account the nature of the public servant's duties, the manner in which the interest may be affected by any action of the County, the appearance of conflict and such other factors as the Board deems appropriate. If the Board determines a conflict exists, the Board's order shall require divestiture or such other action as it deems appropriate which may mitigate such conflict.

### § 77-3. PROHIBITED CONDUCT.

- A. A public servant who has an interest in a firm which is not prohibited by § 77-2 shall not take any action as a public servant particularly affecting that interest.
- B. No public servant shall engage in any business, transaction or private employment, or have any financial or private interest which is in conflict with the proper discharge of his or her official duties.
- C. No public servant shall use his or her official position or office, or take or fail to take any action, in a manner which he or she knows or has reason to know may result in a personal financial benefit to himself or herself, a person or firm associated with the public servant, a customer or client of the public servant or any person from whom the public servant has received a gift or any goods or services for less than fair market value, during the preceding 12 months.
- D. No public servant shall disclose any confidential information concerning the property, affairs or government of the County which is obtained as a result of the official duties of such public servant and which is not otherwise available to the public or use such information to advance any financial or private interest of the public servant or of any person associated with the public servant; provided, however, that this shall not prohibit any public servant from disclosing information concerning conduct which the public servant knows or reasonably believes to involve waste, inefficiency, corruption, criminal activity or conflict of interest.
- E. No public servant shall solicit or accept any gift having a value of \$75 or more from any person or firm which such public servant knows is or intends to become engaged in business dealings with the County.
- F. No public servant shall receive compensation for performing any official duty except from the County or accept or receive any gift or gratuity from any person or entity whose interests will be affected by the public servant's official action or whose interests have been affected by the public servant's official action.

- G. No public servant shall solicit, accept or receive any gift or gratuity from a lobbyist.
- H. No public servant shall, for compensation, represent private interests before any County agency or appear directly or indirectly on behalf of private interests in matters involving the County. For a public servant who is not a County employee, this prohibition shall apply only to the agency served by the public servant.
- I. No public servant shall appear as attorney or counsel against the interests of the County in any litigation in which the County is a party, or in any action or proceeding in which the County, or any public servant of the County, acting in the course of official duties, is a complainant, provided that this subsection shall not apply to an elected official representing himself or herself, or to a public servant employed by an elected official who appears as attorney or counsel for that elected official, in any litigation, action or proceeding in which the elected official has standing and authority to participate by virtue of his or her capacity as an elected official. This subsection shall not apply to an elected official who represents himself or herself in an election law matter or to a public servant who represents a defendant in a criminal proceeding. For a public servant who is not a County employee, this prohibition shall apply only to the agency served by the public servant.
- J. No public servant shall coerce or attempt to coerce, by intimidation, threats or otherwise, another public servant to engage in political activities or participate in a political campaign. Participation in a political campaign shall include managing or aiding in the management of a campaign, soliciting votes, circulating nominating petitions or canvassing voters for a particular candidate or performing similar acts which are unrelated to the public servant's duties or responsibilities.
- K. No public servant shall compel, induce or request any person to make a monetary or in-kind contribution to any candidate for elected office, committee or political party under threat of prejudice to, or promise of, advantage in rank, compensation or other job-related status.
- L. No public servant shall attempt to influence the course of any proposed legislation in the County Legislature that will affect an interest of the public servant or the interest of a person or firm associated with the public servant without publicly disclosing to the Legislature the nature and extent of the private interest.

- M. No public servant shall give or promise to give any portion of his or her compensation or any money or valuable thing to any person in consideration of having been nominated, appointed, elected or employed as a public servant.
- N. No public servant shall make personal use of County letterhead, personnel, equipment, supplies or resources.

§ 77-4. PROHIBITION ON DUAL OFFICE-HOLDING; OTHER PROVISIONS RELATING TO POLITICAL PARTY OFFICIALS.

- A. No political party officer shall be eligible to serve as an elected official, department commissioner, assistant district attorney or member of any board, commission, authority, or public benefit corporation whose members are appointed by the County Executive or County Legislature.
- B. No elected official shall hold another paid position of employment with the County or a paid position of employment with any department, office, commission, board or agency of the United States of America, New York State, any town or village government, or public benefit corporation created under the provisions of New York State law. This provision shall not apply to an elected official who also holds a position as a teacher in a public school district or a professor at a public university or college.
- C. A political party officer may represent private interests before a County agency but he or she shall first disclose to the Board the nature and scope of the services to be provided.
- D. No political party officer or firm in which he or she holds an ownership interest shall have business dealings with the County, except that a political party officer or his or her firm may receive a contract from the County as a result of a competitive bidding process conducted in accordance with Article 5-A of the New York General Municipal Law.

