



**SOUTH COLUMBIA COUNTY
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**

**CODE OF ETHICS
POLICY**

Updated: November 2006

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | | |
|----------------------|---|----------|
| ARTICLE I. | ETHICAL STANDARDS | 3 |
| SECTION 1.01 | MEMBERS NOT JUST CUSTOMERS | 3 |
| SECTION 1.02 | DEMOCRATIC CONTROL..... | 3 |
| SECTION 1.03 | SERVICE DIFFERENTIATES | 3 |
| SECTION 1.04 | “PROFITS” BELONG TO THE MEMBERS | 3 |
| ARTICLE II. | FIDUCIARY DUTY | 4 |
| ARTICLE III. | COMPLIANCE WITH LAWS & REGULATIONS | 4 |
| ARTICLE IV. | ACCURATE AND PROPER ACCOUNTING | 5 |
| ARTICLE V. | TRANSPARENT GOVERNANCE..... | 5 |
| ARTICLE VI. | TRUTHFUL COMMUNICATIONS WITH MEMBERS | 6 |
| ARTICLE VII. | CONFIDENTIAL INTERACTIONS WITH MEMBERS | 6 |
| ARTICLE VIII. | COMMITMENT TO LEARNING AND SKILL ENHANCEMENT | 6 |
| ARTICLE IX. | ABSENCE OF PREJUDICE AND HARASSMENT | 7 |
| ARTICLE X. | CONFLICT OF INTEREST..... | 7 |
| ARTICLE XI. | EMPLOYMENT OF RELATIVES | 7 |
| ARTICLE XII. | COOPERATION WITH OTHER CHAMBERS | 8 |
| ARTICLE XIII. | SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY | 8 |

ARTICLE I. ETHICAL STANDARDS

- Chambers have only one class of stakeholders...Members.
- The Chamber must earn the respect and trust of its Members.
- Trust is earned with routine ethical behavior, built around honesty and fairness.
- The Officials and employees subscribe to the following principles:

Section 1.01 Members Not Just Customers

By joining a Chamber, people become members. Members expect more value and deserve more respect than is available in the typical customer interaction.

Section 1.02 Democratic Control

Members have equal influence in the voting process and equal opportunity to run for election to the Board. One member, one vote. Once elected, Directors and Staff have a fiduciary responsibility to all members.

Section 1.03 Service Differentiates

Democratic control provides a decision-making environment that elevates creating value for the Members above profit accumulation at the Chamber. It is the dedication to providing service that differentiates Chambers from other business related groups.

Section 1.04 "Profits" Belong to the Members

In order to grow and provide new services, Chambers generate capital by retaining a portion of earnings. These retained earnings are used for the betterment of the entire membership.

- The Board commits to review of the Code of Ethics on an annual basis at the June meeting.

ARTICLE II. FIDUCIARY DUTY

- Directors and Staff owe their highest duty to the Members in all decisions. Once elected, Directors represent all Chamber members, not just “their” constituency.
- Once a decision is made, the Board speaks with one voice.
- For All Members, Directors and Senior Staff are responsible for building and maintaining a strong financial base for the Chamber so that it can serve the members for years into the future.
- In all matters coming before the Board, Directors and President will consider the impact to value produced for the members over time.
- Directors and Senior Staff are expected to attend and participate in Board meetings.
- The Board is responsible for developing and evaluating the leadership of the Chamber. Annual President performance evaluation and rotation of Board officers are considered healthy practices in this area.

ARTICLE III. COMPLIANCE WITH LAWS & REGULATIONS

- Officials and Staff will not knowingly violate the laws or regulations governing the activities of the Chamber.
- The Chamber will routinely assess compliance with laws and regulations by undertaking a routine review of its policies and practices.
- Upon the discovery of out-of-compliance circumstances, the officials and Staff shall rectify the non-compliance situation as soon as possible.

ARTICLE IV. ACCURATE AND PROPER ACCOUNTING

- Records shall be maintained in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles.
- Transactions shall be properly authorized by authorities delegated by the Board of Directors.
- Records and transactions shall be documented accurately and in a timely fashion.
- The Board shall employ external auditors to validate the accuracy and appropriateness of the records, controls and procedures of the Chamber.
- Employees shall cooperate fully with the auditors during the course of their reviews.
- There will be no retaliation for disclosing suspected inaccurate reporting or recordkeeping.
- Management shall engage such interim review procedures as may be deemed appropriate to assure accurate and timely maintenance of the Chamber's records.

