

CODE OF ETHICS OF THE OKOLONA FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

SECTION 1. STANDARDS.

The Trustees, Firefighters and Employees of the Okolona Fire Protection District are dedicated to the highest moral and ethical standards in the operation of its fire department for the citizens of the district.

SECTION 2. PURPOSE.

The purpose of this Code of Ethics is to clearly state the standards of ethical conduct and financial disclosure requirements for the Okolona Fire Protection District and is enacted under the power vested in the Board of Trustees by KRS 75.120.

SECTION 3. DEFINITIONS.

(A) "Business" means any corporation, partnership, sole proprietorship, trust, or any other legal entity through which business is conducted for profit.

(B) "Employee" means any person, whether full-time or part-time, who is employed by the Okolona Fire Protection District.

(C) "Family member" means a spouse, parent, child, brother, sister, mother-in-law, father-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, grandparent or grandchild.

(D) "Firefighter" refers to the chief, officers, and members, whether volunteer or paid, of the Okolona Fire Protection District.

(E) "Immediate family member" means a spouse, an unemancipated child, or a dependent of a trustee, firefighter, or employee.

STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

SECTION 4. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST IN GENERAL.

Every trustee, firefighter, and employee of the Okolona Fire Protection District shall comply with the following standards of conduct:

(A) No trustee, firefighter, and employee, or any immediate family member, shall have an interest in a business that conflicts with the proper discharge of his/her public duties.

(B) No trustee, firefighter, or employee shall use his/her official position to secure unwarranted privileges or advantages.

(C) No trustee, firefighter, or employee shall take or refrain from taking any action on a fire district matter in order to obtain a financial benefit for: (1) him or herself; (2) a family member; (3) an outside employer; (4) any business in which he/she or any family member has a financial interest.

SECTION 5. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST IN CONTRACTS.

(A) No trustee, firefighter, or employee of the Okolona Fire Protection District shall directly or through others execute or benefit from any contract entered into by the Okolona Fire Protection District, except as follows:

(1) This prohibition does not apply to contracts before a trustee, firefighter, or employee becomes part of the Okolona Fire Protection District.

(2) This prohibition does not apply if the contract is awarded after public notice and competitive bidding and the trustee, firefighter, or employee does not participate in any aspect of the contract awarding.

(3) This prohibition does not apply if: (a) the specific nature of the contract is publicly disclosed and made a part of the official minutes of the Board of Trustees before the contract is executed; and, (b) The Board of Trustees determines that the contract is in the best interests of the public and the fire district.

(B) If any violation of this section occurs, the Board of Trustees may take legal action to void any contract entered into in violation of this section.

SECTION 6. RECEIPT OF GIFTS.

(A) Any gifts worth more than twenty dollars (\$20.00) received by an individual trustee, firefighter, or employee, in his/her official capacity from someone outside the Okolona Fire Protection District shall be reported in writing to the Board of Trustees within forty-five (45) days of receipt.

(B) No individual trustee, firefighter, or employee shall solicit or accept any gift from outside the fire district under circumstances from which it could be inferred that the gift was intended to influence the performance of his/her public duties.

SECTION 7. USE OF DISTRICT PROPERTY AND PERSONNEL.

(A) No individual trustee, firefighter, or employee of the fire district shall use or permit the use of any fire district time, funds, personnel, equipment, or any other property, for the private use of any person, unless the use is specifically authorized by a written policy of the Okolona Fire Protection District.

SECTION 8. REPRESENTATION OF INTERESTS BEFORE BOARD.

(A) No trustee, firefighter, or employee shall represent any person or business, other than the Okolona Fire Protection District, in connection with any matter pending before the Board of Trustees.

(B) Nothing in this section shall prohibit any trustee, firefighter, or employee from representing himself or herself in matters concerning his/her interests.

(C) No member of the Board shall be prohibited from requesting information on behalf of residents of the Okolona Fire Protection District if no compensation is received.

SECTION 9. MISUSE OF CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION.

No trustee, firefighter, or employee of the Okolona Fire Protection District shall use or disclose any information acquired in the course of his/her official duties for the purpose of furthering his or her personal financial interest or that of another person or business. Information shall be deemed confidential, if it is not subject to disclosure pursuant to the Kentucky Open Records Act, KRS 61.872 to 61.884, at the time of its use or disclosure.

FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE

SECTION 10. Who Must File.

