

**COMMONWEALTH OF
KENTUCKY
CITY OF LONDON
A SUMMARY OF ORDINANCE NO 2026-18**

**ENTITLED "AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE CITY'S ETHICS
ORDINANCE 2023-10 and 2025-12 AS AUTHORIZED BY KRS
65.003."**

This Summary is prepared by Christopher Wiest who is certified to practice law in this Commonwealth. This ordinance amends the City's ethics ordinance by (i) changes appointment to the Ethics Board to the Mayor with the approval of City Council for four year terms, creates staggered terms and a process for ensuring staggered terms going forward, and provides for removal from the Ethics Board to the City Council by at least 5 votes and clarifies that charges can be initiated by the Mayor or a member of Council; (ii) to protect those who make complaints in good faith, removes the reckless disregard violation for false complaints or reckless disregard of making a complaint outside the jurisdiction of the ethics board, but retains as a violation making a knowingly false complaint or knowingly submitting a complaint that is beyond the jurisdiction of the Ethics Board; and (iii) corrects typographical error and makes technical changes.

The full and complete Ordinance 2026-18 is on file at the Office of the London City Clerk and can be viewed there during normal business hours.



Christopher Wiest

**COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY
CITY OF LONDON
ORDINANCE NO. 2026-18**

**AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE CITY'S ETHICS ORDINANCE 2023-10, 2025-12,
2026-15 AS AUTHORIZED BY KRS 65.003.**

WHEREAS, the City of London has authority under KRS 65.003 to establish a Code of Ethics and to provide other provisions related thereto;

WHEREAS, public office and employment are a public trust, a government has a duty both to provide their citizens with standards by which they may determine whether the public is being faithfully served, and to appraise their officers and employees of the behavior which is expected of them while conducting their public duties; and

WHEREAS, it is the purpose of this Ordinance to provide a method of assuring that standards of ethical conduct for city officers, employees of the City of London and others as stated herein shall be clear, consistent, and uniform in their application and to provide City officers and employees with advice and information concerning possible conflicts of interest that might arise in the conduct of their private and public duties; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY OF LONDON, KENTUCKY AS FOLLOWS:

Section I

Section V of Ordinance 2025-12 is amended to read as follows:

SECTION V: BOARD OF ETHICS

(A) A Board of Ethics was previously created by City Ordinance. The Board of Ethics shall have the authorities, duties and responsibilities as set forth in this Ordinance to enforce the provisions of this Ordinance and fulfill other obligations as stated in Kentucky Statutes.

(B) The Board of Ethics shall consist of five (5) members who shall be appointed by the ~~[by the Mayor and confirmed by a vote of the City Council. [vote of the at least five members of the City Council].~~ No member of the Board of Ethics shall be a City Officer or a City employee of the City or any City board, commission or agency. The members, whose terms shall be staggered such that two members shall be appointed for a four year period following the effective date of this ordinance, one member shall be appointed for a three year period following the effective date of this ordinance, one member shall be appointed for a two year period following the effective date of this ordinance, and one member for a one year period following the effective date of this ordinance, and after the initial terms herein, shall serve for a term of ~~[three (3)]~~ four (4) years, or until their successors are legally appointed, whichever is later. Each member of the Board of Ethics shall have been a resident of the City of London for at least one (1) year prior to the date of appointment and shall reside in the City throughout the term of office. The members of the Board of Ethics shall be chosen by virtue of their known and consistent reputation for

integrity and their knowledge of local government affairs. The members may be reappointed for any number of consecutive terms.

(C) A member of the Board of Ethics may be removed by the ~~[the]~~ vote of at least five members of the City Council for misconduct, inability, willful neglect of duties or a violation of this Ordinance and charges may be brought by the Mayor or a member of Council for consideration of removal, or upon recommendation by a majority vote of the Board of Ethics supported by written reasons for such recommendation, subject to the approval of the City Council.