ARTICLE V. TRANSPARENT GOVERNANCE

- Members in good standing and of age of majority shall have equal opportunity to run for election to the Board.
- The Board of Directors and Staff shall establish qualifications for eligibility to serve on the Board. A nominating committee shall be established to validate the qualifications of candidates.
- The election process shall be conducted so as to ensure that all members have an equal opportunity to vote.
- Upon request, any Member may obtain a copy of the By-Laws, Financial Statements, Code of Ethics and any Chamber-originated Member Communications.
- In matters coming before the membership for a vote, the Board shall endeavor to explain the matter in a clear and concise manner.

ARTICLE VI. TRUTHFUL COMMUNICATIONS WITH MEMBERS

- The Chamber will comply with requirements established under all applicable laws and regulations.
- Promotional materials should be designed to inform and not mislead Members with respect to the benefits they can expect to receive from the Chamber.
- Employees responsible for providing advice should be trained to identify the best way to meet the Member's particular need.

ARTICLE VII. CONFIDENTIAL INTERACTIONS WITH MEMBERS

- Members expect and deserve the highest level of confidentiality when it comes to discussions, transactions and recordkeeping affecting their dealings with the Chamber.
- Employees and officials will treat all member interactions with the highest degree of confidentiality.
- The Chamber's data system and remote access transaction processing systems will be designed to ensure the privacy and security of member information.
- It is the responsibility of all employees and officials to report any breach of confidentiality that could harm the relationship of trust between the Chamber and its Members. There will be no retaliation for any disclosure of breach of confidentiality.

ARTICLE VIII. COMMITMENT TO LEARNING AND SKILL ENHANCEMENT

- All Volunteers will complete an Agreement to Serve for officials signed on an annual basis.
- Management will establish an annual Learning and Skill Enhancement Plan for employees to be approved in connection with the annual performance review process.
- Officials commit to the preparation of an annual strategic plan.

ARTICLE IX. ABSENCE OF PREJUDICE AND HARASSMENT

- Each Member is a unique individual. However, there shall be no distinction in policy or practice based on race, creed, national origin, ancestry, sex, age, handicap (disability), sexual orientation, political affiliation or beliefs.
- Each employee is a unique individual. However, there shall be no distinction in recruiting, training, career advancement or any other practice based on race, creed, national origin, ancestry, sex, age, handicap (disability), sexual orientation, political affiliation or beliefs.
- The Board shall establish a formal policy statement that addresses the intolerance for discrimination and harassment that provides for discovery, notification, escalation and resolution of complaints.

ARTICLE X. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

- A Conflict of Interest Policy has been adopted by the Board and is signed and reviewed annually by Board and Staff.

ARTICLE XI. EMPLOYMENT OF RELATIVES

- No Relative of any employee may be hired without the written approval of the Board. In no case will a direct reporting relationship be established with a relative of an employee.
- No Relative of senior management or any director may be hired without the approval of the Board.

ARTICLE XII. COOPERATION WITH OTHER CHAMBERS

- Chambers are interdependent in that they share a common reputation in the eyes of the general public. For this reason, the Chamber supports cooperative efforts among Chambers to enhance the overall reputation of Chambers, to maintain collective financial strength and to obtain economies of scale in service delivery.
- Based on the belief that Chamber membership is an excellent benefit for consumers, Officials will engage in cooperative activities designed to make membership available to as many businesses as possible.

ARTICLE XIII. SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

- The Chamber is dependent on the vitality of its community for the well-being of the membership. For this reason, Chamber Officials commit to develop, fund and implement a Community Involvement Plan.
- Directors and Staff, management and Staff are encouraged to become involved with local civic or charity organizations on a volunteer basis.

I have reviewed this Code of Ethics policy and agree to adhere to it's contents.

Printed Name / Signature

Date

Adopted this 14th day of November, 2006.
South Columbia County Chamber of Commerce

By _____

It's _____