



## State of Illinois Code of Personal Conduct

Revised 3/17/21

### Introduction

---

Employees of the State of Illinois are a team of public servants working on behalf of the people of Illinois. State employees perform critical services upon which our residents and businesses depend. State employees are entrusted to make important decisions and carry out responsibilities that affect the future of our communities.

The purpose of this Code of Personal Conduct (**Code**) is to:

- Ensure that State employees are conducting the business of the State in an honest and respectful manner.
- Promote accountability to the taxpayers and the people of Illinois.
- Promote honest and ethical conduct and fair dealing.
- Promote compliance with applicable laws, policies, rules, and regulations.
- Deter wrongdoing.

### Authority and Applicability

---

This Code was prepared by the Department of Central Management Services, on behalf of the Governor, pursuant to Section IV of Executive Order 2016-04, Executive Order 2018-2 and Executive Order 2018-12, and filed with the Executive Ethics Commission pursuant to Section 5-5(b) of the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act (5 ILCS 430) (**Ethics Act**).

This Code applies to all officers, employees (including without limitation full-time, part-time, and contractual employees), appointees (including without limitation paid and unpaid appointees), and persons holding similar positions (**State Employees**) in any office, department, agency, board, commission, or authority of the Executive Branch of the State of Illinois under the jurisdiction of the Governor for the purposes of Section 20-10(c) of the Ethics Act (**State Agencies**).

More detailed policies and procedures that apply to all State Employees or certain groups of State Employees are set forth in other documents. While these other policies are not part of this Code, each State Employee covered by this Code is expected to conduct himself or herself consistently with this Code and all other applicable policies, laws, and regulations. Nothing in this Code prohibits any State Agency from adopting or maintaining policies or rules of personal conduct that are more restrictive than those set forth in this Code, as long as such policies or rules comply with applicable law and the requirements of any collective bargaining agreement. To the extent any State Agency policy conflicts with this Code, the more restrictive policy will control.



State Employee conduct in violation of this Code may result in discipline, up to and including discharge. The principles of just cause shall apply to the extent required by law or any collective bargaining agreement. In addition to any discipline imposed by a State Agency, any State Employee who knowingly violates this Code, with the intent to defraud the State of Illinois, is in violation of the Ethics Act and will be subject to disciplinary action under the Ethics Act as set forth without limitation in Sections 20-15, 20-20, 20-50, 20-55, 50-5 and 50-10 of the Ethics Act and Title 2, Sections 1620.1100 and 1620.1110 of the Illinois Administrative Code.

This Code does not, and may not be interpreted to, create any rights for any person or entity other than the State of Illinois, the State Agencies, the Executive Ethics Commission, and the Office of Executive Inspector General for the Agencies of the Illinois Governor. Nothing in this Code may be construed as altering the employment relationship between the State of Illinois and any State Employee. Application of progressive discipline pursuant to this Code to State Employees who serve at-will is discretionary and does not affect the at-will status of any such State Employee. State Employees in supervisory positions or in positions with the ability to recommend employee discipline will comply with applicable law and collective bargaining agreements when imposing discipline pursuant to this Code.

This Code is effective as of July 1, 2016. Copies of this Code will be made available to all State Agencies and publicly posted on the Department of Central Management Services website. The Department of Central Management Services will provide training to all State Agencies regarding the implementation of this Code.

The Department of Central Management Services has the ability to amend or supplement this Code with the approval of the Office of the Governor. Any amendment of, or supplement to, this Code will be filed with the Executive Ethics Commission and made publicly available by the Department of Central Management Services, including through posting its website.

## Principles of Public Service

---

While serving in his or her official capacity, each State Employee has a responsibility to the people of the State of Illinois to act with integrity and to treat the people we serve, our colleagues, and other parties with dignity and respect. State Employees hold a position of public trust and are expected to conduct themselves in a responsible and professional manner.

The following principles apply to every State Employee and form the basis for the standards contained in this Code. When a situation is not covered by the standards set forth in this Code or in other applicable policies, laws, or regulations, State Employees will apply the principles set forth in this section in determining whether their conduct is proper.

### **Public service is a public trust, not to be abused for private gain.**

- Except as permitted by applicable law (including but not limited to the Ethics Act and Executive Order 15-09), State Employees may not solicit or accept any gift or other item of monetary value



from any person or entity seeking official action from, doing business with, or conducting activities regulated by the State Employee's State Agency or whose interests may be substantially affected by the performance or nonperformance of the State Employee's duties.

- State Employees may not use public employment or access to nonpublic State information for private gain.
- State Employees may not engage in outside employment or activities, including seeking or negotiating for employment, that conflict with their official State duties and responsibilities.
- State employees must take appropriate action to identify, disclose, and avoid potential conflicts of interest with the performance of their official duties.

**Public service requires honest and impartial performance.**

- State Employees must put forth honest effort in the performance of their duties.
- State Employees may not give improper preferential treatment to any private organization or individual.