(D) Vacancies on the Board of Ethics shall be filled within sixty (60) days by Mayor with the confirmation of the City Council through the vote of ~~[at the majority of the membership of]~~ the City Council, or within sixty (60) days following the adoption of this ordinance, whichever is later. If the vacancy is not filled by the ~~[the]~~ Mayor and City Council within the sixty (60) day[s] period herein, the remaining members of the Board of Ethics shall fill the vacancy. All vacancies shall be filled for the remainder of the unexpired term.

(E) Members of the Board of Ethics shall serve without compensation, unless otherwise approved by the City Council, but shall be reimbursed for all necessary and reasonable Expenses incurred in the performance of their duties. Subject to the availability of funding from the City Council in a budget appropriation, the Board of Ethics may retain legal counsel and that the City shall be responsible for such attorney fees.

(F) The City shall provide a policy of liability insurance for the members of the Board of Ethics in the faithful performance of their duties and responsibilities pursuant to this Ordinance.

(G) The Board of Ethics shall annually elect a Chairperson from among the membership. The Chairperson shall be the presiding officer and a full voting member of the Board. The Chairperson shall conduct all meetings of the Board of Ethics and maintain order at such meetings. The Chairperson may obtain city police presence at any meetings deemed necessary by the Chair.

(H) Other than the Chairperson, no member of the Board shall have any authority to act on behalf of the Board unless authorized by the Board.

(J) Meetings of the Board of Ethics shall be held, as necessary, upon the call of the Chairperson or at the written request of a majority of the members of the Board, or at the request of the Mayor or a majority vote of the City Council.

(K) A quorum shall consist of the majority of the members who have been appointed to the Board of Ethics. Any member of the Board of Ethics who has a conflict of interest with respect to any matter to be considered by the Board shall disclose the nature of the conflict, shall disqualify himself or herself from voting on the matter and shall not be counted for purposes of establishing a quorum and shall remove themselves from such portion of the meeting until such discussion of the matter is completed.

(L) Minutes shall be kept for all proceedings of the Board of Ethics and the vote of each member on any issue decided by the Board shall be recorded in the minutes. The City Clerk, or designee, shall be responsible for attending all meetings and hearings, maintaining accurate records for all meetings and hearings, and providing general administrative support to the Ethics Board, including but not limited to copies, distribution of documents to required parties, preparation of meeting materials, and any other duties requested by the Chair and/or the Board.

Section II

Section VII of Ordinance 2023-10 is amended to read as follows:

SECTION VII: FILING AND INVESTIGATION OF COMPLAINTS

- (A) Complaint forms shall be made available on the City of London website and at the Office of the London City Clerk. All complaints alleging any violation of the provisions of the Ordinance shall be submitted directly to the Board of Ethics Chairperson, or his/her designee, or the City Clerk. If submitted to the City Clerk, the City Clerk shall, within five business days, forward any such complaints to the Board of Ethics Chairperson or his/her designee. The Board of Ethics may have a separate and confidential email that it may create and maintain for the receipt of complaints, and if it does so, that email address shall be published on the City of London website by the City Clerk or information technology personnel. The complaints shall be in writing and identify the complaint including by address. The Board shall forward a copy of the complaint within ten (10) working days to any officer or employee of the City or City Agency who is subject of the complaint; the person who is the subject of the Complaint shall have ten (10) working days to file a written response with the Ethics Board. The Board of Ethics may require the complainant to resubmit any complaint under oath and in writing as condition of further processing, and, if they do so, and the complaint fails to submit a sworn complaint within thirty (30) days of a request for one, the Board of Ethics may dismiss the complaint. It shall be a violation of this ordinance for any person to submit a complaint that they know is false or that they know ~~[or are reckless in not knowing]~~ is beyond the jurisdiction of the Board of Ethics.
- (B) Within thirty (30) working days of the receipt of the complaint by the Board of Ethics, or thirty days following the enactment of this ordinance, whichever is later, the Board shall meet and conduct a preliminary inquiry concerning the allegations contained in the complaint. The complaining party and the person against whom the complaint is made shall have the right to be represented by counsel, to appear and be heard under oath, and to offer evidence in response to the allegations.
- (C) All proceedings and records relative to his preliminary inquiry shall be conducted by the Board and shall be confidential until a final determination is made by the Board, except:
- (1) The Board may provide information to the Commonwealth Attorney, County

Attorney or the Kentucky Attorney General any records which might be the basis of any criminal investigation.

