

RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF
ORANGE COUNTY, CALIFORNIA
August 12, 2025

WHEREAS, on October 5, 1993, the Board adopted a Code of Ethics and Commitment to Public Service (“Code of Ethics”); and

WHEREAS, on June 7, 2016, the voters of Orange County approved Measure A (“County Campaign Finance and Ethics Commission Ordinance”) establishing a Campaign Finance and Ethics Commission (“Commission”); and

WHEREAS, on June 28, 2016, the Board amended the Code of Ethics to align with Measure A by providing that the Commission would administratively enforce certain violations of sections 6 and 9 of the Code of Ethics; and

WHEREAS, on December 3, 2024, the Board issued a directive to the Office of Campaign Finance and Ethics Commission to research best practices for implementation of an expanded Code of Ethics and provide recommendations to the Board for adoption.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that this Board does hereby amend the County Code of Ethics to read as follows:

Section 1 – Purpose.

This Code of Ethics establishes the standards of conduct required of County officials and employees for the proper operation of County government. These standards are intended to strengthen County public service and to maintain and promote faith and confidence of the people in their government. All members of the Board of Supervisors shall review this Code promptly upon taking office and sign a copy attesting to its receipt.

Section 2 – Responsibilities of Public Office.

County officials and employees are agents of the public and serve for the benefit of the public. County officials and employees must demonstrate the highest standards of ethics consistent with the law and the requirements of their positions. In the performance of their duties, they shall not act for personal gain. They shall uphold the Constitution of the United States, the Constitution of the State of California, the rules, regulations, and policies of the County, and shall carry out impartially the laws of the Nation, State, and County. In their official acts, they shall discharge faithfully their duties, recognizing that the public interest is paramount.

Section 3 – Dedicated Service.

In the performance of their duties, all County officials and employees shall support governmental objectives expressed by the electorate and interpreted by the Board of Supervisors and the

County programs developed to attain these objectives. County officials and employees shall adhere to work rules and performance standards established for their positions by the appointing authority. The County requires all County officials and employees to use good manners, to be considerate, to be accurate in statement and to exercise sound judgment in the performance of their work. County officials and employees shall neither exceed their authority nor breach the law nor ask others to do so. They shall work in full cooperation with other public officials, employees and the public.

Section 4 – Nondiscrimination.

No County official or employee shall grant any special consideration, treatment, or advantage to any person beyond that which is available to every other person in similar circumstance. No person shall be favored or discriminated against with respect to any appointment in the County service because of family or social relationships, race, religious creed, color, national origin, ancestry, physical disability, mental disability, medical condition, genetic information, marital status, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, age, sexual orientation, military and veteran status, political opinion or political affiliation.

Section 5 – Oath of Allegiance.

All County officials and employees must execute an Oath of Allegiance as follows:

“I, _____, do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the State of California against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the State of California; that I take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion; and that I will well and faithfully discharge the duties upon which I am about to enter.”

Section 6 – Use of Public Property.

County officials and employees are prohibited from using County-owned equipment, materials, or property for personal benefit or profit unless specifically authorized by the Board of Supervisors as an element of compensation.

Section 7 – Conflict of Interest.

No County official or employee shall engage in any business, transaction or activity, or have a financial interest, which is in conflict with the proper discharge of official duties or would tend to impair independence of judgment or action in the performance of official duties. County officials and employees are also subject to the provisions of the California Government Code Sections 1090, 1126, 87100, and any other applicable provisions of State law as well as County conflict of interest codes and policies applicable to County employment.

Section 8 – Political Activity.

It is the intent of the Board of Supervisors that County officials and employees participate in the political process to the extent that such participation does not interfere with the proper performance of County duties and functions. The provisions of California Government Code Sections 3201-3209 and 3302 and any future amendments thereto are hereby incorporated as part of this rule.

Section 9 – Revolving door.

A County official or employee shall not meet or confer with a former County official or employee who is acting as a lobbyist within one year following termination of the former official or employee from County employment.

“Acting as a lobbyist” shall mean “acting as ‘County lobbyist’” as defined in section 1-1-80 (b) of the County Lobbyist Registration and Reporting Ordinance as may be amended from time to time.

Section 10 – Protection of Whistleblowers

County officials and employees shall not use or threaten to use any official authority or influence to discourage, restrain or interfere with, or effect a reprisal against any person, including, but not limited to, a County official or employee, for the purpose or with the intent of preventing such person from acting in good faith to report or otherwise bring to the attention of the County or other appropriate agency, office, or department, any information that, if true, would constitute a gross waste of County funds, a gross abuse of authority, a specified and substantial danger to public health or safety due to any act or omission of a County official or employee, or the use of a County office or position or of County resources for personal gain.

Section 11 – Enforcement.

Violations of sections 6 and 9 of this Code of Ethics by an Elective County Officer as defined in section 1-6-4 (b) of the Orange County Campaign Reform Ordinance, by a County officer as defined in section 1-3-22 (b) of the County Gift Ban Ordinance, and by a member of a board, commission, or committee under the jurisdiction of the Board of Supervisors shall be investigated and administratively enforced pursuant to section 1-2-112 of the County Campaign Finance and Ethics Commission Ordinance.