

**PITTSYLVANIA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**  
**CODE OF ETHICS**

**Preamble**

The citizens and business of Pittsylvania County, Virginia, are entitled to have fair, ethical, and accountable local government, which has earned the public's full confidence for integrity. The effective functioning of democratic government requires that public officials, both elected and appointed, comply with both the letter and spirit of the laws and policies affecting the operations of government; that public officials be independent, impartial, and fair in their judgment and actions; that public office be used for the public good, not for personal gain; and that public deliberations and processes be conducted openly, unless legally confidential, in an atmosphere of respect and civility.

To this end, the Pittsylvania County Board of Supervisors has adopted this Code of Ethics for members of the Board and of the County's boards, commissions, and committees, to assure public confidence in the integrity of local government and its effective and fair operation.

**1. Act in the Public Interest**

Recognizing that stewardship of the public interest must be their primary concern, members will work for the common good of the people of Pittsylvania County and not for any private or personal interest, and they will assure fair and equitable treatment of all persons, claims, and transactions coming before the Pittsylvania County Board of Supervisors, boards, commissions, and committees.

**2. Comply with the Law**

Members shall comply with the laws of the nation, the Commonwealth of Virginia, and Pittsylvania County in the performance of their public duties. These laws include but are not limited to: the United States and Virginia Constitutions; the Pittsylvania County Code; laws pertaining to conflicts of interest, election campaigns, financial disclosures, employer restrictions, and open processes of government; and County ordinances and policies.

**3. Conduct of Members**

The profession and personal conduct of Members must be beyond reproach and avoid even the appearance of impropriety. Members shall refrain from abusive conduct, personal charges, or verbal attacks upon the character or motives of other Members of the Board of Supervisors, boards, commissions, and committees, the staff, or public.

**4. Respect for Process**

Members shall perform their duties in accordance with the processes and rules of order established by the Board of Supervisors and boards, committees, and commissions, and commissions

governing the deliberation of public policy issues, meaningful involvement of the public, and implementation of policy decisions of the Board of Supervisors by County Staff.

**5. Conduct of Public Meetings**

Members shall prepare themselves for public issues; listen courteously and attentively to all public discussions before the body; and focus on the business at hand. They shall refrain from interrupting other speakers; making personal comments not germane to the business of the body; or otherwise interfering with the orderly conduct of meetings.

**6. Decisions Based on Merit**

Members shall base their decisions on the merits and substance of the matter at hand, rather than on unrelated considerations.

**7. Communication**

Members shall publicly share substantive information that is relevant to a matter under consideration by the Board of Supervisors or boards, committees, and commissions, which they may have received from sources outside of the public decision-making process.

**8. Conflict of Interest**

To assure their independence and impartiality on behalf of the common good, Members shall not use their official positions to influence government decisions to which they have a material financial interest and shall disclose any substantial organizational responsibility or personal or business relationship to the parties in any matter coming before them. This paragraph is not intended to unduly restrict Members who have minor business or professional dealings with clients whose matters come before them.

**9. Gifts and Favors**

A Member should never accept for himself or herself or for family members, favors, or benefits under circumstances which might be construed by reasonable persons as influencing the performance of governmental duties.

**10. Confidential Information**

Members shall respect the confidentiality of information concerning the property, personnel, or affairs of the County. They shall neither disclose confidential information without proper legal authorization, nor use such information to advance their personal, financial, or other private interests.

**11. Use of Public Resources**

Members shall not use public resources that are not available to the public in general, such as County Staff time, equipment, supplies, or facilities, for private gain or personal purposes.

**12. Representation of Private Interests**

In keeping with their role as stewards of the public interest, Members of the Board shall not appear on behalf of the private interests of third parties before the Board of Supervisors or any board, committee, commission, or proceeding of the County, nor shall members of boards, committees, or commissions appear before their own bodies or before the Board of Supervisors on behalf of the private interests of third parties on matters related to the areas of service of their bodies.

