

# **City of Saratoga Code of Ethics and Values**

## ***Preamble***

The proper operation of democratic government requires that decision-makers be independent, impartial, and accountable to the people they serve. The City of Saratoga has adopted this Code of Ethics & Values to promote and maintain the highest standards of personal and professional conduct in the City's government. All elected and appointed officials, City employees, volunteers, and others who participate in the city's government are required to subscribe to this Code, understand how it applies to their specific responsibilities, and practice its nine core values in their work.

Because we seek public confidence in the City's services and public trust of its decision-makers, our decisions and our work must meet the most demanding ethical standards and demonstrate the highest levels of achievement in following this code.

### *1. As a Representative of the City of Saratoga, I will be ethical.*

In practice, this value looks like:

- a. I am trustworthy, acting with the utmost integrity and moral courage.
- b. I am truthful, do what I say I will do, and am dependable.
- c. I make impartial decisions, free of bribes, unlawful gifts, narrow political interests, and financial and other personal interests that impair my independence of judgment or action.
- d. I am fair, distributing benefits and burdens according to consistent and equitable criteria.
- e. I extend equal opportunities and due process to all parties in matters under consideration. If I engage in unilateral meetings and discussions, I do so without making voting decisions.
- f. I show respect for persons, confidences, and information designated as "confidential."
- g. I use my title(s) only when conducting official City business, for information purposes, or as an indication of background and expertise, carefully considering whether I am exceeding or appearing to exceed my authority.

### *2. As a Representative of the City of Saratoga, I will be professional.*

In practice, this value looks like:

- a. I apply my knowledge and expertise to my assigned activities and to the interpersonal relationships that are part of my job in a consistent, confident, competent, and productive manner.
- b. I approach my job and work-related relationships with a positive attitude.
- c. I keep my professional knowledge and skills current and growing.

### *3. As a Representative of the City of Saratoga, I will be service-oriented.*

In practice, this value looks like:

- a. I provide friendly, receptive, courteous service to everyone.
- b. I am attuned to, and care about, the needs and issues of citizens, public officials, and city workers.
- c. In my interactions with constituents, I am interested, engaged, and responsive.

*4. As a Representative of the City of Saratoga, I will be fiscally responsible.*

In practice, this value looks like:

- a. I make decisions after prudent consideration of their financial impact, taking into account the long-term financial needs of the City, especially its financial stability.
- b. I demonstrate concern for the proper use of City assets (e.g., personnel, time, property, equipment, funds) and follow established procedures.
- c. I make good financial decisions that seek to preserve programs and services for City residents.

*5. As a Representative of the City of Saratoga, I will be respectful.*

In practice, this value looks like:

- a. I will listen carefully to the views of others and refrain from interrupting others during discussions of City business.
- b. I will be succinct and direct in expressing my views.
- c. I will not debate with staff or members of the public in public meetings.
- d. I will avoid using acronyms and will explain their meaning when they must be used.

*6. As a Representative of the City of Saratoga, I will be organized.*

In practice, this value looks like:

- a. I act in an efficient manner, making decisions and recommendations based upon research and facts, taking into consideration short and long term goals.
- b. I follow through in a responsible way, keeping others informed, and responding in a timely fashion.
- c. I am respectful of established City processes and guidelines.
- d. I recognize that I am part of a team and will shoulder my share of responsibilities in representing the City.
- e. I will attend all meetings of committees to which I am assigned and meetings with colleagues in nearby jurisdictions or will work to find another to attend in my place.

*7. As a Representative of the City of Saratoga, I will be communicative.*

In practice, this value looks like:

- a. I convey the City's care for and commitment to its citizens.
- b. I communicate in various ways that I am approachable, open-minded and willing to participate in dialog.
- c. I engage in effective two-way communication, by listening carefully, asking

questions, and determining an appropriate response which adds value to conversations.

*8. As a Representative of the City of Saratoga, I will be collaborative.*

In practice, this value looks like:

- a. I act in a cooperative manner with groups and other individuals, working together in a spirit of tolerance and understanding.
- b. I work towards consensus building and gain value from diverse opinions.
- c. I accomplish the goals and responsibilities of my individual position, while respecting my role as a member of a team.
- d. I consider the broader regional and State-wide implications of the City's decisions and issues.
- e. I act in a constructive manner when expressing concern about or disagreeing with the statements of others.

*9. As a Representative of the City of Saratoga, I will be progressive.*

In practice, this value looks like:

- a. I exhibit a proactive, innovative approach to setting goals and conducting the City's business.
- b. I display a style that maintains consistent standards, but is also sensitive to the need for compromise, "thinking outside the box," and improving existing paradigms when necessary.
- c. I promote intelligent and thoughtful innovation in order to forward the City's policy agenda and City services.