



## State of Tennessee - Code of Conduct

### Policy:

Employees of the State of Tennessee are expected to act in a manner that will enhance the name, service and general impression of the State in the eyes of the general public. This Code of Conduct provides general rules of conduct based on fundamental ethical principles. Employees shall also uphold the ethical rules governing their professions as well as comply with departmental and State ethics policies. No Code of Conduct can provide the absolute last word to address every circumstance. Therefore, employees are expected to use sound judgment in all of their conduct and ask for help when needed.

Failure to comply with this Code of Conduct and any other policies which may be specific to the employee's organizational unit may subject the employee to disciplinary action in accordance with the Department of Human Resources Rules and Regulations.

All employees are required to read and sign this Code of Conduct before assuming their job responsibilities.

### Code:

1. Employees shall conduct themselves in a manner that creates and maintains respect for their work sites, fellow employees and customers, their respective agencies or departments and the State of Tennessee. All employees are expected to treat others with respect, courtesy and dignity and conduct themselves in a professional manner. Violence, threats or intimidation against others is prohibited. Employees shall comply with the Department of Human Resources policy on Violence in the Workplace (Policy 12-060) and any applicable agency policies.
2. Employees shall act with honesty and integrity, and avoid situations that involve conflicts of interest. Employees should strive to provide impartial quality service to those with whom they interact, including customers and fellow employees, and avoid providing preferential treatment to any individual or organization. Employees shall comply with their agency's code of ethics, if any, as well as Governor Haslam's Executive Order No. 20 concerning ethics and disclosures.
3. The consumption of illegal drugs or narcotics or the abuse of any drug or narcotic is strictly prohibited at all times. Use of alcoholic beverages or being under the influence of alcohol while on duty or immediately prior to reporting for duty is strictly prohibited. Employees shall comply with their agency's drug free workplace and drug testing policies, if any.

4. Inappropriate romantic or sexual relationships between supervisors and subordinate staff as well as inappropriate use of supervisory position or influence, are prohibited. Employees shall comply with their agency's policy on discrimination and harassment, if any. If there is no agency-specific policy, refer to the Department of Human Resources policy on Workplace Discrimination and Harassment (Policy 12-008). This prohibition extends to relationships at any level within the chain of command.
5. Illegal activities on the part of any employee, in addition to being unlawful, reflect on the integrity of the State and betray the trust and confidence placed in state employees by the public. It is expected that employees shall comply with all federal and state laws, rules and other regulations. Should an employee be charged with, arrested for or convicted of any felony or misdemeanor, the employee shall follow his or her agency's policies and procedures regarding reporting, if any.
6. Employees shall respect and protect confidential information and abide by all laws governing the possession and use of such information. Confidential information should only be released when it is legally permitted or required. Employees shall not use confidential work information for personal gain.
7. Employees should strive to be efficient in the performance of duties. Employees will provide customers with accurate, timely, fair and understandable information and provide the highest level of customer service possible. Employees shall not provide inappropriate responses to customer care needs.
8. While employees are encouraged to participate actively in the public affairs of their communities, clear distinctions must be made between comments, statements or actions made as a private individual and as a representative of the State. Employees shall not speak on behalf of their department or agency without prior authorization to do so. Employees shall not make unauthorized commitments or promises of any kind purporting to bind the department or agency.
9. Employees shall conserve and protect state property and equipment and not use it for unauthorized purposes. Employees shall comply with the State's Acceptable Use Policy governing use of computers, email and network resources.
10. Employees shall accurately report work time and attendance. Employees shall not habitually arrive late or fail to complete duties in a timely manner, or have lack of consideration for the time of others.
11. Employees shall not be involved in dishonesty, fraud or misrepresentation. No false statements or entries may be knowingly made in any type of communication, including telephone or electronic communication.
12. Employees shall help maintain a healthy, safe and productive work environment which is free from discrimination and harassment, whether based on race, color, national origin, age (40 and over), sex, pregnancy, religion, creed, disability, veteran's status or any other factors protected under state and/or federal civil rights law. Employees shall comply with their agency's policy on discrimination and harassment, if any. If there is no agency-specific policy, refer to the Department of Human Resources policy on Workplace Discrimination and Harassment (Policy 12-008).

13. Employees shall not refuse to accept reasonable assignments or intentionally fail to follow lawful instructions.
14. Any employee having knowledge that a theft, forgery, credit card fraud, or any other act of unlawful or unauthorized taking, or abuse of, public money, property, or services, or other shortages of public funds has occurred shall report the information immediately to the office of the comptroller of the treasury.



## State of Tennessee - Code of Conduct Employee Acknowledgement

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (*print name*), have read and understand the principles that comprise the State of Tennessee's Code of Conduct.

I understand that the State of Tennessee's integrity and reputation rest in the hands of its employees.

I understand that my communications and dealings with fellow employees, customers, and the general public can directly impact the State of Tennessee's reputation and credibility.

I understand that my activities, both on and off the job, can affect the reputation, interests, and relationships of the State of Tennessee.

I commit to abide by the principles outlined in this Code of Conduct. I understand that failure to abide by these principles may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Employee signature*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*