(2) If the complainant or alleged violator or their Counsel publicly disclose the existence of the preliminary inquiry, the Board may publicly confirm the existence of the inquiry.

(D) The Board shall make a determination based on its preliminary inquiry whether the complaint is within its jurisdiction and if so whether it alleges a minimal fact basis to constitute a violation of this Ordinance. If the Board concludes that the complaint is not within its jurisdiction, is frivolous or without any factual basis, the Board shall immediately terminate the inquiry, reduce the conclusion to writing and transmit a copy of its decision to the complainant and the person against whom the complaint was filed. If the Board also finds or believes the allegations of the Complaint may also constitute a crime and referral is made to the Commonwealth Attorney, County Attorney or Kentucky Attorney General, such does not prevent the Board from exercising jurisdiction of the matter inasmuch as the same may also be unethical behavior and a violation of this Ordinance.

(E) If the Board concludes, based upon its preliminary inquiry that the complaint is within its jurisdiction and on its face contains allegations sufficient to establish a minimal factual basis to constitute a violation of this Ordinance, the Board shall notify the person against whom the complaint was made and may:

(1) Due to mitigating circumstances such as lack of significant economic advantage or gain by the person against whom the complaint is made or lack of economic loss to the City and its taxpayers, or lack of significant impact on public confidence, may issue, in writing, a reprimand to the person concerning the alleged violation and provide a copy of the reprimand to the Mayor of the City of London, the City Council, and the Department Head (if applicable), or

(2) Initiate a hearing to determine whether there has been a violation of this Ordinance, or

(3) Refer the matter to the Code Enforcement Board.

(F) The Board may also notify the County Attorney, Commonwealth Attorney, Kentucky Attorney General, the Mayor, the City Council, and Department Head (if applicable) of any person who knowingly files with the Board a false complaint alleging a violation of any provision of this Ordinance by an officer or employee of the City or City Agency.

Section III

Section XIII of Ordinance 2023-10 is amended to read as follows:

SECTION XIII: REPRISALS AGAINST PERSONS DISCLOSING VIOLATIONS PROHIBITED

(A) No officer or employee of the City or City Agency shall be subject to reprisal, directly or indirectly, or threatened to use any official authority to influence in any manner whatsoever which would tend to discourage, prevent, interfere, coerce or discriminate against any person who in good faith reports, discloses, divulges or otherwise brings to the attention of the Board or any other Agency of official of the City or the Commonwealth any facts or information relative to an actual or suspected violation of the ordinance.

(B) This section shall not be construed as:

(1) Prohibiting disciplinary or punitive action if an officer or employee of the City or Agency discloses information which he or she knows to be (i) false; ~~[(ii) which he or she discloses with reckless disregard for its truth or falsity];~~ (ii)[i]) which they know ~~[or are reckless in not knowing]~~ are outside the jurisdiction of the Board of Ethics; or ~~[(iv)]-(iii)~~ which they disclose knowing the same is exempt from required disclosure under the provisions of the Kentucky Open Records Act (KRS 61.870 to 61.884) or know is confidential under any other provision of law.

Section IV: Effective Date, Repealer, and Invalidity Provision

This ordinance shall be effective immediately upon publication. Further, any ordinances in conflict with this ordinance be repealed to the extent of such conflict. If any section, sentence, clause, or phrase of this ordinance is held unconstitutional or otherwise invalid, such infirmity shall not effect the validity of the remaining ordinance.

Mayor

Attest: _____
Ashley Taylor, City Clerk

First Reading: July ____, 2026

Second Reading: _____, 2026

Publication Date: _____, 2026