

MONROE COUNTY WATER AUTHORITY

**CODE OF ETHICS POLICY
(READOPTED DECEMBER 2023)**

**ARTICLE 1
PURPOSE**

As a public benefit corporation, the Monroe County Water Authority (the “Authority”) must conduct its operations in a manner that best serves the interests of its customers and the general public. The Authority expects all Members, officers and employees to observe high ethical standards of conduct in the performance of their duties, comply and cause the Authority to comply with all laws and regulations governing business transactions, and use and cause the Authority to use Authority funds and assets only for legal and appropriate public purposes.

This Code of Ethics governs the day-to-day actions of all Members, officers and employees of the Authority. To the extent that a matter falls within the scope of both this policy and the Authority’s Conflicts of Interest Policy or Whistleblower Policy, the provisions of the Conflicts of Interest Policy or the Whistleblower Policy, respectively, shall govern.

**ARTICLE 2
POLICIES**

1. Discharge of Duties

In the course of performing his or her duties, Members, officers and employees shall:

- (a) endeavor to perform the duties of their positions to the best of their ability in furtherance of the Authority’s public purposes;
- (b) uphold high standards of dedicated public service;
- (c) support and encourage fellow employees in the proper execution of their duties; and
- (d) when a question of conduct or regulation occurs, seek the advice of a supervisor, the Authority’s attorneys or the Authority’s independent Ethics Board (formed pursuant to Article 4 hereof).

2. Prohibited Conduct

In the course of performing his or her duties, Members, officers and employees shall not:

- (a) receive any compensation for or have an interest, financial or otherwise, direct or indirect, or incur any obligation that is in substantial conflict with the proper discharge of their duties to the Authority;
- (b) engage in other employment that might impair the independence of their judgment in the execution of their duties with the Authority;

(c) disclose confidential information acquired in the course of official duties nor use such confidential information to further their own personal financial interests;

(d) directly or indirectly solicit or accept any gifts, entertainment, discounts, services, loans or anything of value totaling \$75 or more in any calendar year from any supplier, significant commercial customer, or other persons with whom the Authority does business (gifts of \$75 or more in value must be returned to the donor with the explanation that Authority policy will not permit acceptance of the gift; the Authority will reimburse the employee for the expense of returning gifts); and

(e) engage in conduct prohibited under the Authority's Whistleblower Policy.

3. Specifically Prohibited Actions

Unless otherwise permitted by the Ethics Board, no Member, officer or employee shall engage in the following actions to the extent they create a conflict of interest with the Authority's interest:

(a) receipt by a family member of a Member, officer or employee (family being defined as related by blood or marriage) of gifts or other items described in Section 2(d) of this Article 2;

(b) speculating or dealing in equipment, supplies, or materials normally purchased by the Authority;

(c) borrowing money from the Authority, suppliers, significant commercial customers, individuals or firms with whom the Authority does business (loans or mortgages from banks or individuals doing business with the Authority are exempted if the terms are at current rates and the customary collateral for such transactions is provided);

(d) acquiring an interest in real estate in which it is known that the Authority also has a current or anticipated interest;

(e) misusing information to which the individual has access by reason of his or her position – such as by disclosing confidential information (of a technical, financial or business nature) to others outside or inside the business (whether or not a consideration is received), or using such information for his or her own or family's (as previously defined) benefit;

(f) soliciting funds or other items of value from Authority vendors, suppliers or consultants for oneself or to benefit any other organization, club or person, whether such other persons or entities are charitable, religious or profit-making;

(g) serving as an officer, director or manager with another company or business organization directly or indirectly related to the Authority without specific authorization from the Authority; and

(h) representing current or potential customers to submit applications, plans or other compliance information to the Authority for approval.

The foregoing list does not encompass every situation that may lead to a conflict.

4. **Duty to Disclose**

Each Member, officer and employee shall have the duty to report to the Ethics Board (as defined below) in writing any violation or possible violation of the terms of this Policy, including without limitation instances of conduct prohibited by this Article 2. The following describes some, but not all, situations that must be disclosed:

(a) engaging in activities as an individual or as the holder of more than a one percent financial interest, directly or indirectly (as an owner, stockholder, securities holder in a publicly owned corporation, partner, joint venturer, creditor, guarantor, director, trustee or beneficiary of a trust), in or with a firm that (i) provides services or supplies materials or equipment to the Authority or (ii) to which the Authority makes sales or provides services;

(b) serving as an employee, owner or consultant of another organization providing goods and/or services to the Authority or one or more of the Authority's significant commercial customers, or functioning individually and providing said services to the Authority or one or more of the Authority's significant commercial customers;

(c) membership on or employment with any entity where such employment, service or membership is incompatible with the proper discharge of official duties, or would impair independent judgment or action in the performance of official duties; and

(d) selling goods, services or other items of value to Authority vendors, suppliers or consultants for oneself or to benefit any other organization, club or person, whether such other persons or entities are charitable, religious or profit-making.

