

EMERGENCY

City of Cincinnati

An Ordinance No. _____

AKS

AWG

-2022

ADOPTING a Council Code of Conduct pursuant to Section 101-45, "Code of Conduct," of the Cincinnati Municipal Code to govern conduct by Councilmembers and their staff.

WHEREAS, on December 16, 2020, City Council passed Ordinance 384-2021, establishing the Economic Development Reform Panel ("EDRP"), with a mission of studying the City's development process and making recommendations regarding best practices regarding economic development to insulate the development process from political influence and cronyism; and

WHEREAS, on July 29, 2021, the EDRP submitted its report and recommendations to Council, which included that Council and the Mayor adopt and abide by Codes of Conduct setting out expected behaviors for elected officials particularly in relation to the development process; and

WHEREAS, on October 20, 2021, Council amended Chapter 101 of the Cincinnati Municipal Code to create new Section 101-45, "Code of Conduct," to require City Council to adopt and abide by a code of conduct as recommended by the EDRP; and

WHEREAS, the attached Code of Conduct contains guidelines to promote the aspirational goals of good, open government; and

WHEREAS, Council wishes to adopt the attached Code of Conduct for members of Council and their staff; now, therefore,

BE IT ORDAINED by the Council of the City of Cincinnati, State of Ohio:

Section 1. That pursuant to Cincinnati Municipal Code Section 101-45, Council hereby approves and adopts the attached Council Code of Conduct which will govern the conduct of members of Council and their staff.

Section 2. That this ordinance shall be an emergency measure necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health, safety, and general welfare and shall, subject to the terms of Article II, Section 6 of the Charter, be effective immediately. The reason for the emergency is the immediate need to put Codes of Conduct in place as required by Section 101-45 of the

Cincinnati Municipal Code to govern the behavior of elected officials and their staff in order to restore public trust.

Passed: _____, 2022

Aftab Pureval, Mayor

Attest: _____
Clerk

CINCINNATI CITY COUNCIL

CODE OF CONDUCT

This code of conduct contains principles that shall guide the conduct of City Council and all Council staff, with the express purpose of fostering the highest standards of governance, cooperation, and respect for the City Charter, the laws of the City of Cincinnati, and City Council. Within forty-five days of becoming a member of City Council, whether by election or appointment, every member of City Council shall sign a commitment to follow the Cincinnati City Council's Code of Conduct set forth in this document. Within forty-five days of being hired as a staff member for a member of City Council, every staff member shall sign a commitment to follow the Cincinnati City Council's Code of Conduct set forth in this document. The Clerk of Council shall administer this requirement and provide a copy of the commitment to each member of Council and their staff members.

Pursuant to Section 101-45 of the Cincinnati Municipal Code, Council is charged with enforcement of this Code by public censure of violations, which requires a vote of majority of the members of Council, excluding the member of Council subject to possible censure. Upon approval by a majority of council, the censure shall be filed with the Clerk of Council.

All members of Council and their staff shall:

- 1) Recognize the charter role of the Mayor, Council, and City Manager, particularly in contracting, development projects, and incentives;
- 2) Recognize the obligation of elected officials and staff to not attempt to privately interfere with quasi-judicial proceedings of boards and commissions or the zoning hearing examiner;
- 3) Cultivate a culture of reporting of conflicts of interest and unethical conduct and a commitment to avoid retaliating against those who report suspected conflicts or unethical conduct;
- 4) Commit to understanding and following the applicable ethics and conflict of interest laws (See Ohio Revised Code Chapter 102 and Section 2921.42);
- 5) Commit to attend training at least annually on Ohio ethics laws and other state and local laws pertinent to the role of the Council;
- 6) Commit to never use city resources or personnel for political activity;

- 7) Support the integrity of the City's development processes and promote public trust by directing inquiries from developers related to financial assistance or land use approvals to the City Manager's Office so that they can be handled uniformly through transparent City administrative processes;
- 8) Set City funding and appropriation priorities in an open, transparent, and public manner;
- 9) Not use City resources or personnel to disclose confidential information obtained through the performance of City work for private gain or publicity or as prohibited by Ohio Revised Code section 102.03(B);
- 10) Adhere to all applicable laws and regulations that provide equal opportunity for all persons regardless of race, color, religion, gender, gender identity, national origin, age, sexual orientation, or disability.
- 11) Report, without undue delay, to the City Manager, City Solicitor, Ohio Ethics Commission, or other appropriate authority, conduct in the performance of official duties that is reasonably believed to violate the law or reasonably believed to violate this code of conduct.