

Source: Minneapolis Code of Ordinances

15.40. Conflicts of interest. (a) Definition of conflicts of interest. A local official or employee, whether paid or unpaid, shall avoid any situation that might give rise to a conflict of interest. A conflict of interest is present when, in the discharge of official duties, a local official or employee participates in a governmental decision, action or transaction in which he or she has a financial interest, except when that financial interest is no greater than that of another member of his or her business classification, profession or occupation or in matters involving city litigation when that financial interest is no greater than that of another member of the public impacted by the litigation. A financial interest is any interest, including loans, which shall yield, directly or indirectly, a monetary or other material benefit to the local official or employee (other than monetary or material benefits authorized by the city). A financial interest of a local official's or employee's employer (other than the City of Minneapolis), his or her associated business, or his or her spouse, domestic partner, or dependent, and their employers or associated businesses shall also be considered a financial interest of the local official or employee. The following assets shall not be considered a financial interest for purposes of this section:

- (1) Ownership of shares in a diversified mutual fund.
 - (2) Membership in a pension plan or employee benefit plan.
 - (3) Ownership of bonds or publicly traded securities with a market value of less than two thousand five hundred dollars (\$2,500.00).
 - (4) Ownership of a whole life insurance policy.
- (b) Addressing conflicts of interest. To address conflicts of interest:
- (1) A local official or employee shall not participate in making or attempt to use his or her position to influence any city governmental decision, action, or transaction in which the local official or employee knows or has reason to know that he or she has a conflict of interest. To participate or participation means making the decision, taking action, entering into a transaction, providing advice or a recommendation, introducing, sponsoring, debating, voting on, approving, and investigating the decision, action, or transaction. Participation includes the direct and active supervision of the participation of a subordinate in the matter. Participation is more than official responsibility, knowledge, perfunctory involvement, or involvement on an administrative or peripheral basis.
 - (2) A local official or employee may participate in a city governmental decision, action, or transaction involving an

organization or entity when the local official or employee, or his or her spouse, domestic partner, or dependent is an officer, director, board member, or trustee, if the local official or employee does not have a financial interest in the governmental decision, action, or transaction. However, the local official or employee must disclose his or her affiliation with the organization or entity as though it were a conflict of interest. A local official or employee may participate in a city governmental decision, action, or transaction when the local official or employee has a financial interest in a matter involving city litigation but that financial interest is no greater than that of another member of the public impacted by the litigation. However, the local official or employee must disclose his or her financial interest in the litigation as though it were a conflict of interest.

- (3) A local official or employee may participate in a city governmental decision involving a related person, other than his or her spouse, domestic partner, or dependent, if the local official or employee does not have a financial interest in the governmental decision, action, or transaction. However, the local official or employee must disclose his or her relationship with the related person as though it were a conflict of interest.
- (4) Any lobbyist (other than an employee of the city) who is lobbying on behalf of the city must disclose a complete list of the principals represented by that lobbyist or other lobbyists in the same firm, along with the project or projects on which lobbying is expected to occur on a principal's behalf, to all elected officials of the city and the city clerk. The ethics officer will report to the intergovernmental relations committee on what projects, if any, create, or may create a professional conflict of interest for the lobbyist. A professional conflict of interest is a situation where the interests of a principal of the lobbyist are or may be adverse to the interests of the city. The lobbyist must update the list any time there is a change in his or her list.

(c) Disclosure of conflicts of interest. If a local official or employee, in the discharge of his or her official duties, recognizes that his or her participation would create a conflict of interest, the local official or employee shall disclose the conflict of interest as follows:

- (1) The mayor and members of the city council shall disclose the conflict of interest to each other as soon as they become aware of the conflict. If such official becomes aware of a conflict during a meeting of the city council, or one (1) of its committees, or the executive committee, the official shall immediately disclose the conflict of interest orally. The mayor or

city council member shall also prepare, on a form prescribed by the city clerk, a written statement describing the matter requiring action or decision and the nature of his or her conflict of interest. The written statement shall be distributed to the mayor and the members of the city council and filed with the city clerk. After the first time the official has orally disclosed a conflict of interest and filed the form, the elected official may subsequently orally disclose a conflict by referring to the form. Because the mayor or city council members may not attend all city council or committee meetings, oral disclosure may consist of the written statement being read into the record by the presiding officer at the first regular meeting of the city council after the form has been filed.

- (2) A department head shall disclose a conflict of interest to the mayor and the city council by preparing, on a form prescribed by the city clerk, a written statement describing the matter requiring action or decision and the nature of his or her conflict of interest. The form shall be distributed to the mayor and the members of the city council and filed with the city clerk.
- (3) A local official who is not an employee and who is not covered by paragraphs (1) and (2) above shall disclose a conflict of interest to the other individuals on the agency, authority or instrumentality as soon as the local official becomes aware of the conflict. If a local official becomes aware of a conflict during a meeting, the local official shall immediately disclose the conflict of interest orally. The local official shall also prepare, on a form prescribed by the city clerk, a written statement describing the matter requiring action or decision and the nature of his or her conflict of interest. The written statement shall be distributed to the mayor and city council, any department head whose jurisdiction or agency could be affected, and filed with the city clerk.
- (4) An employee who is not covered by paragraphs (1), (2) or (3) above shall disclose a conflict of interest (i) orally to his or her supervisor; and (ii) in writing as described below. If there is no supervisor, an employee shall disclose a conflict of interest in writing as described below. An employee who is required to disclose a conflict of interest in writing under this paragraph (4) shall prepare, on a form prescribed by the city clerk, a written statement describing the matter requiring action or decision and the nature of his or her conflict of interest. The written statement shall be distributed to the employee's immediate supervisor and department head, and filed with the city clerk.
- (5) All initial written statements required by this section shall be

filed not later than June 1, 2003. Thereafter, they shall be filed and distributed within one (1) week after the local official or employee becomes aware of the conflict of interest.

- (6) If the local official or employee has a supervisor, the supervisor shall assign the matter, if possible, to another person who does not have a conflict of interest. If they have no immediate supervisor, the local official or employee shall remove himself or herself from participating in the action or decision in question. If the local official is a member of the city council or the mayor, the local official shall not participate in any discussion or vote on any matter involving the conflict of interest. Although the mayor or city council member must abstain from voting on the matter, he or she shall be counted present for purposes of a quorum. (2003-Or-034, § 1, 3-21-03; 2007-Or-066, § 1, 8-31-07; 2009-Or-033, § 1, 4-24-09)