

# COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY

## CITY OF LONDON

### ORDINANCE NO. 2025-06

#### An Ordinance Establishing Conduct, Training, and Accountability Standards for Elected Officials of the City of London, Kentucky; Ethics Board Enforcement and Fines

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LONDON as follows:

#### **Purpose:**

The purpose of this Ordinance is to establish requirements for all City of London elected officials' conduct, training, and accountability. This Ordinance ensures public trust, appropriate training, order, ethical behavior and professionalism during the execution of City business.

#### **Section 1 - Required Training**

All members of the London City Council and the Mayor shall:

- Attend municipal training provided by the Kentucky League of Cities (KLC) within three (3) months of taking office, following election or appointment.

All elected officials of the City of London, including City Council Members and the Mayor, shall be required to complete the following training as part of their official duties:

Annual Continuing Education Requirement:

- All elected officials must complete a minimum of forty (40) hours of training by the Kentucky League of Cities per calendar year.
- Approved training topics include, but are not limited to:
  - Ethics
  - Open Meetings & Open Records Law
  - Municipal Finance & Budgeting
  - Conflict Resolution
  - Public Decorum & Meeting Procedures
  - Leadership & Public Service Ethics

Verification & Compliance:

- Proof of completed training hours shall be submitted by each Council Member and the Mayor to the City Clerk for verification by December 31st of each year. It is the responsibility of the Council Member and Mayor to provide such verification to the City Clerk.
- Failure to meet the annual training requirement shall result in:
  - A written warning from the Ethics Board; and/or
  - A fine not to exceed \$250 per violation; and/or
  - Mandatory make-up training within 60 days and/or additional fines by the Ethics Board.

## **Section 2 - Rules of Order During Meetings**

- All council meetings shall follow Roberts Rules of Order or a Council/Mayor adopted rules-of-order policy.
- Council Members and the Mayor shall maintain decorum and respect for the process of transacting city business at all Council meetings, and with all city staff, and the public.
- Any Council Member who disrupts Council meetings, by engaging in personal attacks or obscenities or other similar words or the failure to refuse to follow meeting procedure when directed to do so by the presiding officer may be:
  - Subject to a formal verbal and/or written warning by the presiding officer, and/or subject to Orders and Findings of the Ethics Board, as contained in this Ordinance.
- The Chair of the Council (Mayor, or Presiding Officer) shall be responsible for maintaining order and enforcing rules of procedure during all council meetings.
- Any Council Member who fails to follow proper meeting decorum, engages in personal attacks, disruptive behavior, or refuses to comply with procedural rules shall be subject to the following disciplinary process:

## **Section 3 - Disciplinary Procedure for Council Members and Mayor.**

1. The Chair shall issue up to three (3) verbal warnings to any Council Member found to be out of order or in violation of meeting decorum.
2. After the third (3rd) warning, the Chair shall have the authority to:
  - Find the Council Member in violation of this ordinance; and/or
  - Remove the Council Member from any subcommittees, boards, or appointed roles within the Council.
3. Upon the third (3rd) violation of this Ordinance by any Council Member, the Chair shall file a formal report with the City Ethics Board.
4. The Ethics Board shall have the authority to:
  - Investigate the repeated violations;
  - Recommend fines; and/or
  - Recommend removal from office for gross misconduct, subject to all applicable laws.

5. If the Mayor, serving as Chair, is alleged to be out of order or in violation of this ordinance, all six (6) Council Members must vote to find the Mayor in violation and upon the third violation of this Ordinance, file a formal report with the City Ethics Board.
6. Upon a vote finding the Mayor out of order, the same rules and penalties outlined above shall apply, with the following exceptions: The Mayor shall not be subject to removal from subcommittees or boards, as those are not applicable.

#### **Section 4 - Moral & Ethical Conduct**

- Elected officials must avoid conflicts of interest, personal gain from city business, violations of City Ordinances and Kentucky Law and behavior that reflects negatively on the City of London.
- Violations of ethical or moral standards will be investigated and reviewed by the Ethics Board.
- Sanctions may include public reprimand, fines, or referral to the Attorney General or other appropriate state agency.

#### **Section 5 - Mayor's Accountability**

The Office of the Mayor is subject to the same rules and standards listed in this ordinance for the London City Council. As the presiding officer, the Mayor is responsible for enforcing order and decorum during meetings. The Mayor may direct the City Police to remove persons from any City meeting for failure to abide by the directions of the Mayor, as the presiding officer of the meeting. The Mayor is also subject to investigation by the Ethics Board for any violations of this ordinance.

#### **Section 6 - City-Owned Property & Equipment**

Any equipment, devices, or materials issued to the Mayor or City Council member by the City for the purpose of conducting city business is the property of the City of London.

