

The City Manager's Code of Ethics

(1952)

To achieve effective and democratic local government, the council-manager plan provides that policies shall be determined by the governing body elected by the people and that the administration of such policies shall be vested in the city manager who shall be appointed by and responsible to the governing body. The purpose of the International City Managers Association, the professional organization of city managers, is to increase the proficiency of city managers and to aid in the improvement of municipal government. To further these objectives, the Association believes that certain ethical principles should govern the conduct of every professional city manager.

1. No member of the profession accepts a position as city manager unless he is fully in accord with the principles of council-manager government and unless he is confident that he is qualified to serve to the advantage of the community.
2. The city manager has a firm belief in the dignity and worth of the services rendered by government. He has a constructive, creative, and social responsibility as a trusted public servant.
3. The city manager is governed by the highest ideals of honor and integrity in all his public and personal relationships in order that he may merit the respect and confidence of the governing body, of other officials and employees, and of the public which he serves. He believes that personal aggrandizement or profit secured by confidential information or by misuse of public time is dishonest.
4. The city manager as a community leader submits policy proposals to the council and provides the council with facts and advice on matters of policy to give the council a basis for making decisions on community goals. The city manager defends municipal policies publicly only after considerations and adoption of such policies by the council.
5. The city manager realizes that the council, the elected representatives of the people, is entitled to the credit for the establishment of municipal policies. The city manager avoids coming in public conflict with the council on controversial issues. Credit or blame for policy execution rests with the city manager.
6. The city manager considers it his duty continually to improve his ability and his usefulness and to develop the competence of his associates in the use of management techniques.
7. The city manager keeps the community informed on municipal affairs. He emphasizes friendly and courteous service to the public. He recognizes that the chief function of the local government at all times is to serve the best interests of all the people on a non-partisan basis.
8. The city manager, in order to preserve his integrity as a professional administrator, resists any encroachment on his responsibility for personnel, believes he should be free to carry out council policies without interference, and deals frankly with the council as a unit rather than with its individual members.
9. The city manager handles all matters of personnel on the basis of merit. Fairness and impartiality govern the city manager in all matters pertaining to appointments, pay adjustments, promotions, and discipline in the municipal service.
10. The city manager curries no favors. He handles each problem without discrimination on the basis of principle and justice.