

# Statement of Values and Code of Ethics

## *Statement of Values*

Any code of ethics is built on a foundation of widely shared values. The values include:

- Commitment to the public good
- Accountability to the public
- Commitment beyond the law
- Respect for the worth and dignity of individuals
- Inclusiveness and social justice
- Respect for pluralism and diversity
- Transparency, integrity, and honesty
- Responsible stewardship of resources
- Commitment to excellence and to maintaining the public trust

These values lead directly to the code of ethics that follows.

A code of ethics is, by necessity, general in outlining broad ethical principles. It is not a detailed set of recommended practices on a specific issue. In many cases, those more specific recommended practices are provided by existing standards of national, regional, and subsector-specific groups. This statement of values and code of ethics is not intended in any way to duplicate or substitute for the work of councils promoting standards of practice, but rather is intended as a model that councils can draw from in reviewing or adopting a code of ethics.

# The Code of Ethics

## I. Personal and Professional Integrity

All staff, board members, and volunteers of the Tecumseh Council act with honesty, integrity, and openness in all their dealings as representatives of the council. The council promotes a working environment that values respect, fairness, and integrity.

## II. Mission

The council has a clearly stated mission and purpose, approved by the board of directors, in pursuit of the public good. All of its programs support that mission, and all who work for or on behalf of the council understand and are loyal to that mission and purpose. The mission is responsive to the constituency and communities served by the council and of value to the society at large.

## III. Governance

The council has an active governing body that is responsible for setting the mission and strategic direction of the council and oversight of the finances, operations, and policies of the council. The governing body:

- Ensures that its board members have the requisite skills and experience to carry out their duties, and that all members understand and fulfill their governance duties acting for the benefit of the council and its public purpose
- Has a conflict of interest policy that ensures that any conflicts of interest or the appearance thereof are avoided or appropriately managed through disclosure, recusal, or other means
- Is responsible for the hiring, firing, and regular review of the performance of the Scout executive, and ensures that the compensation of the Scout executive is reasonable and appropriate
- Ensures that the Scout executive and appropriate staff provide the executive board with timely and comprehensive information so that the executive board can effectively carry out its duties
- Ensures that the council conducts all transactions and dealings with integrity and honesty
- Ensures that the council promotes working relationships with board members, staff, volunteers, and program beneficiaries that are based on mutual respect, fairness, and openness
- Ensures that the council is fair and inclusive in its hiring and promotion policies and practices for all staff positions
- Ensures that policies of the council are in writing, clearly articulated, and officially adopted
- Ensures that the resources of the council are responsibly and prudently managed
- Ensures that the council has the capacity to carry out its programs effectively

#### **IV. Legal Compliance**

The council is knowledgeable of and complies with all laws, regulations, and applicable international conventions.

#### **V. Responsible Stewardship**

The council manages its funds responsibly and prudently. This should include the following considerations:

- It spends a reasonable percentage of its annual budget on programs in pursuance of its mission
- It spends an adequate amount on administrative expenses to ensure effective accounting systems, internal controls, competent staff, and other expenditures critical to professional management
- The council compensates staff, and any others who may receive compensation, reasonably and appropriately
- The council has reasonable fundraising costs, recognizing the variety of factors that affect fundraising costs
- The council does not accumulate operating funds excessively
- Councils with endowments prudently draw from endowment funds consistent with donor intent and to support the public purpose of the council
- The council ensures that all spending practices and policies are fair, reasonable, and appropriate to fulfill the mission of the council
- All financial reports are factually accurate and complete in all material respects

#### **VI. Openness and Disclosure**

The council provides comprehensive and timely information to the public, the media, and all stakeholders, and is responsive in a timely manner to reasonable requests for information. All information about the council will fully and honestly reflect the policies and practices of the council. Basic informational data about the council, such as the Form 990, reviews and compilations, and audited financial statements will be posted on the council's website or otherwise available to the public. All solicitation materials accurately represent the council's policies and practices and will reflect the dignity of program beneficiaries. All financial, organizational, and program reports will be complete and accurate in all material respects.

#### **VII. Program Evaluation**

The council regularly reviews program effectiveness and has mechanisms to incorporate lessons learned into future programs. The council is committed to improving program and organizational effectiveness, and develops mechanisms to promote learning from its activities and the field. The council is responsive to changes in its field of activity and to the needs of its constituencies.

#### **VIII. Inclusiveness and Diversity**

The council has a policy of promoting inclusiveness, and its staff, board, and volunteers reflect diversity in order to enrich its programmatic effectiveness. The council takes meaningful steps to promote inclusiveness in its hiring, retention, promotion, board recruitment, and constituencies served.

## **IX. Fundraising**

Councils, when raising funds from the public or from donor institutions, are truthful in their solicitation materials. Councils respect the privacy concerns of individual donors and expend funds consistent with donor intent. Councils disclose important and relevant information to potential donors.

In raising funds from the public, councils will respect the following rights of donors:

- To be informed of the mission of the council, the way the resources will be used, and their capacity to use donations effectively for their intended purposes
- To be informed of the identity of those serving on the council's executive board and to expect the board to exercise prudent judgment in its stewardship responsibilities
- To have access to the council's most recent financial reports
- To be assured their gifts will be used for the purposes for which they were given
- To receive appropriate acknowledgement and recognition
- To be assured that information about their donations is handled with respect and with confidentiality to the extent provided by the law
- To expect that all relationships with individuals representing organizations of interest to the donor will be professional in nature
- To be informed whether those seeking donations are volunteers, employees of the organizations, or hired solicitors
- To have the opportunity for their names to be deleted from mailing lists that the council may intend to share
- To feel free to ask questions when making a donation and to receive prompt, truthful, and forthright answers<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> These 10 points are taken from A Donor Bill of Rights, developed by the American Association of Fund Raising Counsel, the Association for Healthcare Philanthropy, the Council for the Advancement and Support of Education, and the Association of Fundraising Professionals, and endorsed by INDEPENDENT SECTOR.