

**Personnel Rules and Standards of Conduct for  
Employees of the DeKalb County Board of Ethics**

1. **PURPOSE.** The DeKalb County Board of Ethics is committed to a work environment in which its employees are treated with respect and dignity. The DeKalb County Board of Ethics prohibits discriminatory practices, disparate treatment, and all forms of unlawful harassment in the workplace. Each employee has the right to work in a professional atmosphere that promotes equal employment opportunities and is consistent with the Board's vision, mission, and values. To that end, the DeKalb County Board of Ethics expects that all employees will conduct themselves with the utmost integrity in the workplace and that relationships among and between employees will be respectful, business-like and free of bias, prejudice and harassment.

2. **SCOPE.** As a component unit of DeKalb County government, the DeKalb County Board of Ethics is an equal opportunity employer subject to the mandates of governing laws, regulations and standards prohibiting harassment and discrimination in the workplace. This policy establishes safeguards for DeKalb County Board of Ethics employees against such practices and sets forth avenues for reporting and investigating allegations of harassment and/or discrimination.

3. **POLICY.** The DeKalb County Board of Ethics does not and will not tolerate harassment or discrimination of its employees. Board of Ethics employees shall pursue their jobs free from intimidation, humiliation, discrimination, insult and shall not be subjected to offensive physical or verbal abuse, or offensive actions of a sexual, ethnic, racial, religious, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation or identification. The conduct prohibited in this policy applies to Board of Ethics employees, vendors and contractors. Such prohibited conduct is unacceptable in the workplace and in any work-related setting outside the workplace including, but not limited to business meetings and business-related events. The DeKalb County Board of Ethics is committed to preventing such unwanted conduct from occurring and

maintaining an environment free of harassment and discrimination. Toward this end, all Board of Ethics employees shall undergo mandatory Anti-Harassment/Anti- Discrimination training on an annual basis.

**4. PROCEDURE.** The DeKalb County Board of Ethics will take appropriate action to address all reported incidents of harassment or discrimination in a fair, impartial and expeditious manner. Employees who believe they are being subjected to harassing or discriminatory conduct by any Board of Ethics employee, vendor or contractor, are encouraged, (if they feel comfortable), to promptly advise the offender that his/her behavior is unwelcome or offensive and to request that it be discontinued. Often this notice alone will resolve the problem. However, employees may prefer and always have the option to pursue such matters through the following complaint procedure:

A. An employee who believes s/he has been harassed or discriminated against by any Board of Ethics employee, contractor or vendor, should report the matter to the Ethics officer; however, if the Ethics Officer is the subject of the complaint, the matter should be reported to the Board Chairman and Vice-Chairman. The subject of the complaint shall be notified by the Board Chairman.

B. The recipient(s) of the complaint shall immediately forward the complaint to the Human Resources Director for review and investigation; however, the Human Resources Director has the right to recommend that the matter be handled by an outside attorney/reviewer, with the Board of Ethics covering any associated costs. The Board Chairman and the affected parties shall be advised of the status of the assignment. The subject of the complaint shall also be notified of the complaint. The complainant shall be advised of the status of the assignment.

C. Once assigned, the complaint will be promptly, thoroughly, and impartially investigated. When notified, the affected Board employees, vendors or contractors, will be required to participate in the investigation. Failure to cooperate in the investigation, including failure to provide truthful information (to include the original complaint), or intentionally supplying false or misleading information, may result in adverse action, up to and including termination of employment or contract for service.

D. Complaints under investigation will be kept as confidential as possible within the confines of a reasonable investigation and as allowed by law.

5. **RESOLUTION.** Upon completion of the investigation, written findings and recommendations shall be provided to the DeKalb County Board of Ethics. A copy of the investigator's findings and recommendations shall also be provided to the complainant(s) and to the accused. The Board of Ethics shall make the final determination regarding the appropriate action to be taken on the complaint.

If violations of this policy are found to have occurred, timely and appropriate remedial action, up to and including termination of employment or contract, will be taken.

If violations of this policy are not found to have occurred, the Board of Ethics may so conclude; provided that, nothing shall preclude the Board from taking such other remedial action to address matters revealed during the investigation. While petty slights, annoyances, or isolated incidents (unless extremely serious), may not rise to the level of a violation of this policy, such behaviors may nonetheless violate other Board of Ethics policies, its vision, mission or values; and may be addressed accordingly.

Notice of the Board's final determination shall be provided to the complainant and to the accused.

6. **RETALIATION.** The DeKalb County Board of Ethics will not tolerate retaliation against any employee for reporting violations of this policy in good faith or for participating in the investigation of any such complaint. No employee will be retaliated against for voicing a complaint in good faith, for seeking advice or consult from human resource officials, or for participating in the established complaint resolution process. Any individual found to have engaged in retaliatory conduct or who harasses or attempts to harass, intimidate or retaliate against an employee for filing a complaint or for providing information in connection with a complaint, will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

7. **EXCEPTIONS.** Exceptions to this policy must be justified and approved in advance by the DeKalb County Board of Ethics.