



BARNSTABLE COUNTY
BOARD OF REGIONAL COMMISSIONERS
P.O. Box 427
Barnstable, Massachusetts 02630
(508) 375-6648

BARNSTABLE COUNTY REGIONAL GOVERNMENT CODE OF CONDUCT

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to achieve and maintain a high level of public trust and confidence in Barnstable County (Cape Cod) Regional Government. It establishes standards of conduct for elected and appointed members of Barnstable County Regional Government. They will hereinafter be referred to in this policy as "government officials."

APPLICABILITY

This Code of Conduct and all its sections apply to each elected or appointed government official.

III. CODE OF CONDUCT

A. Conduct Generally and in Relation to the Community

Each elected or appointed government official should:

1. Recognize that the official's function is defined in the County Charter.
2. Stay informed concerning official duties under Federal and State law.
3. Acknowledge that a government official represents Barnstable County with respect to official actions.
4. Acknowledge that County duties are in the unselfish service to the public.
5. Recognize the primary function of County government is to serve the common good of County residents.
6. Demonstrate respect for the public being served.
7. Safeguard confidential information.
8. Not seek favor, personal aggrandizement, or profit from this public service.
9. Conduct oneself to maintain public confidence in County government.

10. Conduct official business in a manner that demonstrates he or she cannot be improperly influenced in the performance of official duties.
11. Conduct official business in a manner that promotes open and transparent government, and complies with state open meeting law, unless specifically exempted, e.g., executive session.
12. Include a disclaimer on social media posts stating any communication is done as an individual and does not represent Barnstable County or the County entity on which the official serves.
13. Avoid using social media to address any pending matter, any County employees, or any other Barnstable County government official.
14. Comply with Barnstable County's policies and procedures, including, but not limited to:
 - a. Barnstable County Sexual Harassment and Protected Classes Harassment Policy
 - b. Ethics Policy
 - c. Conduct of Employees Policy
 - d. Barnstable County Social Media Policy
15. Comply with all applicable laws, including, but not limited to:
 - a. Open Meeting Law
 - b. Procurement Law
 - c. Conflict of Interest Law (G.L. c.268A).

B. Conduct in Relation to Other Government Officials

Each elected or appointed government official should:

1. Recognize the responsibility to attend all meetings to assure a quorum.
2. Promptly notify the chair/speaker if unable or unwilling to continue to serve.
3. Recognize that action at official meetings is binding and that one official alone cannot bind the Commissioners or Assembly outside of these meetings.
4. Not make statements or promises as to how an official will vote on pending quasi-judicial matters until the issue is discussed, and an opportunity has been provided to evaluate the merits, at a public meeting.
5. Not disclose privileged information discussed in executive session.

6. Make decisions only after all facts on an issue have been presented and discussed.

C. Conduct in Relation to the County Administrator

Each elected or appointed government official should:

1. Acknowledge that the official's primary role is outlined in the County Charter.
2. Recognize that in creating and enforcing County policy, the Board of Commissioners may direct the County Administrator in setting priorities that affect policy, but that day-to-day operations are delegated to appropriate department heads.
3. Respect the administrative chain of command and not act on complaints as an individual outside the County administration.
4. Give the County Administrator full responsibility for discharging his or her duties under the County Charter.
5. Refrain, as an individual government official, from directing or ordering the County Administrator to take action.
6. Refrain from directly giving instructions to or requesting assistance from County department heads, but rather channel these through the Board of Commissioners, Assembly of Delegates, and County Administrator.

D. Conduct in Relation to County Staff

Each elected or appointed government official should:

1. Treat all County staff as professionals, and respect the abilities, experience, and dignity of each individual.
2. Direct questions to County staff and/or requests for information through the County Administrator.
3. Desist from publicly criticizing an individual employee or department, including but not limited to, through social media. Concerns about staff performance should only be directed to the County Administrator.
4. Make requests for staff support only through the County Administrator.