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# Advisory Neighborhood Commission 6A

## Code of Conduct

### Revision History

Name	Date	Reason for Changes
Laura Gentile	December 12, 2021	Original

## **ANC 6A Code of Conduct**

The ANC 6A Code of Conduct provides guidance and standards for ethical and respectful conduct between Commissioners, Committee members, local residents, and others who may participate in Commission meetings and activities.

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

ANC 6A is committed to providing a safe, productive, and welcoming environment for all individuals who participate in its meetings, based on the full range of dimensions of diversity, including but not limited to: age, citizenship, disability, ethnicity, gender or gender identity, genetic information, national origin, physical appearance, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, veteran status or other characteristic (“personal characteristics”).

#### **Public Participation in Meetings & Communication Forums**

Commission and Committee meetings and related forums (e.g., ANC listserv) allow for the collegial exchange of ideas and discussion of issues related to the ANC 6A community. Civil discourse that includes and acknowledges a diversity of opinions and experiences is vital. Inappropriate behavior of any kind, including personal attacks, will not be tolerated. All ANC 6A meetings and related online communication forums -- including online listservs and chats/Q&As associated with virtual meetings -- are intended to be safe spaces. Commissioners, Committee members, community members, and anyone else who may participate in an ANC meeting is expected to:

- Be respectful
- Listen actively
- Respect diversity, including communication differences
- Respect privacy of participants
- Be aware of language diversity
- Handle disagreement constructively

Personal attacks will not be tolerated.

### **2. KEY PRINCIPLES FOR COMMISSIONERS AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

#### **2.1 Integrity**

Commissioners and Committee members will not place themselves under any obligation to any individual or organization that might reasonably be thought to influence them in the performance of their duties. Commissioners will not take any actions on a matter where they have a financial or personal conflict of interest.

#### **2.2 Leadership**

Commissioners and Committee members will promote and support the key principles by example and to maintain and strengthen the public's trust and confidence in the integrity of the Commission.

### 2.3 Selflessness

Commissioners and Committee members have a duty to make decisions in the public interest.

### 2.4 Impartiality

Commissioners will make decisions on merit and in accordance with the ANC Oath of Office when carrying out public business. This means fairness to all; impartial assessment; considering only relevant matters and paying particular attention to those who have been historically under-represented and discriminated against by the government.

### 2.5 Accountability

Commissioners and Committee members are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and should consider issues on their merits, taking into account the views of others within the community and seeking out voices who do not have the power or accessibility to be present at every meeting.

### 2.6 Honesty

Commissioners and Committee members will abide by the Bylaws and guidelines outlined in the Standard Operating Procedures and the Code of Conduct.

## 3. GUIDE TO ETHICAL DECISION MAKING

3.1 If a Commissioner is unsure about the ethical issues around an action or decision, they should consider these five points:

- Is the decision or conduct lawful?
- Is the decision or conduct consistent with the Commission's Bylaws, Standard Operating Procedures, or Code of Conduct?
- What will the outcome be for the Commissioner, the Commission, and the community, especially for those underrepresented?
- Do the outcomes raise a conflict of interest or lead to private gain or loss at public expense?
- Can the decision or conduct be justified in terms of the public interest and would it withstand public scrutiny?

### Seeking advice

3.2 Commissioners have the right to question any instruction or direction given to them that they think may be unethical or unlawful. If a Commissioner is uncertain about an action or decision, he or she may choose to seek advice from the ANC 6A Chair, the

OANC, or any relevant Governmental organization.

#### **4. GENERAL CONDUCT OBLIGATIONS**

##### General conduct

4.1 Commissioners must not conduct themselves in a manner that is likely to bring the Commission into disrepute. Specifically, Commissioners must not act in a way that

- a) contravenes the Commission's relevant administrative requirements and policies;
- b) is improper or unethical;
- c) is an abuse of power or otherwise amounts to misconduct;
- d) causes, comprises or involves intimidation, harassment or verbal abuse; or, involves prejudice in the provision of a service to the community.

4.2 Commissioners must act lawfully and honestly and must exercise a reasonable degree of judgment.

##### Fairness and equity

4.3 Commissioners must consider issues consistently, promptly and fairly. Commissioners must deal with matters in accordance with established procedures, in a non-discriminatory manner.

4.4 Commissioners must take all relevant facts available into consideration and have regard to the particular merits of each matter.

##### Harassment and discrimination

4.5 ANC 6A commits to create a community dedicated to the principles of equity and anti-discrimination and focused on supporting those who have been historically underrepresented and underserved by government decisionmakers.

4.6 Commissioners will not harass, discriminate against, use any language that is disparaging or support others who harass and discriminate against colleagues or members of the public. This includes, but is not limited to harassment and discrimination on the grounds of race, color, gender, sexuality, class, disability, religion, age, homelessness, national origin, or familial status.

4.7 Commissioners and Committee members are expected to speak up if they witness any injustice, discrimination or exclusion of anyone else.

4.8 Each Commissioner and Committee member shall attend, at least annually, an anti-racism training or presentation which may be offered by the DC Office of Human Rights or community-based organizations located in or serving ANC 6A. Documentation of such training shall be submitted to the Chair on an annual basis prior to the first meeting of the year. The Commission will consider paying for the

cost of a trainer or training course. Any training would need to be pre-approved by the OANC.

#### Public Comment

4.9 Commissioners in the course of their duties may provide comment regarding issues within their specific SMDs. However, only Commissioners that have been designated through official action by the Commission may publicly comment on or otherwise represent the official position of the Commission.

While it is recognized that Commissioners and Committee members, as residents of the community, have the right to publicly comment and enter into public debate on the political and social issues, they will take care to clarify that their views are personal and not representative of the official Commission.

Commissioners and Committee members will work to hear from as many constituents as possible, in particular those from communities that have been traditionally excluded or marginalized from government services and opportunities.

### **5. ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND COMMISSION RESOURCES**

5.1 The Chair and the Secretary, or Designee, must provide full and timely information to Commissioners to enable them to carry out their duties. Such information shall be made available to the public through the ANC 6A website unless prohibited by Federal or DC law, ANC 6A Bylaws, or if it contains personally identifying information of a constituent who has not provided permission.

5.2 Commissioners who provide any information to a particular Commissioner in the performance of their civic duties must also make that information available to other Commissioners who may request it.