

Milwaukee LGBT Community Center

Common Code of Ethics

(Approved by the Board of Directors on November 19, 2008)

I. COMMON CODE OF ETHICS

- A. As a nonprofit organization at the forefront of enhancing the quality of life for the metro Milwaukee LGBT population, the policy of the Milwaukee LGBT Community Center (herein referred to as the “Center”) is to uphold the highest legal, ethical, and moral standards. Our donors and volunteers support the Center because they trust us to be good stewards of their resources and to uphold rigorous standards of conduct. Our reputation for integrity and excellence requires the careful observance of all applicable laws and regulations, as well as a scrupulous regard for the highest standards of conduct and personal integrity.
- B. The mission of the Center can only be realized through a common code of ethics upheld by its staff, volunteers, and the Board of Directors.
 - 1. We expect integrity, honesty, and trustworthiness in our work, courage in our decisions, and dedication to the values and beliefs of the Center.
 - 2. We expect responsible action on behalf of the organization and are accountable and transparent to our constituents and to one another. We share information when appropriate without sacrificing confidentiality.
 - 3. We expect to be treated and to treat others with respect. We respect the opinions of and the differences among individuals.
 - 4. We expect fairness to be evident in our actions internally and externally. We are equitable in our decisions and mindful of their impact on other groups and people.
 - 5. We expect our actions to demonstrate our care for others and the community as a whole. We support each other in a humane manner. We care about the well-being of each other, the community, and the Center.
- C. We, as Center professionals (staff, volunteers, and Board members), dedicate ourselves to carrying out the mission of this organization. We will do the following:
 - 1. Recognize that the chief function of the Center at all times is to serve the best interests of our constituency.
 - 2. Accept as a personal duty the responsibility to keep up-to-date on emerging issues and to conduct ourselves with professional competence, fairness, impartiality, efficiency, and effectiveness.
 - 3. Respect the structure and responsibilities of the Board of Directors, provide them with facts and advice as a basis for their policy-making decisions, and uphold and implement policies adopted by the Board.
 - 4. Keep the community informed about issues affecting it.

5. Conduct our organizational and operational duties with positive leadership exemplified by open communication, creativity, dedication, and compassion, and conflict management.
6. Exercise whatever discretionary authority we have under the law to carry out the mission of the Center.
7. Serve with respect, concern, courtesy, and responsiveness in carrying out the organization's mission.
8. Demonstrate the highest standards of personal integrity, truthfulness, honesty, and fortitude in all our activities in order to inspire confidence and trust in our activities.
9. Adhere to the Philanthropy Code of Ethics when involved in strategic fund development plans, donor relations, and/or fundraising activities; and to follow the Gift Acceptance Guidelines when discussing or soliciting charitable donations.
10. Avoid any interest or activity that is in conflict with the conduct of our official duties.
11. Respect and protect privileged information to which we have access in the course of our official duties.
12. Strive for personal and professional excellence and encourage the professional developments of others.

II. INFRACTIONS

- A. In general, the use of good judgment based on high ethical principles will guide Center staff, volunteers, and the Board of Directors with respect to lines of acceptable conduct. However, if a situation arises where it is difficult to determine the proper course of conduct, or where questions arise concerning the propriety of certain conduct by an individual or others, the matter should be brought to the attention of the Center.
 1. Staff should contact their immediate supervisor and, if necessary, the Executive Director. However, if the propriety of the Executive Director's conduct is in questions, staff members are encouraged to speak with the Co-Presidents of the Board of Directors about their concerns.
 2. Board members should raise any such concerns with the Co-Presidents of the Board of Directors.
- B. Obvious infractions of this Common Code of Ethics are to be reported immediately to the Executive Director or to a Co-President of the Board of Directors who shall, in his/her determination, bring the infraction to the attention of the full Board of Directors.

Signature _____ Date _____

Name (please print) _____