

**RULE I**  
**CODE OF ETHICS AND COMMITMENT**  
**TO COUNTY PUBLIC SERVICE**



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**Section 1 – Purpose**

This code establishes the standards of conduct required of all public officials and employees for the proper operation of County government and has the force of law. These standards are intended to strengthen public service and to maintain and promote faith and confidence of the people in their government.

**Section 2 – Responsibilities of Public Office**

Public officials and employees are agents of the public purpose and serve for the benefit of the public. They shall uphold and adhere to the Constitution of the United States, the Constitution of the State of California, and the Charter of the County of San Bernardino, rules, regulations and policies of the County, and shall carry out impartially the laws of the Nation, State, and County. In their official acts, they shall discharge faithfully their duties, recognizing that the public interest is paramount. All public officials and employees must demonstrate the highest standards of morality and ethics consistent with the requirements of their position and consistent with the law.

**Section 3 – Dedicated Service**

In the performance of their duties, all officials and employees shall support governmental objectives expressed by the electorate and interpreted by the Board of Supervisors and the County programs developed to attain these objectives. Officials and employees shall adhere to work rules and performance standards established for their positions by the appointing authority. The County requires all officials and employees to use good manners, to be considerate, to be accurate and truthful in statement and to exercise sound judgment in the performance of their work. During the hours covered by active County employment, no official or employee shall work for any other employer or agency and neither conduct nor pursue any unauthorized activity for remuneration. Officials and employees shall neither exceed their authority nor breach the law nor ask others to do so. They shall work in full cooperation with other public officials and employees unless prohibited from so doing by law or by officially recognized confidentiality of the work.

**Section 4 – Nondiscrimination**

No official or employee shall grant any special consideration, treatment, or advantage to any person beyond that which is available to every other person in similar circumstance. No person shall be favored or discriminated against with respect to any appointment in the County service because of family or social relationships, sex, race, religion, national origin, marital status, age, physical handicap, political opinion or political affiliation.

**Section 5 – Oath of Allegiance**

Pursuant to State law, all officials and employees must execute an Oath of Allegiance as follows: "I ....., do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the State of California against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the State of California; that I take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion; and that I will well and faithfully discharge the duties upon which I am about to enter."

**Section 6 – Confidential Information**

As appropriate, every appointing authority shall make known to subordinates which information is regarded as confidential. No official or employee shall neither disclose or remove from County offices such confidential information except as authorized or required by law or office nor otherwise use such information for personal gain or benefit. All personnel records shall be confidential except when disclosure is required by law.

**Section 7 – Use of Public Property**

Officials and employees are prohibited from using County-owned equipment, materials, or property for personal benefit or profit unless specifically authorized by the Board of Supervisors as an element of compensation.

**Section 8 – Conflict of Interest**

No official or employee shall engage in any business or transaction or shall have a financial or other personal interest or association, which is in conflict with the proper discharge of official duties or would tend to impair independence of judgment or action in the performance of official duties. Personal as distinguished from financial interest includes an interest arising from blood or marriage relationships or close business, personal, or political association. This section shall not serve to prohibit independent acts or other forms of enterprise during those hours not covered by active County employment providing such acts do not constitute a conflict of interest as defined herein. An employee is also subject to applicable provisions of the California Government Code, including but not limited to Sections 1090, 1126, 87100, and/or any other conflict of interest Code, policy or rule applicable to County employment.

**Section 9 – Political Activity**

It is the intent of the Board of Supervisors that every County employee participates in the political process to the extent that such participation does not interfere with the orderly performance of County employees' duties and functions. The provisions of California State Government Code 3201-3205 and 3302 and any future amendments thereto are hereby incorporated as part of this Rule. Employees engaged in political activity in violation of any personnel rule, County policy, labor contract, or regulation governing the conduct of County employees shall constitute cause for disciplinary action.

**Section 10 – County/Employee Responsibility**

The County shall provide all employees appointed to a regular classified or unclassified position with the County, with a copy of these Rules. It shall be the responsibility of employees to become aware and knowledgeable of these Rules.

**Section 11 – Delegation of Approval**

Any action which requires the approval of the Director of Human Resources may be taken by a Human Resources employee who has been delegated that responsibility in writing by the Director of Human Resources.