
Lake County Vector Control District

POLICY HANDBOOK

POLICY TITLE: Code of Conduct for Trustees
POLICY NUMBER: 4015

4015.1 This Code of Conduct shall govern the conduct of the Board of Trustees of the Lake County Vector Control District.

4015.2 The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to:

4015.2.1 Protect the integrity of the Lake County Vector Control District Board of Trustees and sustain the confidence of the people of the District by articulating specific standards and guidelines to assure that those entrusted with the public authority avoid conduct that undermines respect for the District.

4015.2.2 Provide a comprehensive statement of pertinent laws and regulations, ethical principles, considerations, and obligations governing the conduct of the Board members and provide a comprehensive and unified statement of ethical principles, considerations, and obligations to sustain the public trust in the District.

4015.2.3 Enhance the understanding of laws and ethical principles that create the obligations of Board members.

4015.2.4 Establish positive, effective, and comprehensive guidance for the conduct of the Board members.

4015.3 Pursuant to §2022(d) of the State Health and Safety Code, “It is the intent of the Legislature that persons appointed to boards of trustees have experience, training, and education in fields that will assist in the governance of the districts”; and (e) “...The trustees shall represent the interests of the public as a whole and not solely the interests of the board of supervisors or the city council that appointed them.”

4015.3.1 The public served by the District need and deserve an agency whose commitment to pursuing public interest outweighs any competing personal or political considerations.

4015.3.2 No code of conduct can anticipate all situations, nor can it prescribe behaviors that are appropriate to most situations.

4015.3.3 Board members must exercise discretion and judgment to adhere to the spirit of this Code of Conduct. It is essential to recognize that an act is not ethical simply because it is legal and conduct is not proper simply because it is permissible. Board members should be willing to do more than the law

requires and less than it allows. Strict compliance is not necessarily enough and attempts to evade or circumvent ethics, laws, and rules are improper.

4015.3.4 All actions, decisions, and votes should be made on their merits, objectively and without party, regional, or ideological partnership.

4015.4 Confidentiality. Confidential information, particularly investigative reports from the District Manager, District Counsel, and personnel matters, shall not be disseminated beyond the recipient.

4015.5 Roles of the Board and Board Members

4015.5.1 The Board has duties distinct from those of management. The Board oversees and provides counsel and direction to management and should not be involved in the day-to-day affairs, function, or activities of the District.

4015.5.2 Board members do not have individual power or authority, and it is improper for any Board member to exercise such authority. The power and decision-making ability lie with the full Board.

4015.5.3 Board members shall not be involved in employee matters (i.e., hiring, firing, discipline, etc.) or other personnel action unless required by provision within the “Policy Handbook” or advice by District counsel.

4015.5.4 Board members shall not be involved in the employee matters or other personnel action by District contractors or their subcontractors.

4015.5.5 The role of the Board shall principally be to:

4015.5.5.1 Set policy.

4015.5.5.2 Hire the District Manager.

4015.5.5.3 Retain legal counsel.

4015.5.6 The Board particularly:

- Assures financial stability of the District.
- Adopts policies.
- Facilitates constructive employer-employee relationships.
- Recognizes ethical responsibility to maintain confidentiality of private and privileged information.
- Builds communications “bridges” between communities, regions, and districts.
- Understands and serves as an agent of constructive change.
- Maintains, at Board meetings, a respectful recognition of others' opinions within a civil process conducive to parliamentary order.
- Recognizes importance of supporting educational programs which improve District operations and community understanding of the purpose and usefulness of the District's activities.

4015.6 Board Member Rules of Conduct

4015.5.6.1 Board members shall understand the authoritative limits and responsibilities allowed them and the Board under the provisions of the State Health and Safety Code and conduct themselves accordingly.

4015.5.6.2 Rules of Order for Board Meetings. Proper parliamentary conduct is expected. The Board prefers a flexible form of meeting and, therefore, does not conduct its meetings under formalized rules (e.g., Robert's Rules of Order).

4015.5.6.2.1 Point of Order. If a Trustee believes order is not being maintained or procedures are not adequate, then he/she should raise a point of order - not requiring a second - to the President. If the ruling of the President is not satisfactory to the Trustee, then it may be appealed to the Board. A majority of the Board will govern and determine the point of order.

4015.5.6.2.2 Obtaining the Floor. Any trustee desiring to speak should address the President and, upon recognition by the President, may address the subject under discussion.

4015.5.6.2.3 Motions. Any trustee, including the President, may make or second a motion. A motion shall be brought and considered as follows:

4015.5.6.2.3.1 A trustee makes a motion; another trustee seconds the motion; and the President states the motion.

4015.5.6.2.3.2 Once the motion as been stated by the President, it is open to discussion and debate. After the matter has been fully debated, and after the public in attendance has had an opportunity to comment, the President will call for the vote. The motion must be made, seconded and approved by a majority vote of the Board to pass.

4015.5.6.2.4 Public Comment. Provisions for permitting any individual or group to address the Board concerning any item on the agenda of a special meeting, or to address the Board at a regular board meeting on any subject that lies within the jurisdiction of the Board of Trustees shall be as follows: Five (5) minutes may be allotted to each speaker. Speaking times may be adjusted at the discretion of the Board.

4015.5.6.2.5 Personnel Complaints. No oral presentation shall include charges or complaints against any District employee, regardless of whether or not the employee is identified in the presentation by name or by any other reference which tends to identify. All charges or complaints against employees shall be submitted to the Board of Trustees under provisions contained in Policy #1030 Public Complaints.

4015.5.6.3 Board members shall treat each other and District staff at all times and in all situations professionally, with respect and courtesy.

4015.5.6.4 Board members shall not publicly engage in personal attacks on one another, District staff, or the District.

4015.5.6.5 Board members shall not attempt to discredit, humiliate, embarrass, harass, rebuke, or discipline any employee.

4015.5.6.6 Any concerns regarding an employee's performance shall be communicated in writing to the District Manager. Any concerns regarding the District Manager's performance shall be communicated in writing to the President. Any concerns regarding a Board officer's performance shall be communicated, in writing, to the affected officer. Nothing in this section shall affect the right of the Board to evaluate Board officers.

4015.5.6.7 The President may call for an action of Board censure against any Board member who fails to comply with any provision of this section.

4015.7 Abstaining. Board members shall abstain from participating and voting on any matter on which there is a conflict of interest involving the employment, property, or business of themselves or their immediate family.

4015.8 Attendance at Board Meetings

4015.8.1 Pursuant to California Government Code §1770(g), a public office, such as a seat on the board of trustees for a vector control district, is abandoned if the person holding the office ceases to discharge the duties of his or her office for a period of three consecutive months, except when prevented by sickness or specified excuses. The Board may excuse a Board member's absence for the reasons stated in Section 4015.8.2.

4015.8.2 The Board may excuse a Board member's absence from a general meeting only in the case of sickness, conduct of district business with permission, and permitted absences for military or other government duty.

4015.8.3 The District shall follow the following procedures to address meeting absences:

4015.8.3.1 Within ten days of a Board member's second consecutive unexcused absence from a Board meeting, the District Manager will deliver verbal and written notification to the Board member informing the member that the District Manager will send a letter to the Board member's appointing body if the Board member has a third consecutive unexcused absence.

4015.8.3.2 Within ten days of a Board member's third consecutive unexcused absence from a general Board meeting, the District Manager will send a letter to the Board member's appointing agency, notifying the agency of the Board member's absences in reference to this Article V, Section 9. The letter will notify the appointing authority that the appointee has abandoned the office and will request that the appointing authority appoint a Board member to the Board of Trustees.