

Revisions to Tenet 3 and the Guidelines and to Tenet 12 Guideline on Personal Relationships

In the continuing effort to ensure that the ICMA Code of Ethics is relevant to the profession, the ICMA Committee on Professional Conduct launched a structured review of Tenet 3 in 2016.

Why focus on Tenet 3? Because integrity, which is often defined as being honest and having a commitment to core principles, is an essential attribute of being a good leader. Especially for those serving in the public sector, it is critical to building trust, respect, and confidence with the public we serve.

The eight guidelines under Tenet 3, most of which were drafted in 1972, attempt to define what honor and integrity look like for a local government professional. Issues addressed include maintaining public confidence, impression of influence, appointment commitment, credentials, treating colleagues with respect when seeking a position, and the obligation to report potential ethics violations while adhering to the confidentiality requirements of the process.

As part of the discussion on relationships in the workplace, the Committee is recommending changes to clarify the personal relationship guideline under Tenet 12.

Based on member feedback, the Committee drafted proposed changes to the language of Tenet 3 and the guidelines, along with the Tenet 12 guideline. With your feedback in hand, the Committee will then make recommendations on next steps. Please note that any change to the tenet requires a vote of the corporate members which would take place in 2017. Guideline changes are approved by the ICMA Executive Board.

Thank you for taking the time to review the recommendations and to provide your comments.

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Tenet 3 Revisions - FINAL

Tenet 3: Please respond whether you agree or disagree with the proposed language.

1. The recommendation is to replace the current language in Tenet 3:

Tenet 3 - Current Language

Be dedicated to the highest ideals of honor and integrity in all public and personal relationships in order that the member may merit the respect and confidence of the elected officials, of other officials and employees, and of the public.

Tenet 3 - Proposed Language

Demonstrate, by word and action, the highest standards of ethical conduct in all public, professional, and personal relationships in order that the member may merit the trust and respect of the elected and appointed officials, employees, and the public.

- I agree with the proposed Tenet 3 change.
- I disagree with the proposed Tenet 3 change.
- Comments or suggestions for new language:

Tenet 3 Revisions - FINAL

Public Confidence: Please respond whether you agree or disagree with the proposed language.

2. The recommendation is to replace the current language in **Tenet 3 - Guideline: Public Confidence**

Public Confidence - Current Language

Members should conduct themselves so as to maintain public confidence in their profession, their local government, and in their performance of the public trust.

Public Confidence - Proposed Language

Members should conduct themselves so as to maintain public confidence in their position and profession, the operation of their local government, and in their responsibility to uphold the public trust.

- I agree with the proposed guideline.
- I disagree with the proposed guideline.

Comments or suggestions for new language:

Tenet 3 Revisions - FINAL

Influence: Please respond whether you agree or disagree with the proposed language.

3. The recommendation is to replace the current language in **Tenet 3 - Guideline: Impression of Influence**

Impression of Influence - Current Language

Members should conduct their official and personal affairs in such a manner as to give the clear impression that they cannot be improperly influenced in the performance of their official duties.

Influence - Proposed Language

Members should conduct their professional and personal affairs in such a manner as to ensure that they cannot be improperly influenced in the performance of their official duties.

- I agree with the proposed guideline
- I disagree with the proposed guideline

Comments or suggestions for new language:

Tenet 3 Revisions - FINAL

Appointment Commitment: Please respond whether you agree retain the current guideline.

4. The recommendation is to retain the current language for **Tenet 3 - Guideline: Appointment Commitment**

Appointment Commitment. Members who accept an appointment to a position should not fail to report for that position. This does not preclude the possibility of a member considering several offers or seeking several positions at the same time, but once a bona fide offer of a position has been accepted, that commitment should be honored. Oral acceptance of an employment offer is considered binding unless the employer makes fundamental changes in terms of employment.

- I agree to retain the guideline.
- I disagree with retaining this guideline

Comments of suggestions for new language:

Credentials: Please respond whether you agree or disagree with the proposed language.

5. The recommendation is to replace the current language in **Tenet 3 - Guideline: Credentials**

Credentials - Current Language

An application for employment or for ICMA's Voluntary Credentialing Program should be complete and accurate as to all pertinent details of education, experience, and personal history. Members should recognize that both omissions and inaccuracies must be avoided.

Credentials - Proposed Language

A member's resume for employment or application for ICMA's Voluntary Credentialing Program should completely and accurately reflect the member's education, work experience, and personal history.

- I agree with the proposed guideline.
- I disagree with the proposed guideline.

