

NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL BOARD MEMBER CODE OF CONDUCT POLICY

WHEREAS, the Board of Neighborhood Commissioners (Commission) established Working Groups comprised of current and past Neighborhood Council members and Neighborhood Council stakeholders on January 26, 2013, to recommend changes to the Plan for a Citywide System of Neighborhood Councils;

WHEREAS, the Commission believes the following Code of Conduct (Attachment A) will address some of the concerns and recommendations of the Working Groups;

WHEREAS, the Commissioners recognize that a Neighborhood Council System that is physically and emotionally safe and secure for all Board Members promotes good citizenship, increases Stakeholder attendance and supports community engagement;

WHEREAS, Neighborhood Councils are required under Article II of the Plan for a Citywide System of Neighborhood Councils to be diverse, inclusive and open to all Stakeholders;

WHEREAS, the Board of Neighborhood Commissioners expects Board Members to conduct themselves in a manner in keeping with an established Code of Conduct and with a proper regard for the rights and welfare of other Board Members, Stakeholders, Committee Members, and volunteers;

WHEREAS, this Commission and others believe Neighborhood Council Board Members should be aware of other types of behavior such as sexual harassment, sexual, gender and age discrimination, "bullying," work place violence and other related conduct because it will help minimize improper conduct by making Neighborhood Council members aware of the harm that results from it;

WHEREAS, the Commission recognizes that improper conduct may occur within the Neighborhood Council System and among members of Neighborhood Councils;

WHEREAS, Section 902 (b) Article IX of the new Charter provides that the Board of Neighborhood Commissioners "shall be responsible for policy setting and policy oversight...and the promulgation of rules and regulations but not be responsible for day-to-day management."

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the Board of Neighborhood Commissioners establishes this policy to inform Neighborhood Council members of that type of conduct which this Commission and others deem harmful to the Neighborhood Council system.

POLICY NUMBER:

2014-2(1)

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1. Neighborhood Council Board Members are required to either read and sign a copy of the Code of Conduct attached as Exhibit "A" or participate in training approved by the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment.
2. On or before April 3, 2015, each Neighborhood Council Board Member shall provide a signed and dated copy of the attached Code of Conduct to the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment (Department) bearing their signature or participate in training approved by the Department.
3. Thereafter each newly elected, re-elected or appointed Neighborhood Council Board Member shall provide a signed and dated copy of the attached Code of Conduct to the Department bearing their signature or participate in training approved by the Department within 30 days of the election being certified by the Department or within 30 days of being appointed.
4. Any Neighborhood Council Board Member who fails or refuses to review, sign, date and provide a copy of the attached Code of Conduct to the Department or participate in training approved by the Department within the abovementioned time frames shall be suspended from their Neighborhood Council and shall not act on any matter that comes before their Neighborhood Council and shall not be counted for the purpose of establishing a quorum of the Neighborhood Council.
 - a. The Department shall notify the Board Member of their suspension by sending a letter to their last known email address and/or physical mailing address.
 - b. The Department shall also notify the remainder of the Board Members by email and/or U.S. mail of the suspension of the Board Member.
5. If within 30 days of being suspended the Neighborhood Council Board Member does not provide a signed and dated copy of the attached Code of Conduct to the Department bearing their signature or participate in training approved by the Department they shall be removed as a Neighborhood Council Board Member by the following procedures:
 - a. The Department will notify the Board Member of their removal by sending a letter to their last known email address and/or mailing address.
 - b. The Department will also notify the remainder of the Board Members by email and/or U.S. mail regarding the removal of the Board Member and that the Board Members position on the board shall be considered vacant.
 - c. Any Board Member removed pursuant to this policy shall have the right to present to the Department evidence that he or she has in fact complied with this policy. The Department shall be the sole decision maker as to the sufficiency of the evidence submitted.

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Moved by:


Member, Board of Neighborhood Commissioners

Seconded by:


Member, Board of Neighborhood Commissioners

Witnessed by:


Staff, Department of Neighborhood Empowerment

VOTES

AYES: 4 (Atkinson, Grant, Mack, Shaffer)

NAYS: 1 (Lipmen)

DATE: 1/12/15

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ATTACHMENT A

1. Neighborhood Council Board Members should conduct themselves in a professional and civil manner.
2. Neighborhood Council Board Members should treat other Board Members and members of the public with respect regardless of the other's opinion, ethnicity, race, religion, religious belief or non-belief, color, creed, national origin, ancestry, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender expression, age, disability, marital status, income, homeowner status, renter status or political affiliation.
3. Neighborhood Council Board Members should not, during meetings, functions or events engage in or threaten to engage in any physical attack on any other individual.
4. Neighborhood Council Board Members should not use language that is threatening, obscene, or slanderous, including profanities, insults or other disparaging remarks or gestures directed toward other Board Members.
5. Neighborhood Council Board Members should promote and, if necessary, enforce a safe meeting environment. If other Board Members become disruptive or violate the Code of Conduct Neighborhood Council Board Members have agreed to abide by, Board Members should demand that the offending Board Member conduct themselves in a respectful and orderly manner.
6. Neighborhood Council Board Members should not engage in "bullying" or harassment which is generally defined as follows:
 - a) "Bullying" is conduct that meets all of the following criteria:
 - i. is reasonably perceived as being dehumanizing, intimidating, hostile, threatening, or otherwise likely to evoke fear of physical harm or emotional distress;
 - ii. is directed at one or more Board Members;
 - iii. is conveyed through physical, verbal, or technological means;
 - iv. substantially interferes with participation opportunities, benefits, or programs of one or more Board Members at Neighborhood Council sponsored activities or events;
 - v. adversely affects the ability of a Board Member to participate in or benefit from the Neighborhood Council programs or activities by placing the Board Member in reasonable fear of physical harm or by causing emotional distress; and,
 - vi. is based on a Board Member's actual or perceived protected characteristic (see 2 above), or is based on an association with another person who has or is perceived to have any of these characteristics.

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- b) "Harassment" is conduct that meets all of the following criteria:
- i. is reasonably perceived as being dehumanizing, intimidating, hostile, threatening, or otherwise likely to evoke fear of physical harm or emotional distress;
 - ii. is directed at one or more Board Members;
 - iii. is conveyed through physical, verbal, or technological means;
 - iv. substantially interferes with participation opportunities, benefits, or programs of one or more Board Members at Neighborhood Council sponsored activities or events;
 - v. adversely affects the ability of a Board Member to participate in or benefit from the Neighborhood Council programs or activities because the conduct, as reasonably perceived by the Board Member, is so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive as to have this effect; and,
 - vi. is based on a Board Member's actual or perceived protected characteristic (see 2 above), or is based on an association with another person who has or is perceived to have any of these characteristics.

I have read and understand the Neighborhood Council Board Member Code of Conduct. I understand that if I fail to provide the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment with a signed and dated copy of this Neighborhood Council Board Member Code of Conduct I may be subjected to suspension and/or removal from my Neighborhood Council Board.

Name (Please Print) _____

Signature _____

Date _____

Neighborhood Council _____

Email address _____