This includes, but is not limited to:

- City-issued mobile phones
- Computers, laptops, or tablets
- Email accounts and communication systems
- Access cards, keys, or any other city-owned materials

Terms of Use:

- City-issued devices shall be used for official city business only and in accordance with all applicable laws, city policies, and ethical guidelines.
- All communications, data, and records on city-owned devices are subject to the Kentucky Open Records Laws and may be reviewed or audited at any time.

#### Return of Property Upon Leaving Office:

- Upon the conclusion of their term, resignation, or removal from office, all city-issued devices and property must be returned to the City of London within five (5) business days.
- Failure to return city property may result in:
  - Legal action for recovery of property;
  - Fines assessed by the Ethics Board;
  - Withholding of final compensation or benefits until the property is returned.

#### **Section 7 - Social Media Conduct:**

All elected officials of the City of London, including Council Members and the Mayor, shall conduct themselves on social media in a professional and respectful manner that reflects the integrity of their office.

#### Guidelines for Social Media Use:

- No elected official shall use City social media platforms for personal gain, political attacks, or to spread misinformation.
- Elected officials' personal social media pages should avoid derogatory comments about other council members, Mayor, City Employees, or citizens of London.
- Social media posts shall not disclose confidential city business or disclose any information relating to Executive sessions under the Kentucky Open Meetings laws or confidential information under the Kentucky Open Records laws.

#### **Section 9 - Dress Code for Public Meetings**

All elected officials shall dress in a professional and respectful manner when attending official city meetings or representing the City of London in an official capacity.

#### Minimum Standards of Dress:

- Business casual or professional attire is required.
- No clothing with offensive language, political slogans, or inappropriate images.
- Failure to comply with this section may result in:
  - A verbal warning;
  - A written reprimand by the Chair;
  - Repeat violations may result in fines or Ethics Board review.

#### **Section 10 - Conflict of Interest Disclosure Requirements**

All elected officials shall avoid conflicts of interest in the performance of their duties.

#### Disclosure Requirements:

- Any Council Member or the Mayor with a financial or personal interest in any matter coming before the Council shall disclose the nature of that interest before participating in any discussion or vote. The Council member or Mayor with such financial or personal interest shall remove themselves from the meeting before any discussion or vote on the matter and the Minutes of the meeting shall so reflect. An “abstention” vote does not correct or legitimize participation in the discussion or vote.
- Disclosure must be made in the public record and documented by the City Clerk.

Prohibited Actions:

- Elected officials shall not use their position for personal gain or to benefit family members or associates.
- Failure to disclose a conflict of interest shall result in:
  - Referral to the Ethics Board for possible fines and/or removal from office, and/or actions by the Ethics Board pursuant to this Ordinance and other applicable laws.

**Section 11 - Enforcement**

All provisions of this ordinance shall be enforced by the Ethics Board, and in accordance with Kentucky law.

**Section 12 - Ethics Board Authority to Levy Fines**

This Ordinance shall grant the City of London Ethics Board the authority to investigate any violation of this Ordinance alleged by the Mayor or any member of the City Council.

Upon completion of its investigation, and based on the severity and frequency of the violation(s), the Ethics Board shall have the authority to impose fines as follows:

| Offense Level               | Fine Amount           |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------|
| First Offense               | \$250                 |
| Second Offense              | \$500                 |
| Third Offense               | \$1,000               |
| Fourth Offense              | \$1,500               |
| Fifth & Subsequent Offenses | \$2,000 per violation |

Additional Enforcement:

- The Ethics Board may also recommend:
  - Public reprimand; and/or
  - Removal from subcommittees or board appointments; and/or
  - Recommendation to the Council or appropriate authority for removal from office for repeated or egregious violations.

Collection of Fines:

- All fines shall be paid to the City of London within 30 days of the Ethics Board's decision.
- Failure to pay fines may result in:
  - Suspension of compensation from the City; and/or
  - Legal action to recover unpaid fines; and/or
  - Removal from office, and/or
  - Enforcement in the Laurel Circuit or District Court.

**Section 13 - Severability**

If any part or parts of this Ordinance are found to be unconstitutional or unenforceable by any Court of competent jurisdiction, the remaining parts of the Ordinance shall remain in effect.

**Section 14 - EFFECTIVE DATE**

This Ordinance shall become effective immediately following publication in keeping with the requirements of Kentucky law.

This \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2025.

FIRST READING DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

SECOND READING DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

PUBLICATION DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ ATTESTED: \_\_\_\_\_

MAYOR RANDALL WEDDLE

LONDON CITY CLERK