**Town of Sutton**

**Professional Conduct Policy**

**Section 27.19 - Conduct Of Employees**

 **27.19.1** - General Policy

All employees are prohibited from engaging in any conduct which could reflect unfavorably upon the town. Employees must avoid any action which might result in or create the impression of using public office for private gain, giving preferential treatment to any person or losing complete impartiality in conducting Town business.

**27.19.2** - Receipt of Gifts

(1) Items of Monetary Value. Employees are prohibited from soliciting or accepting gifts, gratuities, favors, entertainment, loans or any other item of monetary value from any person who has or is seeking to obtain business with the town or from any person within or outside town employment whose interests may be affected by the employee’s performance or nonperformance of official duties.

(2) Nominal Gifts. Acceptance of nominal gifts in keeping with special occasions, such as marriage, retirement or illness; food and refreshments in the ordinary course of business meetings; or unsolicited advertising or promotional material, e.g., pens, notepads or calendars of nominal intrinsic value, is permitted.

(3) Flower Funds or Gifts For Fellow Employees. Contributions made for such funds or special gifts are not prohibited. However, participation in such activities, including contributions for even nominal gifts to supervisors, must be wholly voluntary on the part of each employee, and any gifts should be of minimal value.

(4) Supervisors. The policies described in all the above sections shall apply to all staff. In addition, supervisors must avoid placing themselves in a position which could interfere with or create the impression of interfering with the objective evaluation and direction of their subordinates other than those of nominal value for special occasions, and no supervisor shall borrow or loan money or accept favors from any subordinate.

**27.19.3** - Business Activities and Solicitation

No employee shall engage in any business other than his/her regular duties during working hours, including such activities as selling to fellow employees, lending of money for profit and any similar activity.

**27.19.4** - Outside Employment

(1) Interference with Town Employment. No employee may engage in additional employment which in any manner interferes with proper and effective job performance, results in a direct or gives the appearance of a conflict of interest, or may subject the town to public criticism or embarrassment.

(2) Preference of Town Employment. Employees who engage in employment outside of regular working hours may be subject to call to perform regular town duties first.

(3) Injury and Illness. The town shall in no respect be liable nor grant injury or sick leave in case of injury to an employee while engaged in outside employment nor any occupational illness attributed to the outside employment.

**27.19.5** - Privileged Information

Employees often deal with plans, programs and documents of significant public interest. Employees must not use this privileged information for their own financial advantage or to provide family, friends and acquaintances with financial advantages or with information which could be used for financial advantage. If an employee finds that he/she has an outside financial interest which could be affected by town plans or activities, he/she must immediately report the situation to his/her department head. Each employee is charged with the responsibility of ensuring that he/she releases only information that should be made available to the general public. Violation of privileged information or use for private gain is just cause for discharge of the employee. Freedom of information and privacy laws are to be observed.

**27.19.6** - Use Of Town Property

(1) General Policy. Employees should not, directly or indirectly, use or allow the use of town property of any kind for other than official activities.

(2) Telephone Use. Personal use of town telephones should be limited to emergencies and unusual circumstances, and should be as brief as possible. Department heads shall review monthly telephone invoices and/or reports to ensure compliance.

(3) Damaged/Missing Property. All employees are responsible for reporting any damaged or missing town property to the appropriate department head. Willful neglect, misuse, or theft of town property on the part of an employee may require the reimbursement of said item(s) by the employee to the town, and/or result in disciplinary action.

**27.19.7** - Political Activity

(1) All employees are entitled to exercise their rights as citizens to express their political opinions and to cast their votes.

 (2) Employees may not:

(a) Use official authority or influence for the purpose of interfering with or affecting the result of an election or nomination for office.

(b) Directly or indirectly coerce, attempt to coerce, command or advise a state or local officer or employee to pay, lend or contribute anything of value to a party, committee, organization, agency or person for political purposes.

(c) Post political literature on town owned property, nor shall be permitted to campaign during work hours.

**27.19.8** - Dress Code

Each employee is responsible for reporting for duty in attire most appropriate to the requirements of his/her position. Employees are expected to represent a professional appearance at all times, and clothing may not be of a provocative or

safety hazard nature. The department head may authorize alternative dress requirements with due discretion.

**27.19.9** - Dealings with Public, Vendors, & Other Staff

Employees are expected at all times to conduct all dealings with the public, vendors, and other staff members in a most professional manner. Courtesy and respect is to be observed at all times.