

FAIRFAX COUNTY POLICE CIVILIAN REVIEW PANEL CODE OF ETHICS

Panel Approved: 15 May 2017

PREAMBLE¹

Civilian Police Review Panel members have a unique and critical role as public servants in reviewing law enforcement agency actions. Accordingly, the public, government, and law enforcement agencies have entrusted these individuals to conduct their oversight in a professional, informed, fair, and impartial manner. They earn this trust through a firm commitment to the public good, to the mission of their review panel, and to the ethical and professional standards described herein. The spirit of these ethical and professional standards shall guide panel members' conduct when conflicts of interest or ethical uncertainties arise as well as provide standards to which the public shall hold panel members accountable for their actions. The Code shall be a constant reminder that panel members are beholden to the interest of and fidelity to the public, which requires regularly promoting public trust, integrity, and transparency.

I. DIGNITY AND RESPECT²

Treat all persons with dignity, respect, equality, equity, and fairness and without preference, prejudice, or discrimination based on, but not limited to: age, ethnicity, culture, race, color, disability, sex, gender, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, socioeconomic status, housing status, marital status, parental status, citizenship, nationality, immigration status, language, political beliefs, and all other protected classes.

II. PERSONAL INTEGRITY³

Demonstrate the highest standards of personal and professional conduct to inspire and maintain public and stakeholder confidence and trust. Act honestly and responsibly and promote the ethical practices at all times.

III. COMMITMENT⁴

Represent the public's interest, uphold the constitutions and laws, and adhere to the mission and objectives of this panel, while seeking to improve policies and procedures to promote the public good in accordance with the Fairfax County Police Civilian Review Panel Bylaws. Place service to the public above personal and organizational self-interest.

¹ National Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement (NACOLE) Code of Ethics ([Link](#))

² NACOLE Code of Ethics; included equality, equity, and fairness as they are not necessarily covered under respect and dignity. Language focuses on ability to communicate in native languages or for hearing impaired that may not necessarily be covered under ethnicity, culture, or disability.

³ American Society of Public Administration Code of Ethics (ASPA) ([Link](#)); NACOLE Code of Ethics; National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics ([Link](#))

⁴ NACOLE Code of Ethics; ASPA Code of Ethic

IV. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT⁵

Engage in open, candid, and culturally sensitive outreach with community stakeholders in order to share information and to learn about community policing issues and concerns impacting communities throughout the county.

V. IMPARTIAL OVERSIGHT

Conduct reviews with diligence, objectivity, fairness, inquisitiveness, comprehensiveness, and in a timely matter. Present facts and findings without regard to personal beliefs or concerns for personal, professional, or political consequences.

VI. TRANSPARENCY⁶

Be open, transparent, responsive, and explanative to the public about the panel's role and processes, while in accordance with the Fairfax County Police Civilian Review Panel Bylaws, to include, but not limited to, maintaining meeting minutes and releasing regular annual reports on oversight activities.

VII. CONFIDENTIALITY⁷

Recognize that individual lives are impacted regardless of who they are and what the panel determines. Accordingly, maintain confidentiality of information, and in accordance with the Fairfax County Police Civilian Review Panel Bylaws, that cannot or should not be disclosed and protect the security of confidential records and identities of crime victims and police officers. Any disclosure of confidential information shall require written consent from the complainant and/or victim.

VIII. PROFESSIONAL EXCELLENCE⁸

Acquire the necessary knowledge and understanding of law enforcement, community dynamics, and current social, cultural, legal, and professional issues that impact the community, law enforcement agencies, and county government. Seek and encourage other members to seek professional development opportunities to enhance the ability to act competently, culturally sensitively, appropriately, and ethically in the capacity of a panel member.

IX. ACCOUNTABILITY AND SELF-EXAMINATION⁹

Seek continuous improvement in the effectiveness, efficiency, and advocacy of the panel, the law enforcement agencies it works with, and their relations with the communities they serve. Gauge this through community and cross-organizational feedback and evaluation as well as through internal panel policy and procedural reviews to advance performance, organizational reforms, and accountability. Sustain a respectful relationship with the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, to whom the panel reports.

⁵ NASW Code of Ethics, NACOLE Code of Ethics

⁶ ASPA Code of Ethics; NACOLE Code of Ethics

⁷ NACOLE Code of Ethics; ASPA Code of Ethics

⁸ NACOLE Code of Ethics; ASPA Code of Ethics

⁹ NACOLE Code of Ethics

X. COURAGE¹⁰

Have the mental, moral, and physical fortitude to see through challenges, make tough decisions under stress and pressure, and to do what is right in the face of adversity.

XI. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Panel members shall avoid conflicts of interest, as set forth in the Fairfax County Police Civilian Review Panel Bylaws, that compromise or have the perception of interfering with their fair, impartial, and independent judgment and execution of their roles and responsibilities.

¹⁰ United States Marine Corps Core Values ([Link](#))