**Public servants protect taxpayer resources.**

- State Employees may not knowingly make unauthorized commitments or promises of any kind purporting to bind the State of Illinois.
- State Employees must protect and conserve State property and not use it for other than authorized activities.
- State Employees must disclose waste, fraud, abuse, and corruption to the appropriate authorities.

**Public servants are good citizens.**

- State Employees should avoid any action that creates the appearance of a violation of the law or the ethical standards set forth in this Code.
- State Employees must satisfy in good faith all personal financial obligations to the State and comply with all requirements of all governmental taxing authorities.

**Public Service must be an equal opportunity for all.**

- State Employees must adhere to all laws and regulations that provide equal opportunity for all.
- There must be no unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or retaliation in any employment practice based on race, color, national origin, religion, age, sex, marital status, disability, ancestry, sexual orientation, military service, political affiliation, or any other protected status or non-merit based factor.



## Specific Instances of Unethical Conduct

---

This section sets forth specific ethical standards for all State Employees. Violations of these standards are subject to discipline up to and including discharge. This section is applicable to all State Employees when on State-compensated time (other than vacation, personal, or compensatory time off, as defined in the Ethics Act), on State property, or carrying out the State Employee's official duties, or when there is a nexus between the State Employee's off-duty conduct and his or her official duties. As noted above, this Code does not preclude a State Agency from maintaining or establishing additional rules of personal conduct consistent with this Code, applicable law, and the requirements of any collective bargaining agreement. To the extent any State Agency policy conflicts with this Code, the more restrictive policy will control.

**Insubordination:** A State Employee (a) must execute the lawful instructions, whether oral or written, of a supervisor or member of management having authority over the State Employee, (b) may not be disrespectful in his or her conduct and communication, whether oral or written, directed toward a supervisor or member of management, and (c) will comply with State and State Agency policy as directed.

**Disruptive Conduct:** A State Employee may not (a) engage in disruptive conduct or activities or horseplay that interrupts work or impedes the work of others, or (b) use abusive or offensive language, gestures, or similar conduct.

**Unsatisfactory Work Performance:** While on duty, a State Employee should dedicate his or her efforts to the performance of assigned work and other job responsibilities. A State Employee (a) will perform all work duties assigned to him or her, (b) will not perform any work duties in a negligent manner that results in a material delay or material financial loss to the State, and (c) will not engage in willful idleness while on the job.

**Breach of Confidentiality:** A State Employee will take reasonable measures to protect confidential information in his or her possession. A State Employee may not knowingly (a) fail to safeguard confidential information, (b) take actions which result in a breach of confidential information, or (c) violate confidentiality requirements inherent to the State Employee's position or his or her State Agency's mission.

**Stealing:** A State Employee may not steal or attempt to steal, with the intent to deprive, the property of another individual or entity or collude with another person to commit such acts.

**Misuse or Abuse of State Property:** Except for *de minimis* personal use, a State Employee will use State property for official purposes and not for personal benefit or political gain. When entrusted with safeguarding State property, a State Employee may not (a) intentionally lose or damage such State property, or (b) knowingly and willfully use or authorize the use of a State vehicle for an other-than-official purpose.



**Conduct Unbecoming of a State Employee:** A State Employee will conduct himself or herself (a) with integrity and in a manner that reflects favorably upon the State, (b) in compliance with all laws, policies, orders, and procedures that prohibit the solicitation or acceptance of any gift or other item of monetary value from any person or entity seeking official action from, doing business with, or conducting activities regulated by the State Employee's State Agency or whose interests may be substantially affected by the performance or nonperformance of the State Employee's duties, and (c) in accordance with the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act (5 ILCS 430) and the Illinois Governmental Ethics Act (5 ILCS 420).

**Conduct Unbecoming of a Supervisor:** A State Employee in a position with supervisory authority may not (a) intentionally, negligently, or recklessly commit any illegal act or violation of State or State Agency disciplinary rules or code of conduct, (b) order State Employees to perform a task for other than an official purpose, or (c) exploit supervisory authority for personal gain or personal profit.

**Threatening Words or Actions:** A State Employee may not threaten or attempt to inflict bodily harm on another individual, unless otherwise authorized by State or State Agency policy or procedure.

A State Employee who witnesses, is a victim of, or becomes aware of any threatening words or actions must immediately report the incident to his or her supervisor or to the appropriate law enforcement entity in accordance with Executive Order 2016-04. Subject to applicable law and any contrary instructions by law enforcement, the State Employee will be required to submit a written statement regarding the incident.

**Fighting:** A State Employee may not hit or push another person or have hostile or unwelcomed contact with another person, unless otherwise authorized by State or State Agency policy or procedure.

A State Employee who witnesses, is a victim of, or becomes aware of any fighting must immediately report the incident to his or her supervisor or to the appropriate law enforcement entity in accordance with Executive Order 2016-04. Subject to applicable law and any contrary instructions by law enforcement, the State Employee will be required to submit a written statement regarding the incident.

