



## **COLUMBUS CIVILIAN POLICE REVIEW BOARD STANDARDS OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT**

### **Preamble**

Civilian oversight practitioners have a unique role as public servants, overseeing law enforcement agencies. The community, government, and law enforcement has entrusted them to conduct their work in a professional, fair, and impartial manner. They earn this trust through a firm commitment to the public good, the mission of their agency, and to the ethical and professional standards described herein.

The standards set forth hereafter are intended to be of general application. It is recognized, however, that the practice of civilian oversight varies among jurisdictions and agencies, and additional standards may be necessary. The spirit of these ethical and professional standards should guide the civilian oversight practitioner in adapting to individual circumstances, and in promoting public trust, integrity, and transparency.

### **Primary Obligation to the Community**

At all times, place your obligation to the community, duty to uphold the law and to the goals and objectives of your agency above your personal self-interest.

### **Personal Integrity and External Influences**

Demonstrate the highest standards of personal integrity, commitment, truthfulness, and fortitude to inspire trust among your stakeholders, and to set an example for others. Avoid conflicts of interest. Conduct yourself in a fair and impartial manner and recuse yourself or personnel within your agency when significant conflict of interest arises. A conflict of interest might include but is not limited to the following: a board member's spouse, domestic partner, or other immediate family member residing with the board member is the subject or a complaint or the complainant; a board member is likely to be a material witness to any hearing scheduled related to a complaint; a board member has a professional connection to the subject of a complaint or complainant, in the matter/case before the board.

Do not accept gifts, gratuities or favors that could compromise your impartiality and independence. Conduct board business unimpacted by public clamor or fear of criticism. Not permit family, social, political, financial, or other interests or relationships to influence conduct or recommendation. Not convey or permit others to convey the impression that any person or organization is may to influence the board member.

### **Independent and Thorough Oversight**

Conduct investigations, audits, evaluations and reviews with diligence, an open and questioning mind, integrity, objectivity, and fairness, in a timely manner. Rigorously test the accuracy and reliability of



information from all sources. Present the facts and findings without regard to personal beliefs or concern for personal, professional, or political consequences.

### **Transparency and Confidentiality**

Conduct oversight activities openly and transparently, providing regular reports and analysis of your activities, and explanations of your procedures and practices to as wide an audience as possible. Refrain from investigating the facts of a matter independently, outside the purview of the board or Inspector General—this includes initiating, receiving, permitting, or considering communications without board disclosure; and consider only the evidence presented via Inspector General report or in-person statement before the board. Maintain the confidentiality of information that cannot be disclosed and protect the security of confidential records. Comply with the social media policy as adopted by the board. Refrain from making pledges, promises, or commitments that are inconsistent with the *impartial* performance of the adjudicative duties of the board.

### **Respectful and Unbiased Treatment**

Perform duties of the board without bias or prejudice. Treat all individuals with dignity and respect, and without preference or discrimination including, but not limited to age, ethnicity, citizenship, color, culture, race, disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, housing status, marriage, mental health, nationality, religion, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, or political beliefs, and all other protected classes.

### **Outreach and Relationships with Stakeholders**

Disseminate information and conduct outreach activity in the communities that you serve. Pursue open, candid, and non-defensive dialog with your stakeholders. Educate and learn from the community.

### **Agency Self-examination and Commitment to Policy Review**

Seek continuous improvement in the effectiveness of your oversight agency, the law enforcement agency it works with, and their relations with the communities they serve. Gauge your effectiveness through evaluation and analysis of your work product. Emphasize policy review aimed at substantive organizational reforms that advance law enforcement accountability and performance.

### **Professional Excellence**

Seek professional development to ensure competence. Acquire the necessary knowledge and understanding of the policies, procedures, and practices of the law enforcement agency you oversee. Keep informed of current legal, professional, and social issues that affect the community, the law enforcement agency, and your oversight agency.