

**TOWN OF WESTCLIFFE, COLORADO  
CODE OF ETHICS POLICY FOR  
ELECTED AND APPOINTED OFFICIALS**

The Town of Westcliffe has adopted a Code of Ethics for members of the Town's Board of Trustees and the Town's advisory boards to assure public confidence in the integrity of local government and its effective and fair operation.

**PREAMBLE:**

The citizens and businesses of Westcliffe are entitled to have fair, ethical and accountable local government which has earned the public's full confidence for integrity. In keeping with the Town of Westcliffe's commitment to excellence, the effective functioning of democratic government therefore requires that:

- Public officials, both elected and appointed, comply with both the letter and spirit of the laws and policies affecting the operations of government;
- Public officials be independent, impartial and fair in their judgment and actions;
- Public office be used for the public good, not for personal gain; and
- Public deliberations and processes be conducted openly, unless legally confidential, in an atmosphere of respect and civility.

To this end, the Westcliffe Board of Trustees has adopted a Code of Ethics for members of the Board of Trustees and Town's advisory boards to assure public confidence in the integrity of local government of respect and civility.

**CODE OF ETHICS:**

1. **Act in the Public Interest** — Recognizing that stewardship of the public interest must be their primary concern, Trustees will work for the common good of the people of Westcliffe and not for any private or personal interest, and they will assure fair and equal treatment of all persons, claims and transactions coming before the Town of Westcliffe Board of Trustees, as well as various advisory boards.
2. **Comply with the Law** — Trustees shall comply with the laws of the nation, the State of Colorado and the Town of Westcliffe in the performance of their public duties. These laws include, but are not limited to: the United States and Colorado constitutions; the Westcliffe Municipal Code; laws pertaining to conflicts of interest, election campaigns, financial disclosures, employer responsibilities, and open processes of government; and Town ordinances and policies.
3. **Conduct of Trustees** — The professional and personal conduct of Trustees must be above reproach and avoid even the appearance of impropriety. Trustees shall refrain from abusive conduct, personal charges or verbal attacks upon the character or motives of other Trustees, boards and commissions, the staff or the public.
4. **Respect for Process** — Trustees shall perform their duties in accordance with the processes and rules of order adopted by the Westcliffe Board of Trustees governing the deliberation of public policy issues and implementation of policy decisions. Snide remarks, jokes, antagonistic comments and frivolous adversarial outbursts, should never be part of the process.

5. **Conduct of Public Meetings** — Trustees shall prepare themselves for Board of Trustee meetings; listen courteously and attentively to all public discussions before the board; and focus on the business at hand. They shall refrain from interrupting other speakers; making personal comments not germane to the business of the board; or otherwise interfering with the orderly conduct of meetings.
6. **Decisions Based on Merit** — Trustees shall base their decisions on the merits and substance of the matter at hand, rather than on unrelated considerations.
7. **Communication** — Trustees shall not publicly share substantive information that is relevant to a matter under consideration by the Board of Trustees which they may have received from sources outside of the public decision-making process.
8. **Conflict of Interest** — In order to assure their independence and impartiality on behalf of the common good, Trustees shall not use their official positions to influence government decisions in which they have a material financial interest or where they have an organizational responsibility or personal relationship which may create a conflict of interest or which give the appearance of a conflict of interest. As may be related to matters before them, Trustees shall disclose investments, interests in real property, sources of income, and gifts; and they shall abstain from participating in deliberations and decision-making where conflicts may exist.
9. **Gifts and Favors** — Trustees shall not take any special advantage of services or opportunities for personal gain, by virtue of their public office that is not available to the public in general. They shall refrain from accepting any gifts, favors or promises of future benefits which might compromise their independence of judgment or action or give the appearance of being compromised.
10. **Confidential Information** — Trustees shall respect the confidentiality of information concerning the property, personnel or affairs of the Town. They shall neither disclose confidential information without proper legal authorization, nor use such information to advance their personal, financial or other private interests.
11. **Use of Public Resources** — Trustees shall not use public resources not available to the public in general, such as Town staff time, equipment, supplies or facilities, for private gain or personal purposes.
12. **Representation of Private Interests** — In keeping with their role as stewards of the public interest, members of any board or commission shall not appear on behalf of the private interests of third parties before the any board, commission or proceeding of the Town, nor shall members of any boards and commissions appear before their own bodies or before the Board of Trustees on behalf of the private interests of third parties on matters related to the areas of service of their bodies.
13. **Advocacy** — Trustees shall represent the official policies or positions of the appropriate board or commission to the best of their ability when designated as delegates for this purpose. When presenting their individual opinions and positions, Trustees shall explicitly state they do not represent their body or the Town of Westcliffe, nor will they allow the inference that they do.
14. **Independence of Boards and Commissions** — Because of the value of the independent advice of advisory boards to the public decision-making process, members of the Board of Trustees shall refrain from using their position to unduly influence the deliberations or outcomes of advisory board proceedings.

- 15. Positive Work Place Environment** — Trustees shall support the maintenance of a positive and constructive work place environment for Town employees and for citizens and businesses dealing with the Town. Trustees shall recognize their special role in dealings with Town employees and in no way should create the perception of inappropriate direction to staff.
- 16. Implementation** — As an expression of the standards of conduct for Trustees expected by the Town, the Westcliffe Code of Ethics is intended to be self-enforcing. It therefore becomes most effective when Trustees are thoroughly familiar with it and embrace its provisions. For this reason, ethical standards shall be included in the regular orientations for candidates for the Board of Trustees, applicants to advisory boards, and newly elected and appointed officials. Trustees entering office shall sign a statement affirming they read and understood the Town of Westcliffe Code of Ethics. In addition, the Code of Ethics shall be annually reviewed by the Town’s Board of Trustees or appointed advisory board. Changes shall be approved by the Board of Trustees at a regularly called Board of Trustee meeting.
- 17. Compliance and Enforcement** — The Town of Westcliffe Code of Ethics expresses standards of ethical conduct expected for Trustees of the Westcliffe Board of Trustees and advisory boards. Trustees themselves have the primary responsibility to assure that ethical standards are understood and met, and that the public can continue to have full confidence in the integrity of government.

Any citizen of Westcliffe has the right and responsibility to intervene when actions of Trustees that appear to be in violation of the Code of Ethics are brought to their attention. The Board of Trustees may impose sanctions on any Trustee or advisory board member when their conduct does not comply with the Town's ethical standards. Sanctions may take the form of a reprimand and/or formal censure. Removal from an advisory board shall be at the discretion of the Board of Trustees. Trustees may be removed in accordance with the laws of the state of Colorado.

Enacted by the Board of Trustees on the 8th day of October, 2015.