

City of Mission Viejo Personnel Policy

Subject: Standards of Conduct

Statement of Intent:

This policy shall apply to all City of Mission Viejo employees whether they are at-will, regular, or probationary. Each employee of the City has an obligation to the public and to fellow employees to meet the highest ethical and professional conduct standards and to enhance the public's respect and trust for the City and its operations. It is intended that the rules and procedures which follow will assist employees in maintaining high ethical and professional conduct standards.

Policy:

1. Purpose.

- a. Employees of the City have responsibilities unique from their counterparts in private industry. Employment with the City carries an obligation of personal integrity and conduct that serves to establish public respect, confidence, and trust.
- b. Employees represent the City and the quality of City service is judged through their performance and conduct. The residents of the City of Mission Viejo have a right to expect that City employees will provide services in an efficient, thorough, and courteous manner.
- c. The City, as a condition of employment, expects to receive from its employees:
 - i. Initiative and a conscientious effort to perform productive work.
 - ii. Cooperative, positive, responsive, and courteous relations with fellow employees, supervisors, subordinates, and the public.
 - iii. A continuous effort to strive for greater knowledge and skill on the job in order to maintain performance at a proficient & competent level.
 - iv. Compliance with all policies, regulations, rules of conduct, ordinances, and Values Statement established by the City.
 - v. Responsible work habits demonstrated by:
 1. Dependability, promptness, reliable attendance, and performing required duties competently.
 2. Keeping informed of developments and matters affecting job performance.
 3. Being flexible and adaptable to change.
 4. Accepting constructive suggestions and criticism.

5. Neat and clean grooming and attire appropriate to the job assignment. Prescribed uniforms and safety equipment must be worn where applicable.
6. Effectively implementing the official policies of the City when servicing in their official capacity with customers, clients, vendors, and the public and/or when identifying themselves as City of Mission Viejo employees in the course of their work.
7. Reporting unlawful behavior or behavior which violates City policy, regulation, code, or ordinance.

2. Standards of Conduct.

- a. While the City expects employees to deliver excellent customer service, it does not expect employees to be routinely subjected to inappropriate and unprofessional language or behavior by a member, or members, of the public or by a fellow City employee. Examples of inappropriate and unprofessional language and behavior include, but are not limited to:
 - i. Derogatory or suggestive comments
 - ii. Repetitive use of foul language
 - iii. Verbal or visual harassment
 - iv. Ridiculing statements that tend to disparage the employee, his/her supervisor, or co-workers
 - v. Physically blocking the employee's movement
 - vi. Screaming or yelling
- b. If an employee feels they are being subjected to inappropriate and/or unprofessional language on the phone, he/she should:
 - i. Remain calm and professional.
 - ii. Attempt to diffuse the situation; politely request the caller to return to a professional demeanor; and inform the caller that if the caller fails to return to a professional demeanor, that the call may be terminated.
 - iii. If such attempts fail, then the employee should offer to transfer the caller to their department manager or director and again remind the caller that failure to maintain a professional demeanor may result in termination of the call.
 - iv. If such transfer cannot be completed and in the employee's judgment no further actions will remedy the situation, then the employee shall inform the caller the call will be terminated due to the caller's inability to remain professional and the employee shall terminate the call.
 - v. The employee shall note the date and time of the call, the name of the caller, a summary of the inappropriate language, and the nature

of the complaint. This summary of information shall be emailed to the employee's direct supervisor, department manager, and department director as soon as possible, but no later than the end of the next business day after the event.

- c. If an employee feels they are being subjected to inappropriate and/or unprofessional language or behavior in-person, he/she should:
 - i. Remain calm and professional
 - ii. Attempt to diffuse the situation; politely request the person to return to a professional demeanor; and inform the person that failure to return to a professional demeanor may result in the employee walking away and terminating the conversation.
 - iii. If such attempts fail, then the employee should politely offer to set up a meeting with the department manager or director; and remind the person that failure to maintain a professional demeanor may result in the employee walking away and terminating the conversation.
 - iv. If such meeting cannot be scheduled and in the employee's judgment no further actions will remedy the situation, then the employee shall politely provide the person, in writing, the contact information of their direct supervisor; and apologize to the person that they can longer assist them and that they are walking away to terminate the conversation due to the person's failure to maintain a professional demeanor.
 - v. The employee shall note the date and time of the confrontation, the name of the person, a summary of the inappropriate language and/or behavior, and the nature of the complaint. This summary of information shall be emailed to the employee's direct supervisor, department manager, and department director as soon as possible, but no later than the end of the next business day after the event.

Administration:

In accordance with City of Mission Viejo Municipal Code chapter 2.60 "Personnel System", this Personnel Policy is deemed not to have a direct financial impact on the City. The City Manager may implement and amend this policy subject to prior City Attorney legal review and approval, and City Council review.

Implemented: Resolution No. 17-51, October 24, 2017.