



City of Arts & Innovation

Board of Ethics Memorandum

TO: BOARD OF ETHICS

DATE: AUGUST 7, 2025

FROM: CITY CLERK

WARDS: ALL

SUBJECT: CODE OF ETHICS ANNUAL REVIEW

ISSUE:

Conduct the annual review of the Code of Ethics and Conduct and forward proposed recommendations for revisions to the City Council Governmental Processes Committee.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Board of Ethics performs the annual review of the Code of Ethics and Conduct for its effectiveness, considers any recommendations for revisions from the other City boards and commissions, and submits to the Governmental Processes Committee its recommendations as required by Section 2.78.110 of the Riverside Municipal Code, and delegates a member to present to GPC.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY/BACKGROUND:

Charter Section 202 requires the adoption of a Code of Ethics and Conduct for elected officials and members of appointed boards, commissions, and committees to assure public confidence in the integrity of local government and its effective and fair operation. The first Code of Ethics and Conduct, adopted by a Resolution of the City Council on July 1, 2005, was amended several times.

On April 5, 2016, Ordinance No. 7328 was adopted adding Chapters 2.78 and 2.80 to the Riverside Municipal Code, adopting a revised Code of Ethics and Conduct and establishing the Board of Ethics (BOE).

RMC Section 2.78.110 provides for annual monitoring and oversight in the following cadence:

- Before the end of July of each year, all boards and commissions shall review and discuss the Code of Ethics and Conduct and submit recommendations, if any, to the BOE for their consideration.
- Then before the end of August, the BOE shall review and discuss the effectiveness of the Code of Ethics and Conduct and the recommendations of the other boards and

commissions, then submit their recommendations to the Governmental Processes Committee (GPC).

- Subsequently, in September, the GPC will review and discuss the effectiveness of this Code of Ethics and Conduct, in addition to the recommendations from the Boards and Commissions, then instruct the City Manager to prepare a report to the City Council for their consideration.
- Then lastly, prior to the end of each year, the Chair of the GPC will present a report to the City Council, which shall include the recommendations from the Boards and Commissions and GPC. At which time, the City Council conducts a public hearing to review the report and make an independent evaluation of the effectiveness of this chapter. After their discussion, City Council may direct the Attorney to make any necessary changes to this chapter it deems appropriate.

DISCUSSION:

On June 2, 2025, the Human Resources Board submitted three recommendations: (a) drafting a section for digital conduct; (b) clarifying explicit protection for whistleblowers; and (c) expanding the complaint eligibility to vendors/contractors and guests that directly interface with the public officials.

On June 25, 2025, the Community Police Review Commission recommended that the six months to a year timeline to file an ethics complaint be explored for appropriateness.

On July 10, 2025, the Budget Engagement Commission recommended providing guidance to City staff for filing complaints and creating whistleblower protocols.

The Commission on Aging and the Transportation Board will meet in August 2025 to review the Code of Ethics and Conduct. Any recommendations received will be forwarded to the GPC in September for consideration.

The Airport Commission, Commission on Disabilities, Cultural Heritage Board, Human Relations Commission, Board of Library Trustees, Museum Board of Riverside, Park and Recreation Commission, Planning Commission, and Board of Public Utilities submitted no recommendations for amendments for the BOE consideration.

Board of Ethics recommendation:

On May 5, 2025, the Board of Ethics deferred amending RMC Section 2.78.070.D.5 provision, which reads *"including when the policy of the City of Riverside was established"*, to the annual review. The language is bolded in Attachment 4-RMC 2.78 for reference.

Administrative recommendations:

Correct a clerical error in RMC Section 2.78.070.D.5 in reference to “*For alleged violations of RMC Section 2.78.070(M)*,” replacing 2.78.070(M) with Section 2.78.060(M) as outlined in Attachment 4

Update “Inclusiveness, Community Engagement, and Governmental Processes Committee” to “Governmental Processes Committee” to reflect the name change that took place January 16, 2024.

Lastly, for clarity purposes, consider revising Section 2.78.110 to remove language as reflected in Attachment 4.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact associated with the annual review.

Prepared by: Donesia Gause, City Clerk

Attachments

1. Human Resources Board Minutes
2. Community Police Review Commission
3. Budget Engagement Commission
4. RMC 2.78