Any trustee, firefighter, or employee of the Okolona Fire Protection District shall file a statement of financial disclosure if:

- (1) Trustee, firefighter, or employee; family member; an outside employer; any business in which trustee, firefighter, or employee, or any family member has a financial interest; has undertaken, executed, or held any contract with the Okolona Fire Protection District; or,
- (2) The trustee, firefighter, or employee has received any gifts worth more than twenty dollars (\$20.00), whether in the form of money, service, loan, travel, entertainment, hospitality, thing or promise, or any other form from the public; or,
- (3) The trustee, firefighter, or employee has used or permitted the use of any time, funds, personnel, equipment, or other property, of the Okolona Fire Protection District that is not specifically authorized by a written policy of the Okolona Fire Protection District.

SECTION 11. WHEN TO FILE STATEMENTS; AMENDED STATEMENTS.

(A) Initial statement of financial interests shall be filed with Ethics Committee no later than January 31, 2012. All subsequent statements of financial interest shall be filed no later than June 30 of each year, provided that: (1) Trustee, firefighter, or employee newly appointed to shall file his or her initial statement no later than thirty (30) days after the date of appointment; and, (2) A candidate for Board shall file his or her initial statement no later than thirty (30) days after the date on which the person becomes a candidate for an elected position on the Board.

(B) In the event there is a material change in any information contained in a financial statement that has been filed with the Ethics Committee, the trustee, firefighter, or employee shall, no later than thirty (30) days after becoming aware of the material change, file an amended statement with the Ethics Committee.

SECTION 12. CUSTODY OF STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL INTERESTS.

The Board shall be the custodian of the statements of financial interests as public documents available for public inspection immediately upon filing, and shall retain them for a period of five (5) years. These records may be inspected through the Kentucky Open Records Act.

SECTION 13. CONTENTS OF THE FINANCIAL INTERESTS STATEMENT.

(A) The statement of financial interest shall include the following information for the preceding fiscal year:

- (1) Full legal name and home address;
- (2) Current business address and telephone number;
- (3) The date, amount, and specific nature of any contract by any business in which the trustee, firefighter, or employee, or any family member has a financial interest, which has been entered into, awarded, or granted by the Okolona Fire Protection District;
- (4) The date, amount, and specific type of any gifts worth more than twenty dollars (\$20.00); or,
- (5) The date, amount, and specific action of any use of time, funds, personnel, equipment, or other personal or real property, of the Okolona Fire Protection District for the private use of the trustee, officer, firefighter, member, employee, or any other person, not specifically authorized by a written policy of the Okolona Fire Protection District.

SECTION 14. NONCOMPLIANCE WITH FILING REQUIREMENTS.

The Board may take legal action to void any contract entered into in violation of this Ethics Code.

SECTION 15. NEPOTISM PROHIBITED.

(A) No trustee, firefighter, or employee of the Okolona Fire Protection District shall be solely responsible for the: (1) employment; (2) appointment; (3) promotion; (4) transfer; or, (5) advancement; of a family member within the Okolona Fire Protection District.

(B) No trustee, firefighter, or employee of the Okolona Fire Protection District shall be solely responsible for the supervision of the work of a family member.

(C) No trustee, firefighter, or employee shall participate alone in any action relating to the employment or discipline of a family member, although this prohibition shall not prevent a trustee from voting on or working on a budget that includes compensation for a family member as a member of a class of persons.

ENFORCEMENT

SECTION 16. ETHICS COMMITTEE CREATED.

(A) There is hereby created an Ethics Committee that shall consist of three (3) members appointed by the Chairman, subject to the approval of the Board, and shall include: (1) one firefighter trustee; (2) one property owner non-firefighter trustee; and, (3) one trustee appointed by the Louisville Metro Mayor. The members shall serve a term of one (1) year.

(B) The Ethics Committee shall have authority to investigate complaints with regard to alleged violations of the Ethics Code and to refer information concerning alleged violations to the Board of Trustees. Written complaints against Trustees, Firefighters or employees of the Okolona Fire Protection District which allege violations of this Code of Ethics may be filed by any person with the Ethics Committee and must be filed within one year of the time of the occurrence which is the subject of the complaint, or within one year of the date the occurrence was discovered.

(C) The Ethics Committee may either conduct its own investigation or refer a matter to others for investigation.

(D) When requested by a Trustee, Firefighter, or employee the Ethics Committee shall issue an advisory opinion concerning acts or activities covered by this Code of Ethics. Such opinions shall be public and shall not disclose the identity of persons associated with the opinion. Confidential opinions may be issued, if requested by the Trustee, Firefighter, employee or Okolona Fire Protection District.

SECTION 17. EFFECTIVE DATE.

Code of Ethics shall take full force and effect immediately.