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CODE OF CONDUCT for QUEENS COMMUNITY BOARD MEMBERS

*Issued by Queens Borough President Donovan Richards
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Community Board members are public servants who must act in a manner consistent with the maintenance of the public trust and the legal and ethical integrity of the work they perform. To that end, the Queens Borough President has issued the following Code of Conduct for members of Queens's fourteen Community Boards.

- **Attendance:** Community Board members are expected to attend and participate in all regular meetings and assigned committee meetings. The Borough President may remove a member from a Community Board for "substantial nonattendance" if the member has more than three (3) unexcused absences within a six-month period. A member may seek an excused absence by submitting a written request to the Community Board Chair or Committee Chair. An excused absence shall be granted for illness, employment obligation, death in the family, family emergency, military or other compulsory service, religious observance, or planned vacation.
- **Non-Discrimination:** Discrimination and sexual harassment are strictly prohibited. Community Board members must abide by the Office of the Queens Borough President's Equal Employment Opportunity and Sexual Harassment Prevention policies as well as the New York City Human Rights Law.

(continued on the next page)

- **Respectfulness:** Members are expected to act respectfully toward all individuals with whom they interact in the context of their role as a Community Board member. Community Board members are strictly prohibited from threatening, intimidating, or harassing other members, Community Board employees, or the public.
- **Eligibility:** Community Board members are required to inform the Office of the Queens Borough President of any changes that may affect the member's eligibility to serve on the Community Board (*e.g.*, changing residence to outside the community district, accepting employment with an appointing city council member, etc.)
- **Conflicts of Interest:** Community Board members must abide by New York City's conflicts of interest law (Chapter 68 of the New York City Charter) and all relevant guidance from the Conflicts of Interest Board, including but not limited to the requirement that a member must disclose a conflict and abstain from voting on a matter that impacts the member's private interests, as well as the prohibition on the use of a city title or resources for political activity.
- **Trainings:** Community Board members must complete all training courses, including technical and cultural competency courses, as directed by the Queens Borough President's Office.
- **Legal Compliance:** Community Board members shall abide by all federal, state, and local laws.

Complaints

In the event that the Borough President determines that a Community Board member has violated a provision of the Code of Conduct, the Borough President may take corrective action, up to and including the removal of the member for cause.

Any complaint against a Community Board member for the violation of this Code of Conduct should be referred to the Queens Borough President's Office's General Counsel at legal@queensbp.org. The General Counsel's Office will conduct an investigation of any allegation that contains a *prima facie* case of a Code of Conduct violation. Anonymous complaints are not accepted, but the identity of a complainant will be kept confidential during an investigation whenever possible. The subject of a complaint will be notified at the commencement of an investigation and will have the opportunity to respond in writing. At the conclusion of the investigation, the General Counsel will present a report and recommendation to the Borough President for consideration. The Office of the Queens Borough President may also initiate an investigation without receiving an external complaint.

Any complaint alleging the violation of the Equal Employment Opportunity Policy of the Office of the Queens Borough President may be referred to the Office's EEO Officers and addressed under the provisions of that policy.

Nothing in this policy abrogates or limits a complainant's ability to report allegations to other city agencies, including:

- *NYC Department of Investigation*, for fraud, waste, and corruption
- *NYC Conflicts of Interest Board*, for Chapter 68 and ethics violations
- *NYC Commission on Human Rights*, for discrimination