

City of Manitowoc Common Council Code of Conduct

The City of Manitowoc and its elected officials share a commitment to ethical and professional conduct and service to the City. The purpose of this code is to establish clear guidelines for the Common Council (defined as alderpersons and the Mayor) in carrying out their responsibilities in their relationships with each other, with City employees, with the citizens of the City of Manitowoc, and with all other private and governmental entities.

- 1. Conduct with Each Other.** Difficult questions, tough challenges to particular points of view, and criticism of ideas are legitimate and necessary elements of democracy in action. Every Council member has the right to an individual opinion, which shall be respected by other Council members during debate. Council shall refrain from being hostile, degrading, or defamatory when debating issues and engage in debate in a courteous and respectful manner.
- 2. Conduct with City Staff.** Council members shall treat all staff as professionals, referring to them respectfully during meetings, and never publicly demeaning an employee. Council members will avoid interfering with the daily operations of departments and, whenever possible, direct concerns and inquiries to the Mayor or the Mayor's direct reports. Council members shall address employee performance issues with the employee's department head or the Mayor rather than in open session. Council members will abstain from giving gifts to City employees.
- 3. Conduct Towards the Public.** Council members will demonstrate honesty and integrity in all dealings with the public, and be an example of appropriate and ethical conduct. Council members will make the public feel welcome at City meetings, and will avoid showing partiality, prejudice, or disrespect to members of the public speaking at public input.
- 4. Conduct with Media or Other Government or Private Entities.** When communicating with the media, other units of government, or private entities, Council members will make clear whether they are expressing a personal opinion or the official position of the City. Each Council member has differing views and until a final vote is taken, the position of a Council member is not the City's position. Council shall refer all media questions on closed session matters or litigation to the Mayor or City Attorney.
- 5. Communication.** Alderpersons shall use their City-issued email address for all City-related correspondence. Alders shall refrain from using their personal emails to contact City employees at work.