5. **Nepotism Policy**

(a) Any person living in the same household as a current Member, officer or employee and any person who is a direct descendant of a current Member, officer or employee's grandparents (e.g. siblings, parents, children, nieces, nephews, cousins, etc.) or the spouse of such descendant (individually and collectively, a "Relative") may be considered for a permanent position only if all of the following conditions are met:

- The Relative is an appointment from a Civil Service List.
- There will be no supervisory relationship between the Relative and the current Member, officer or employee.
- The Relative and the current Member, officer or employee will not work in the same department.
- The Executive Director, with the advice of the Department Heads, has approved the hiring of the Relative.

(b) If current Members, officers or employees marry, it may be necessary for the Authority to reassign one or both individuals, particularly in the case of close working, or direct supervisory relationships.

(c) A Relative may be considered for summer or temporary employment only if all of the following conditions are met:

- There will be no supervisory relationship between the Relative and the current Member, officer or employee.
- The Relative and the current Member, officer or employee will not work in the same department.

(d) In no event shall a current Member, officer, or employee participate in any decision to hire, promote, discipline, or discharge a Relative.

ARTICLE 3 DISCLOSURE STATEMENTS

On an annual basis, the Authority shall obtain a completed financial disclosure statement (in the form set forth as Exhibit A attached hereto, a “Disclosure Statement”) from each Member, the Executive Director, the Executive Staff, and any employees with authority to approve purchases of amounts greater than \$1,000.

ARTICLE 4 PROCEDURES

1. Ethics Board

The Authority shall establish an Ethics Board comprised of three persons not employed by the Authority. The Members of the Authority shall appoint the members of the Ethics Board on an annual basis. The Ethics Board shall interpret and make recommendations to the Authority regarding any question under or purported violation of this Policy and any statutory enacted ethics standards affecting Members, officers and employees.

Annually, the Ethics Board shall review the completed Disclosure Statements to identify businesses with direct or indirect ties to Members; officers and/or employees of the Authority. The Ethics Board shall determine whether any of these relationships warrant placing the business on a list of businesses that the Authority will not hire (the “Prohibited Contractors List”). In making its determination, the Ethics Board shall assess the nature of the relationship between a Member, officer or employee and an outside business. The Prohibited Contractors List shall include only those businesses where the relationship could lead to ethics problems (e.g., if a relative owns a business that could supply goods or services to the Authority). In contrast, the Prohibited Contractors List shall not include businesses where the potential for ethics problems is minimal (e.g., where a relative is a clerical, ministerial or low-level management employee at an existing or potential vendor, lacks the power to influence the relationship between the business and the Authority and did not obtain his or her position as a means to influence a Member, officer or employee of the Authority).

2. Powers of Ethics Board

At its discretion, the Ethics Board may recommend to the Authority appropriate disciplinary action, which may include, but is not limited to, a reprimand, suspension or termination of employment. Any such recommendation will only be final after any hearing required by Section 75 of the Civil Service Law or any applicable Collective Bargaining Agreement.

ARTICLE 5
ONE-YEAR MORATORIUM

No person who has served as a Member or officer of the Authority shall within a period of one year after the termination of such service or employment render services before the Authority or receive compensation for any such services rendered on behalf of any person, firm, corporation or association in relation to any case or transaction with respect to which such person was directly concerned, or participated in, during the period of his or her service with the Authority.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, the one-year moratorium shall not apply to (i) normal business issues arising as a result of the person's status as a water customer of the Authority and (ii) professional services provided by such person pursuant to a written agreement with the Authority, to the extent such agreement is otherwise consistent with this Code of Ethics.

ARTICLE 6
DISTRIBUTION OF THIS POLICY

This Code of Ethics shall be distributed to each Member, officer and employee of the Authority annually. It shall also be distributed to each new Member, officer and employee as soon as practicable following commencement of such position.