§ 77-5. EXEMPTIONS.

**This article shall not prohibit:**

- A. An elected official from appearing without compensation before any County agency on behalf of constituents in the performance of his or her public duties and responsibilities.

- B. A public servant from accepting or receiving any County benefit which is provided for or made available to residents generally, or a substantial class of residents to which the public servant belongs.
- C. An elected official from proposing or voting on a measure that will provide a benefit to the elected official, if the benefit will be available to County residents generally or to a substantial class of residents to which the public servant belongs.
- D. A public servant or public servant's spouse from acting as an attorney, agent, broker, officer, director or consultant for any not-for-profit corporation or other entity which operates on a not-for-profit basis, which has business dealings with the County, provided that such public servant takes no direct or indirect part in such business dealings and that the public servant receives no salary or other compensation for such activities.
- E. A contract between the County and a public servant for instructing approved emergency medical services training service programs.
- F. A contract between the County and a public servant for the purpose of providing a foster home for a child under the care of the Suffolk County Department of Social Services, unless the public servant's official responsibilities include approving, authorizing or auditing foster care payments.
- G. An elected official from accepting an invitation to, and attending and participating in, an event sponsored by a community group or organization.

#### § 77-6. POST-EMPLOYMENT RESTRICTIONS.

- A. No public servant shall solicit, negotiate for, or accept employment with any firm which is involved in business dealings with the County while such public servant is directly concerned with or personally participating in those business dealings on behalf of the County. This prohibition shall not apply to positions in the federal, state or any local government.
- B. No former public servant shall appear, within a two-year period after his or her separation from County service, before the County agency served by such public servant. This prohibition shall not apply to a former public servant who appears before a County agency on behalf of any government entity, including the County of Suffolk, as an elected representative, employee or consultant, provided that, in the case of a former public servant serving as a consultant, such former public servant contracts to provide such consultant services directly with the County. **[Amended 12-20-2016 by L.L. No. 1-2017]**

- C. No person who has served as a public servant shall appear before the County, or receive compensation for any services rendered, in relation to any particular matter in which such person had participated personally and substantially as a public servant, provided that, such prohibition shall not apply to a former public servant serving as a consultant to the County, where such former public servant contracts to provide such consultant services directly with the County.  
**[Amended 12-20-2016 by L.L. No. 1-2017]**
- D. No elected official shall appear before any agency in the branch of County government served by such elected official within a period of two years after such official's separation from County service. For the purposes of this section, the executive branch consists of all agencies of the County, except the County Legislature. This prohibition shall not apply to a former elected official who appears before a County agency on behalf of another governmental entity as an elected representative or employee.
- E. No public servant shall, after leaving County service, disclose or use for private advantage any confidential information gained from County service which is not otherwise available to the public; however, this shall not prohibit any former public servant from disclosing any information concerning conduct which the public servant knows or reasonably believes to involve waste, inefficiency, corruption, criminal conduct or conflict of interest.
- F. No elected official may resign prior to the completion of his or her term of office and be employed by the County in any other position for a period of two years after his or her resignation.
- G. No elected official may resign prior to the completion of his or her term of office and be employed with a certified employee organization which engages in collective bargaining negotiations with the County for a period of two years after his or her resignation.
- H. No elected official whose term of office has expired may accept employment with a certified employee organization which engages in collective bargaining negotiations with the County for a period of two years after the expiration of his or her term.
- I. Nothing contained in this section shall prohibit a former public servant from being associated with or having a position in a firm which appears before a County agency or from acting in a ministerial matter regarding business dealings with the County.

§ 77-7. RECUSAL AND DISCLOSURE.

- A. A public servant shall promptly recuse himself or herself from acting on any matter when acting on the matter, or failing to act on the matter, would constitute prohibited conduct under the Code of Ethics or would financially benefit the public servant, a person or firm associated with the public servant, a customer or client or any person from whom the public servant has received a gift, or any goods or services for less than market value in the preceding 12 months.
- B. Whenever a public servant is required to recuse himself or herself under the Code of Ethics, he or she shall:
  - (1) Promptly inform his or her immediate supervisor, if any;
  - (2) Promptly file with the Board a signed statement disclosing the nature and extent of the conflict; and
  - (3) Immediately refrain from participating further in the particular matter.

§ 77-8. DISCLOSURE INVOLVING COUNTY CONTRACTS.

