
California Special Districts Association

SAMPLE POLICY HANDBOOK

POLICY TITLE: Code of Ethics

POLICY NUMBER: 4010

4010.1 The Board of Directors of [DISTRICT NAME] is committed to providing excellence in legislative leadership that results in the provision of the highest quality services to its constituents and to comply with State laws including AB 1234 (Salinas) approved in 2006.(copy attached as reference)

In order to assist in the governance of the behavior between and among members of the Board of Directors and District staff, the following rules shall be observed.

4010.1.1 The dignity, style, values and opinions of each Director shall be respected.

4010.1.2 Responsiveness and attentive listening in communication is encouraged.

4010.1.3 The needs of the District's constituents should be the priority of the Board of Directors. When a Director believes he/she may have a conflict of interest, the legal counsel shall be requested to make a determination if one exists or not.

4010.1.4 The primary responsibility of the Board of Directors is the formulation and evaluation of policy. Routine matters concerning the operational aspects of the District are to be delegated to professional staff members of the District.

4010.1.5 Directors should commit themselves to emphasizing the positive, avoiding double talk, hidden agendas, gossip, backbiting, and other negative forms of interaction.

4010.1.6 Directors should commit themselves to focusing on issues and not personalities. The presentation of the opinions of others should be encouraged. Cliques and voting blocks based on personalities rather than issues should be avoided.

4010.1.7 Differing viewpoints are healthy in the decision-making process. Individuals have the right to disagree with ideas and opinions, but without being disagreeable. Once the Board of Directors takes action, Directors should commit to supporting said action and not to create barriers to the implementation of said action.

4010.1.8 Directors should practice the following procedures:

4010.1.8.1 In seeking clarification on informational items, Directors may directly approach professional staff members to obtain information needed to supplement,

upgrade, or enhance their knowledge to improve legislative decision-making.

4010.1.8.2 In handling complaints from residents and property owners of the District, said complaints should be referred directly to the General Manager.

4010.1.8.3 In handling items related to safety, concerns for safety or hazards should be reported to the General Manager or to the District office. Emergency situations should be dealt with immediately by seeking appropriate assistance.

4010.1.8.4 In presenting items for discussion at Board meetings, See Policy #5020.

4010.1.8.5 In seeking clarification for policy-related concerns, especially those involving personnel, legal action, land acquisition and development, finances, and programming, said concerns should be referred directly to the General Manager or legal counsel.

4010.1.9 If approached by District personnel concerning specific District policy, Directors should direct inquiries to the appropriate staff supervisor or General Manager. The chain of command should be followed.

4010.2 The work of the District is a team effort. All individuals should work together in the collaborative process, assisting each other in conducting the affairs of the District.

4010.2.1 When responding to constituent requests and concerns, Directors should be courteous, responding to individuals in a positive manner and routing their questions through appropriate channels and to responsible management personnel.

4010.2.2 Directors should develop a working relationship with the General Manager wherein current issues, concerns and District projects can be discussed comfortably and openly.

4010.2.3 Directors should function as a part of the whole. Issues should be brought to the attention of the Board as a whole, rather than to individual members selectively.

4010.2.4 Directors are responsible for monitoring the District's progress in attaining its goals and objectives, while pursuing its mission.