Comments or suggestions for new language:

Tenet 3 Revisions - FINAL

Professional Respect: Please respond whether you agree or disagree with the proposed language.

6. The recommendation is to replace the current language in **Tenet 3 - Guideline: Professional Respect**

Professional Respect - Current Language

Members seeking a management position should show professional respect for persons formerly holding the position or for others who might be applying for the same position. Professional respect does not preclude honest differences of opinion; it does preclude attacking a person's motives or integrity in order to be appointed to a position.

Professional Respect - Proposed Language

Members seeking a position should show professional respect for persons formerly holding the position or for others who might be applying for the same position. Professional respect does not preclude honest differences of opinion; it does preclude attacking a person's motives or integrity in order to be appointed to a position.

- I agree with the proposed guideline.
- I disagree with the proposed guideline

Comments or suggestions for new language:

Tenet 3 Revisions - FINAL

Reporting Violations: Please respond whether you agree or disagree with the proposed language.

7. The recommendation is to replace the current language in **Tenet 3 - Guideline: Reporting Ethics Violations**

Reporting Ethics Violations - Current Language

When becoming aware of a possible violation of the ICMA Code of Ethics, members are encouraged to report the matter to ICMA. In reporting the matter, members may choose to go on record as the complainant or report the matter on a confidential basis.

Reporting Ethics Violation - Proposed Language

Members are encouraged to report possible violations of the Code of Ethics to ICMA. In reporting the matter, members may choose to go on record as the complainant or report the matter on a confidential basis.

- I agree with the proposed guideline.
- I disagree with the proposed guideline.

Comments or suggestions for new language:

Tenet 3 Revisions - FINAL

Confidentiality: Please respond whether you agree or disagree to retain the guideline.

8. The recommendation is to retain the current language for **Tenet 3 - Guideline: Confidentiality**

Confidentiality. Members should not discuss or divulge information with anyone about pending or completed ethics cases, except as specifically authorized by the Rules of Procedure for Enforcement of the Code of Ethics.

- I agree to retain the guideline.
- I disagree with retaining this guideline

Comments or suggestions for new language:

Seeking Employment: Please respond whether you agree or disagree with the proposed language.

9. The recommendation is to replace the current language in **Tenet 3 - Guideline: Seeking Employment**

Seeking Employment - Current Language

Members should not seek employment for a position having an incumbent administrator who has not resigned or been officially informed that his or her services are to be terminated.

Seeking Employment - Proposed Language

Members should not seek employment for a position with a local government which has an incumbent administrator who has not announced his or her resignation or been officially informed that his or her services are to be terminated. Members having contact with representative(s) of the appointive body of an incumbent administrator regarding prospective interest in the position should, as an extension of professional respect, report those contacts to the incumbent administrator.

- I agree with the proposed guideline.
- I disagree with the proposed guideline.

Comments or suggestions for new language:

Tenet 3 Revisions - FINAL

***NEW* Personal Relationships: Please respond whether you agree to add the proposed guideline.**

10. The recommendation is to add **Personal Relationships in the Workplace** as a Guideline as part of **Tenet 3**

NEW - Personal Relationships in the Workplace: Members should not engage in a personal, romantic relationship with a co-worker whom they appoint and/or supervise, either directly or indirectly, through the organization's chain of command.

- I agree to add the proposed guideline.
- I disagree with adding the proposed guideline.

Comments or suggestions for new language:

Tenet 12 - Personal Relationships: Please respond whether you agree or disagree with the proposed.

11. The recommendation is to replace the current language in **Tenet 12 Personal Relationships**

Personal Relationships - Current Language

Member should disclose any personal relationship to the governing body in any instance where there could be the appearance of a conflict of interest. For example, if the manager's spouse works for a developer doing business with the local government, that fact should be disclosed.

Conflicts of Interest Related to Personal Relationships - Proposed Language

In any instance where there could be the appearance of a conflict of interest or personal financial gain involving an individual with whom a member has a personal relationship, the member should disclose the personal relationship to the governing. For example, if the manager's spouse works for a developer doing business with the local government, that fact should be disclosed.

- I agree with the proposed guideline.
- I disagree with the proposed guideline

Comments or suggestions for new language:

Member Information

12. How many years have you worked in local government?

- 0-4 years
- 5-10 years
- 11-19 years
- 20-30 years
- 30 + years

13. What region do you reside?

- Midwest Region
- Northeast Region
- Mountain Plains Region
- Southeast Region
- West Coast Region
- International

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Thank you for your participation!

Your feedback will be used to help inform changes to Tenet 3 and Tenet 12 - Guideline (Personal Relationships) of the ICMA Code of Ethics.