



Code of Conduct
Revised May 2024

Serve business. Promote growth. Empower community.

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The Pearland Chamber of Commerce

Our Mission

Serve business. Promote growth. Empower community.

Code of Conduct

The Pearland Chamber of Commerce holds itself and its associated entities — including members, staff, board members, volunteers, contractors, and third parties — to the highest standards of ethical conduct. This Code of Conduct outlines our core values and expectations.

As representatives of the Chamber, you are expected to:

Understand, support, and promote the vision, goals, and mission of the Pearland Chamber.

Respect the reputation, profile and status of the Pearland Chamber and represent the Chamber accordingly.

Refrain from engaging in any practices prohibited by law and conform to all laws established by Municipal, State and Federal governments for the control of said business, where applicable.

Conduct business with honesty, integrity, and fairness with respect to customers, clients, and employees alike.

Exercise due respect while attending, interacting, or communicating with staff or other members or their guests at Chamber events or functions.

Understand where to go for assistance or guidance if you have questions about these expectations.

Code of Conduct Violation

This policy communicates the actions to be taken for suspected misconduct committed, encountered, or observed by employees and volunteers.

Definition

For purposes of this policy, misconduct includes, but is not limited to:

- Actions that violate the Chamber's Code of Conduct or any of the policies of the organization.
- Destruction, alteration, mutilation, or concealment of any document or record with the intent to obstruct or influence an investigation, or potential investigation, carried out by a department or agency of the government or by the Chamber in connection with any policy;
- Disclosure to any external party of proprietary information or confidential personal information obtained in connection with employment with or service to the Chamber;
- Acts that violate federal, state, county, or municipal laws or regulations;
- Failure to report known instances of misconduct in accordance with the reporting responsibilities described herein, including tolerance by supervisory employees of misconduct of subordinates.

Investigation

Every employee, officer, and volunteer is responsible for immediately reporting suspected misconduct to their supervisor, the President/CEO, or the Board Chair and should not attempt to personally conduct investigations or interviews/interrogations related to any suspected fraudulent act.

When employees receive a report of suspected misconduct, they must immediately report such acts to the President/CEO or the Chair.

Initial Responsibility

- The President/CEO has the primary responsibility for receiving and reviewing the initial suspected Code of Conduct involving employees and members.
- The Executive Compensation Committee has the primary responsibility for receiving and reviewing the initial suspected Code of Conduct involving the President/CEO and Board Members.

In either situation, if a serious violation is suspected, an Ethics Review Committee (ERC) will be established to further investigate the complaint.

The ERC will be appointed by the Board Chair, subject to Board approval, and will be made up of five individuals. In the situation that the Board Chair is the subject of the investigation, the Immediate Past Chair will appoint the five individuals.

Investigation into suspected code of conduct violations will be performed without regard to the suspected individual's position, length of service, or relationship with the Chamber.

In fulfilling its investigative responsibilities, the ERC (subject to prior approval) will have the authority to seek the advice and/or contract for the services of outside firms, including but not limited to law firms, Chartered Accountants, forensic accountants, and investigators.

Members of the ERC will have free and unrestricted access to all Chamber records and premises, at all times. They will also have the authority to examine, copy and remove all or any portion of the contents (in paper or electronic form) of filing cabinets, storage facilities, desks, credenzas and computers without prior knowledge or consent of any individual who might use or have custody of any such items or facilities when it is within the scope of an investigation into suspected misconduct or related follow-up procedures. The investigative team will be responsible for protecting, preserving, and returning all removed content.

To perform this investigation, the ERC may separately interview the complainant, the respondent and/or any other person who may have firsthand knowledge of the facts surrounding the alleged violation to gather additional information about the alleged violation. Interviews may be conducted by personal meeting, phone call, video conference, email, or other digital means.

The existence, the status or results of investigations into suspected misconduct will not be disclosed or discussed with any individual other than those with a legitimate need to know in order to perform their duties and fulfill their responsibilities effectively.

Decisions by the Ethics Review Committee

The ERC will determine whether and when the investigation is complete. It shall document the investigation as necessary, keep records of the facts and information it has reviewed and set forth its findings in writing.

Upon completion of the investigation, the ERC shall forward the complaint, along with its written findings and all records relating to its review, to the Board of Directors.

Depending on the Board of Directors Decision, it shall proceed as follows:

No serious violation: If the Board determines the respondent has not committed a serious violation of the Code of Conduct, the matter shall be closed and all records relating to the matter shall be forwarded to Chamber's office to be kept in secure and confidential files for three years. All copies of records kept by individual ERC members shall be destroyed in a manner consistent with destroying confidential records.

Serious violation: If the Board determines the respondent has committed a serious violation of the Code of Conduct, the Board shall:

1. Prepare a written determination to this effect. This determination shall describe the findings and evidence providing the basis for the determination. It will also include the appropriate disciplinary measures or other responses to be taken in response to the violation.

2. Appropriate disciplinary measures or other responses may include but are not limited to the following:
 - a. A written letter of reprimand to the respondent that the complaint has been found to be valid, expressing appropriate concern and proposing greater sanctions if a future violation occurs.
 - b. Permanent revocation or suspension for a specified period of the respondent's membership or place on the Board of Directors. This revocation or suspension is not formally announced.
 - c. Staff violations will be subject to the Employee Handbook discipline section.
 - d. The Board of Directors may determine if it is appropriate to inform others within or outside the organization about any disciplinary measures.

Annual Acknowledgment and Awareness of the Code of Conduct

The Code of Conduct Policy is signed annually by all staff, Board of Directors, and Committee Chairs to reaffirm their commitment to the Chamber's ethical standards. It is acknowledged by all new members upon joining and is distributed to all members at the start of each year. Additionally, the Code of Conduct is a standing item on the agenda of all Chamber meetings to ensure continual awareness and adherence.

Signature

Date

Printed Name

Role with Organization

Approval and Revisions

May 24, 2024

The initial document was approved by the Board of Directors.