

ICMA Code of Ethics

The principles outlined in the ICMA Code of Ethics and enforced by the Rules of Procedure govern the conduct of every member of ICMA.

Adopted in 1924, the ICMA Code of Ethics defined the principles that today serve as the foundation for the local government management profession and set the standard for excellence. Leadership in a management structure committed to equity, transparency, integrity, stewardship of public resources, political neutrality, and respect for the rights and responsibility of elected officials and residents strengthens democratic local governance. ICMA members pledge to uphold these principles in their conduct and decisions in order to merit the trust of the public, elected officials, and staff they serve. As a condition of membership, ICMA members agree to submit to a peer-to-peer review under established enforcement procedures should there be an allegation of unethical conduct.

ICMA's Code of Ethics, most recently amended by the membership in 1998 to reflect changes in the profession, includes Guidelines to assist members in applying the principles outlined in the Code. The Guidelines were adopted by the ICMA Executive Board in 1972 and most recently revised in July 2004. Individuals seeking advice on ethics issues or enforcement are encouraged to contact Martha Perego, ICMA's director of ethics at 202/962-3668 or email mperego@icma.org.

Here is the full version of the [ICMA Code of Ethics](#) (with Guidelines).

The mission of ICMA is to create excellence in local governance by developing and fostering professional local government management worldwide. To further this mission, certain principles, as enforced by the Rules of Procedure, shall govern the conduct of every member of ICMA, who shall:

Tenet 1

Be dedicated to the concepts of effective and democratic local government by responsible elected officials and believe that professional general management is essential to the achievement of this objective.

Tenet 2

Affirm the dignity and worth of the services rendered by government and maintain a constructive, creative, and practical attitude toward local government affairs and a deep sense of social responsibility as a trusted public servant

Tenet 3

Be dedicated to the highest ideals of honor and integrity in all public and personal relationships in order that the member may merit the respect and confidence of the elected officials, of other officials and employees, and of the public.

Tenet 4

Recognize that the chief function of local government at all times is to serve the best interests of all people.

Tenet 5

Submit policy proposals to elected officials; provide them with facts and advice on matters of policy as a basis for making decisions and setting community goals; and uphold and implement local government policies adopted by elected officials.

Tenet 6

Recognize that elected representatives of the people are entitled to the credit for the establishment of local government policies; responsibility for policy execution rests with the members.

Tenet 7

Refrain from all political activities which undermine public confidence in professional administrators. Refrain from participation in the election of the members of the employing legislative body.

Tenet 8

Make it a duty continually to improve the member's professional ability and to develop the competence of associates in the use of management techniques.

Tenet 9

Keep the community informed on local government affairs; encourage communication between the citizens and all local government officers; emphasize friendly and courteous service to the public; and seek to improve the quality and image of public service.

Tenet 10

Resist any encroachment on professional responsibilities, believing the member should be free to carry out official policies without interference, and handle each problem without discrimination on the basis of principle and justice.

Tenet 11

Handle all matters of personnel on the basis of merit so that fairness and impartiality govern a member's decisions, pertaining to appointments, pay adjustments, promotions, and discipline.

Tenet 12

Seek no favor; believe that personal aggrandizement or profit secured by confidential information or by misuse of public time is dishonest.