- A. Where a public servant has, or acquires, an interest in any actual or proposed contract, purchase agreement, lease agreement or other agreement with the County, the public servant shall disclose the nature and extent of that interest in writing to his or her immediate supervisor and to the Board as soon as he or she has knowledge of the actual or prospective interest.
- B. For the purposes of this section, "interest" means a direct or indirect pecuniary or material benefit accruing to the public servant as a result of a contract with the County. A public servant shall be deemed to have an interest in the contract of:
  - (1) His or her spouse, except as to his or her spouse's employment agreement with the County;
  - (2) A firm, partnership, or association of which the public servant is a member or employee; and
  - (3) A corporation of which the public servant is an officer, director or employee.

§ 77-9. PENALTIES FOR OFFENSES.

- A. Upon a determination by the Board that a violation of § 77-1 or § 77-2 involving a contract, sale or other transaction has occurred, the County may elect to void the contract, sale or transaction in question.

- B. Upon a determination by the Board that a violation of § 77-2, 77-3, 77-7 or 77-8 of this article has occurred, the Board shall have the authority to impose fines up to \$10,000 and to recommend to the hiring authority suspension or removal of the public servant from office or employment.
- C. Any person who knowingly violates § 77-2, 77-3, 77-4, 77-6, 77-7 or 77-8 of this article shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and subject to a term of imprisonment not in excess of one year and/or a fine of \$1,000.

ARTICLE II. FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE

§ 77-10. PERSONS REQUIRED TO FILE FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE STATEMENT.

**Notwithstanding any other provision of law to the contrary, the following public servants and persons shall file with the Board the approved disclosure statement by May 15 of each year, unless a different date is provided below, answering each and every question contained in the statement:**

- A. Elected officials and chairpersons of County political party committees.
- B. Each person, who is not otherwise required to file a financial disclosure statement pursuant to this article, who has declared his or her intention to seek nomination or election and who has filed a petition for the Office of County Executive, District Attorney, Comptroller, Clerk, Treasurer, Sheriff or County Legislature, shall file such statement on or before the last day for filing his or her designating petitions.
- C. Each person, who is not otherwise required to file a financial disclosure statement pursuant to this article, who has been designated to fill a vacancy in a designation or nomination for the Office of County Executive, District Attorney, Comptroller, Clerk, Treasurer, Sheriff or County Legislature, shall file such statement within 15 days after a certificate designating such person to fill such vacancy is filed with the Board of Elections.
- D. Each department head, chief deputy department head and deputy department head.
- E. Each employee of the County Executive's Office and the County Legislature whose responsibilities include the independent exercise of managerial or policy making functions, as annually determined by the appointing authority, subject to review by the Board.

§ 77-10.

PERSONS REQUIRED TO FILE FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

- E. Each County employee, other than an employee of the County Executive's Office and the County Legislature, who holds a policymaking position as annually determined by the head of his or her agency, subject to review by the Board.
- G. Each County employee whose duties at any time during the preceding calendar year involved the negotiation, authorization or approval of leases, franchises, revocable consents, concessions, real estate licenses and contracts, including those involving the sale, rental, or lease of real property.
- H. Members appointed to the Suffolk County Planning Commission, the Board of the Suffolk County Off-Track Betting Corporation, the Suffolk County Industrial Development Agency, the Suffolk County Water Authority, and the Board of Trustees of the Department of Parks, Recreation and Conservation.

§ 77-11. PROCEDURES FOR FILING AND REVIEW OF FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE STATEMENTS.

- A. Each agency head shall determine by February 15 of each year, subject to review by the Board, which persons within the agency are required to submit a financial disclosure statement pursuant to the provisions § 77-10F and G, and shall inform such employees of their obligation to file the statement. All agency heads shall file with the Board, by March 1 each year, a list of persons within their agency obligated to file a financial disclosure statement.
- B. The County Executive and the Presiding Officer of the County Legislature shall determine by February 15 of each year, subject to review by the Board, which persons within their respective offices are required to submit a financial disclosure statement pursuant to the provisions of § 77-10E. The County Executive and the Presiding Officer shall file with the Board, by March 1 each year, a list of persons within their offices obligated to file a financial disclosure statement.
- C. The Board shall promulgate rules establishing procedures whereby a person required to file an annual financial disclosure statement may request an additional period of time within which to file such report, due to justifiable cause or undue hardship. However, in no case shall the Board's rules authorize the filing of a statement later than September 1 in any year.
- D. Any amendments and changes to a financial disclosure statement made after its filing shall be made on a separate form to be provided by the Board and attached to the statement.