**13. Advocacy**

Members shall represent the official policies of the Board of Supervisors, boards, commissions, or committees to the best of their ability when designated as delegates for this purpose. When representing their individual opinions and positions, Members shall explicitly state they do not represent their body or Pittsylvania County, nor will they allow the influence/inference that they do.

**14. Policy Role of Members**

The Board of Supervisors determines the policies of the County with the advice, information, and analysis provided by the public, boards, commissions, and committees, and County Staff. The of Supervisors delegates authority for the administration of the County to the County Administrator. Therefore, Members shall not interfere with the administrative functions of the County or the professional duties of County Staff; nor, shall they impair the ability of County Staff to implement Board policy decisions. Inquiries to County Staff shall be made through the County Administrator or the appropriate Department Manager or Director.

**15. Independence of Board and Commissions**

Because of the value of the independent advice of boards, committees, and commissions to the public decision-making process, Members of the Board of Supervisors shall refrain from using their positions to unduly influence the deliberations or outcomes of board, committee, or commission proceedings.

**16. Positive Workplace Environment**

Members shall support the maintenance of a positive and constructive workplace environment for County employees and for citizens and businesses dealing with the County. Members shall recognize their special role in dealings with County employees and in no way create the perception of inappropriate direction to County Staff.

**17. Implementation**

As an expression of the standards of conduct for Members expected by the County, this Code of Ethics is intended to be self-enforcing. Therefore, it becomes most effective when members are thoroughly familiar with and embrace its provisions. For this reason, ethical standards shall be included in the regular orientations for candidate for the Board of Supervisors, applicants to boards, committees, commissions, and newly elected and appointed officials. Members entering office shall sign a statement affirming they have read and understood the Code of Ethics. Additionally, the Board of Supervisors, boards, committees, and commissions, shall annually review the Code of Ethics and the Board of Supervisors shall consider recommendations from boards, committees, and commissions to update it as necessary.

## **18. Compliance and Enforcement**

This Code of Ethics expresses standards of ethical conduct expected of Members of the Pittsylvania County Board of Supervisors, boards, committees, and commissions. Members themselves have the primary responsibility to assure that ethical standards are understood and met, and that the public can continue to have confidence in the integrity of government.

The Chairs of boards, committees, and commissions and the Chairman of the Board of Supervisors have the additional responsibility to intervene when actions of members that appear to be in violation of the Code of Ethics are brought to their attention.

The Board of Supervisors may impose sanctions on Members whose conduct does not comply with the County's ethical standards, such as public or private reprimand, formal censure, loss of seniority or committee assignment, or budget restrictions. Where allowed by law, the Board of Supervisors also may remove members of Board-appointed boards, committees, and commissions from office.

A violation of this Code of Ethics shall not be considered a basis for challenging the validity of a Board of Supervisors, board, committee, or commission decision.

**MODEL OF EXCELLENCE**  
**PITTSYLVANIA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS,**  
**BOARDS, COMMITTEES, AND COMMISSIONS**  
**MEMBER STATEMENT**

As a Member of the Pittsylvania County Board of Supervisors, or of a Pittsylvania County board, committee, or commission, I, the undersigned, agree to uphold the Code of Ethics for elected and appointed officials adopted by the Board of Supervisors and conduct myself by the following model of excellence.

I will:

- Recognize the worth of individual Members and appreciate their individual talents, perspectives, and contributions;
- Help create an atmosphere of respect and civility where individual Members, County Staff, and the public are free to express their ideas and work to their full potential;
- Conduct my personal and public affairs with honesty, integrity, fairness, and respect for others;
- Respect the dignity and privacy of individuals and organizations;
- Keep the common good as my highest purpose and focus on achieving constructive solutions for the public benefit;
- Avoid and discourage conduct which is divisive or harmful to the best interests of Pittsylvania County; and
- Treat all people with whom I interact in the manner I wish to be treated.

I affirm that I have read and understand the Pittsylvania County Code of Ethics.

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

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

Name (printed): \_\_\_\_\_

Office(s) held: \_\_\_\_\_