**Discriminatory Personnel Action:** A State Employee may not (a) discriminate against another State Employee on any basis in violation of federal or State law with respect to any adverse employment or personnel action, or (b) if such State Employee is a supervisor, fail to prevent or curtail unlawful discrimination of a subordinate when, as a supervisor, the State Employee knew or should have known that discrimination was occurring.

**Interference with or Obstruction of an Investigation:** A State Employee may not interfere with or obstruct an investigation by (a) refusing to testify or cooperate in a properly authorized inquiry or investigation, without legal justification, (b) interfering with or improperly influencing, or attempting to interfere with or improperly influence, the testimony of any witness or participant in an investigation, or (c) improperly influencing, or attempting to improperly influence, any investigatory official.

**Retaliation:** A State Employee may not (a) intentionally interfere with a State Employee's exercise of, or retaliate against a State Employee for exercising, the right to grieve or file a complaint through established



procedures, or (b) retaliate against a State Employee for filing a complaint, providing information to an investigatory official, or testifying in an official proceeding. To the extent this section conflicts with the Whistleblower Act (740 ILCS 174) or Section 15-5 of the Ethics Act, the applicable statute will control.

**False Statement:** A State Employee may not (a) make any materially false statement or knowing misrepresentation on an application for State employment or other document pertaining to qualifications or any other official record, (b) knowingly or intentionally make any false or malicious statement against a fellow State Employee (including a State Employee's co-worker, supervisor, and subordinate) with the intent of harming or destroying the reputation, authority, or official standing of that individual, (c) knowingly make any deliberate misrepresentation or omission, of a material fact, including perjury, making any false sworn statement, and lying to a supervisor, or (d) falsify or knowingly fail to correct false information contained in official documentation or in an official record related to the performance of such State Employee's job duties.

**Unlawful Job Action:** A State Employee may not participate in or promote an unprotected strike, work stoppage, slow down, sick-out, or other job action in violation of the Illinois Public Labor Relations Act, Illinois Education Labor Relations Act, or a no-strike agreement between the State or a State Agency and an exclusive representative.

**Sexual Harassment:** A State Employee will work to ensure that his or her workplace is free from sexual harassment. Conduct such as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when (a) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment, (b) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment related decisions affecting such individual, or (c) the conduct unreasonably has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, abusive or offensive working environment.

Any State Employee who witnesses, is subjected to, or becomes aware of such conduct should immediately report the incident to his or her supervisor, a member of management, or the applicable State Agency Equal Opportunity Officer. All complaints of sexual harassment will be investigated thoroughly, and appropriate action will be taken when warranted.

**Unauthorized on the Job Use of Alcohol, Drugs, or Controlled Substances:** A State Employee may not (a) be under the unauthorized influence of alcohol, drugs, or other controlled substances to a degree that would interfere with proper performance of his or her job duties, would be a menace to safety, or would be prejudicial to the maintenance of discipline, or (b) be under the unauthorized influence of alcohol, drugs, or other controlled substances to a degree that results in injury to another individual or damage to State property.

**Health and Safety Violation:** A State Employee will maintain a clean and orderly work area and will follow all applicable safety rules and regulations, including (a) not smoking in any unauthorized area, (b) not possessing a lighter, match, or other flammable materials in any explosive or hazardous area, (c) reporting to a supervisor any on-the-job personal injury or accident for which the State Employee



had primary responsibility, (d) observing all precautions for personal safety, posted rules, signs, and written or oral safety instructions, (e) using appropriate protective clothing and equipment in any hazardous area, (f) following all material traffic regulations and not engaging in reckless driving or improper operation of a motor vehicle while on property owned or controlled by the State or while driving a State vehicle, and (g) not possessing any explosive, firearm, or other dangerous weapon on State property, or attempt to bring such explosive, firearm, or other dangerous weapon onto State property unless his or her State Agency requires such possession by the State Employee. A State Employee who wants to travel to and from work with a firearm and who possesses a lawful concealed- carry license or permit may secure the firearm in a vehicle parked on State property in accordance with the Firearm Concealed Carry Act (430 ILCS 66).

**Nepotism:** A State Employee may not advocate for nor appoint, hire, or promote a relative into a State position. As used in this Code, “relative” means a parent, child, grandparent, grandchild, sibling, legal dependent, aunt, uncle, first cousin, niece, nephew, spouse, parent- in-law, child-in-law, granddaughter-in-law, grandson-in-law, sister-in-law, brother-in-law, step-parent, step-child step-sibling, step-grandchild, or half-sibling. This includes those individuals having stood in loco parentis to an employee as well as those for whom an employee is standing or stood in loco parentis.

A State Employee is also prohibited from serving on an interview panel of a relative. A State Employee is prohibited from having a relative in their direct chain of command, in either direction, and may not evaluate the job performance of a relative nor recommend a salary increase for them. A State Employee may not participate in the discipline, discharge, or investigation related to a relative’s misconduct. State Employees must be familiar with and abide by all the provisions of Executive Order 2018-12 and Agency policy regarding nepotism.