§ 77-11. PROCEDURES FOR FILING AND REVIEW OF FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE STATEMENTS

- E. The Board may establish rules and procedures for the electronic filing of financial disclosure statements.

§ 77-12. CONTENT AND FORM OF STATEMENT

- A. The financial disclosure statement filed in any given year shall provide financial information for the preceding calendar year.
- B. The statement set forth in the Exhibit A, attached hereto and made a part of this Part 1, *Editor's Note: Exhibit A can be found in the Suffolk County Code on the Board of Ethics webpage*, shall be the approved financial disclosure statement for the County of Suffolk. Notwithstanding any other provision of law to the contrary, each person subject to financial disclosure requirements pursuant to § 77-10, shall file this approved financial disclosure statement, except that the members of the Suffolk County Planning Commission and the Suffolk County Parks Trustees shall complete the statement set forth in Exhibit B, which is attached hereto and made a part of this Part 1. *Editor's Note: Exhibit B can be found in the Suffolk County Code on the Board of Ethics webpage.*

§ 77-13. REVIEW OF STATMENT

The Board or its staff will review each financial disclosure statement filed with it to determine if there has been compliance with this article governing financial disclosure.

§ 77-14. PUBLIC INSPECTION OF STATEMENTS

- A. Information filed in financial disclosure statements required by this article shall be maintained by the Board, shall not be deemed confidential, and shall be made available for public inspection, upon written request on such form as the Board shall prescribe regardless of whether a Freedom of Information Law ("FOIL") request has been made for the release of said information. The Board shall respond to requests for inspection of financial disclosure statements in the order that they are received and the Board shall make the records available for inspection within ten business days of the request.

**[Amended 4-25-2017 by L.L. No. 10-2017]**

- B. Any person required to file a statement may, at the time the statement is filed, submit a request to the Board, in such form as the Board shall require, to withhold any item disclosed therein on the ground that the inspection of such item by the public would constitute an unwarranted invasion of his or her privacy or a risk to the safety or security of any person. The Board shall evaluate such request and any such item shall be withheld from public

inspection upon a finding by the Board that the inspection of such item by the public would constitute an unwarranted invasion of privacy or a risk to the safety or security of any person. The Board shall provide a written notification of the Board's determination to the person who requested that information be withheld from public inspection in a timely manner, and shall not release the information subject to the request until at least 10 days after mailing such notification.

- C. Whenever the Board produces a financial disclosure statement for public inspection, the Board shall notify the person who filed the report of the production and of the identity of the person to whom such statement was produced.
- D. Categories of value shall be confidential and this information will be redacted by the Board before a financial disclosure statement is made available for public inspection.

#### § 77-15. RETENTION OF RECORDS

Statements filed pursuant to this article and other records of the Board shall be retained and disposed of in accordance with the Records Retention and Disposal Schedule issued pursuant to Article 57-A of the New York Arts and Cultural Affairs Law.

#### § 77-16. PENALTIES FOR OFFENSES

- A. Any person required to file a financial disclosure statement with the Board pursuant to this article or any provision of County law who has not so filed at the end of one week after the required filing date shall be subject to a fine of not less than \$250 or more than \$1,000. In determining the amount of the fine, the Board shall consider factors, including, but not limited to, the person's failure in prior years to file a report in a timely manner, and the length of the delay in filing. The Board may waive a fine entirely if a person establishes that the failure to file a report in a timely manner was due to illness, injury or other hardship.

**[Amended 11-18-2014 by L.L. No. 1-2015]**

- B. If any County employee subject to financial disclosure requirements fails to file a statement as required by this article, the Board shall notify the employee's supervisor and the County Comptroller of such failure. Upon such notification, the Comptroller shall withhold the pay checks of said employee.
- C. Any intentional violation of this article, including but not limited to failure to file, failure to include assets or liabilities, and misstatement of assets or

liabilities, shall constitute a misdemeanor punishable by imprisonment for not more than one year or by a fine not to exceed \$1,000, or both, and shall constitute misconduct and be grounds for disciplinary action, including removal from employment in the manner provided by law.

## PART 2. TIME ACCOUNTING

### ARTICLE III. TIME ACCOUNTING BY COMMISSIONERS, DEPARTMENT HEADS AND DEPUTIES

#### § 77-17. LEGISLATIVE INTENT

- A. This Legislature hereby finds and determines that recent actions on the County's operating budget have required enormous sacrifice on the part of everyone, including County taxpayers and County employees.
- B. This Legislature also finds and determines that the fiscal difficulties currently confronting the County of Suffolk require full verifiable accounting of time by all commissioners, department heads, deputy commissioners or deputy department heads.
- C. Therefore, the purpose of this Part 2 is to require a full accounting and verification of all time sheets by commissioners, department heads, deputy commissioners and deputy department heads.

#### § 77-18. TIME SHEETS

- A. Each head or commissioner, as the case may be (except an elected head of a department), of a County department or agency, each chief deputy and each deputy thereof shall file a completed time sheet on a monthly basis as a precondition of receipt of compensation for such position of employment.
- B. The time sheets to be filed under Subsection A. of this section shall contain an accurate accounting of the number of hours of actual employment of said County officials and of any accruals arising thereunder.
- C. The time sheets required by this section shall be reviewed for compliance by the County Department of Audit and Control, or any successor department thereto, except that time sheets for the chief deputy or any deputy in the Comptroller's office shall be reviewed for compliance by the County Department of Human Resources, Personnel and Civil Service.  
**[Amended 9-15-2011 by L.L. No. 49-2011]**

§ 77-18.

TIME SHEETS

- D. Failure to comply with this section and to file such time sheets shall constitute a basis for denial of payment of County compensation to such individual who is in noncompliance.

§ 77-19. APPLICABILITY.

This Part 2 shall apply to all hours of employment occurring on or after the effective date of this Part 2.

Appendix A

**FOR OFFICE USE ONLY:**

COMPLAINT NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE RECEIVED: \_\_\_\_\_

EBCF-2013  
2 Page Form



## SUFFOLK COUNTY BOARD OF ETHICS

Mailing: 335 Yaphank Avenue, Yaphank, New York 11980 • Office 631.854.0022 • Fax 631.854.0028

### *EXAMPLE* Ethics Violation Complaint Form

#### Complainant's Information

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

(STAMP RECEIVED)

#### Alleged Violation

Who is the complaint against? : \_\_\_\_\_

What is your association or affiliation to the person (s) you are filing a complaint against? : \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

How is this person associated to Suffolk County?

“X” Box that applies (Required):     COUNTY EMPLOYEE     ELECTED OFFICIAL

BOARD/COMMITTEE/COMMISSION/COUNCIL MEMBER

Date and Time Alleged Violation Occurred: \_\_\_\_\_

Location and Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Please explain your complaint fully, if insufficient space is provided additional sheets may be attached, providing a detailed description of the facts and the actions of the person (s) named on page 1 of this form. Include relevant dates and the names and addresses of persons whom you believe may be witnesses.

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Identify below any supporting documents, i.e. Emails, contracts, photographs, invoices, statements of witnesses, and audio/visual recordings. Attach all supporting documents to this form.

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Please read statement below, sign and date.

I, \_\_\_\_\_, hereby acknowledge that making a false statement herein is  
(Insert Your Name)  
punishable as a misdemeanor under section 210.45 of the New York State Penal Law.

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

Complainant's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**NOTICE: It shall be unlawful for any person to make a complaint or threaten to make a complaint to the Board against a public servant, or to offer to withdraw a complaint against a public servant, in order to improperly influence that public servant's vote, opinion, judgment, action, decision or exercise of discretion as a public servant. Such conduct will constitute a violation punishable by a fine of not more than \$1,500, or imprisonment of not more than 15 days, or both.**





Appendix D

**ATTENTION EMPLOYEE:** Please complete the statement below which shall be maintained in your personnel file.

**Certification Statement**

**Pursuant to Article XXX §A30-2 (D) of the Suffolk County Administrative Code**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, hereby certify that I have received a copy of Suffolk County's Code of Ethics Booklet and that I understand that I must abide by the conflict of interest rules contained therein during the time of my service with the County.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

SUFFOLK COUNTY BOARD OF ETHICS  
FORMS AND PROCEDURES  
ARE AVAILABLE TO BE DOWNLOADED  
FROM OUR WEBPAGE.

VISIT OUR WEBPAGE AT:

**[WWW.SUFFOLKCOUNTYNY.GOV](http://WWW.SUFFOLKCOUNTYNY.GOV)**

TO RECEIVE INFORMATION BY MAIL

WRITE US AT:

**335 YAPHANK AVENUE  
YAPHANK, NEW YORK 11980**

OR CONTACT US

BY TELEPHONE AT:

**(631) 854-0022**

OFFICE LOCATION:

SUNRISE BUSINESS CENTER  
3500 SUNRISE HIGHWAY  
BUILDING 300, ROOM 364  
GREAT RIVER, NEW YORK 11739