

Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts Code of Ethics

This Code of Ethics is the policy of the Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts (AISWCD) and expresses fundamental values. Accordingly this Code guides the conduct of all employees of the AISWCD and is intended too foster an environment that promotes ethical conduct in carrying out their responsibilities.

AISWCD employees set an example for other organizations and the AISWCD's member districts by their high standards of performance, professionalism and ethical conduct.

Personal Integrity

A personal commitment to integrity in all circumstances benefits each individual as well as the organization. AISWCD Employees:

- Respect and seek out the truth and avoid misrepresentation.
- Ensure fairness and objectivity in all activities.
- Set an example, as employees of a leading association, for high standards of professionalism.
- Promote member as well as public confidence in the organization.

Professional Excellence

As an employer, the AISWCD promotes professional excellence and encourages open and honest communication among its employees to create an atmosphere conducive to personal growth and career development.

AISWCD's management:

- Encourages employee development and communicates with personnel to help them achieve their goals and increase their self esteem through job enrichment.
- Evaluates employees on a fair and consistent basis so that all employees know what is expected of them and how they are progressing toward fulfilling expectations.
- Shows respect and empathy for employees and is considerate while being mindful of managerial responsibilities.
- Regularly solicits and respects the opinions of subordinates.
- Encourages the reporting of breaches of the Code of Ethics and protects those who report.

AISWCD's employees:

- Strive to meet performance standards at the highest level.
- Refuse to engage in or tolerate any fraud, misuse, abuse or waste of AISWCD resources.
- Encourage growth and self-improvement in themselves and their co-workers.
- Exhibit respect for co-workers and all those they come into contact with.
- Have the courage to face situations squarely and offer a minority opinion when necessary.

- Examine all alternatives with the understanding that the easiest action is not always in the best interest of the organization.
- Comply with all legal requirements concerning substance abuse.
- Comply with all other laws and regulations affecting the organization and their personal obligations.
- Discuss any questions concerning interpretations or compliance with the Code of Ethics with their supervisor or the AISWCD President.
- Encourage the reporting of breaches of the Code of Ethics and protect those who report.

Accountability and Efficiency

The AISWCD has responsibilities to its members. These members have placed faith in the AISWCD. To uphold this trust, AISWCD employees:

- Make full and fair disclosure of all relevant information to members who have the right to know how their dues are spent.
- Are good stewards of AISWCD financial resources, spending money wisely, efficiently and in a way that advances the AISWCD's mission.

Responsibilities to Members

Members who serve the AISWCD through its Board of Directors and committees are crucial to the success of the AISWCD. In order to assist such members to serve effectively and to obtain satisfaction from their service, AISWCD officers and employees:

- Support members so they can perform to the highest level of their commitment and personal satisfaction.
- Treat all members with fairness, equity and respect providing appropriate mechanisms for their views and interests to be expressed.
- Involve members as appropriate at all levels and phases of the decision making process.
- Assist in the development and the understanding of the roles of members and employees and respectively, set clear standards of performance for members and appropriately recognize their contributions.

Responsibilities of Members

Members also represent the AISWCD and set examples through their ethical conduct and professionalism. Members:

- Review the AISWCD Code of Ethics and ensure that they adhere to the spirit of the Code when making policy or otherwise engaging in or managing the affairs of the organization.
- Do not knowingly take any action or make any statement intended to influence the conduct of the AISWCD in such a way as to confer any financial benefit on such members, their immediate family or any corporation in which they or their family members have a significant interest as stockholders, directors or officers.

In the event that there comes before the Board of Directors a matter for consideration or decision that raises a potential conflict of interest for any member of the board, the member shall disclose the potential conflict of interest as soon as he or she becomes aware of it and shall withdraw from the meeting room during discussion, review and voting in connection with the matter. The disclosure and withdrawal will be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

Vendor Relations

Vendors are treated fairly to avoid favoritism or the appearance of impropriety. The AISWCD:

- Affords all vendors the opportunity to offer or qualify their products or services on a competitive basis.
- Conducts all competitive bidding in a fair and professional manner.
- Purchases all products and services under its purchasing policy procedures, which adhere to this Code of Ethics.

Equal Opportunity

The AISWCD is an equal opportunity employer. AISWCD employees:

- Respect all co-workers and all other individuals without regard to race, color, religion, creed, age, gender, national origin of ancestry, marital status, veteran status, sexual orientation or status as a qualified disabled or handicapped individual.
- Refuse to engage in or tolerate in others any form of sexual harassment as provided in the organization's policy against sexual harassment.
- Strive to create an environment conducive to professionalism.

Conflict of Interest

To avoid even the appearance of a conflict of interest which would tarnish the image of the organization and undermine the member's trust in the AISWCD and its employees, officers and employees of the AISWCD:

- Avoid any activity or outside interest which conflicts or appears to conflict with the best interest of the AISWCD, including involvement with a current or potential AISWCD vendor, grantee or competing organization unless disclosed to and approved by the AISWCD's Board of Directors or the employee's supervisor.
- Refrain from participating in or influencing any decision or other action of the AISWCD that could result in a direct or indirect benefit to his or her family or any organization with which the officer or employee is substantially affiliated.

Personal Gain

No employee should accept any gratuity or favor for doing his or her job. AISWCD employees:

- Do not solicit or accept gratuities, gifts or favors, other than promotional gifts of nominal value, for themselves or their families.
- Do not accept food, transportation, lodging or entertainment unless directly related to AISWCD business.
- Do not use AISWCD resources for personal gain.

Travel, Entertainment and Related Expenses

Travel, entertainment and related expenses are incurred on a basis consistent with the mission of the AISWCD. Accordingly, expenses incurred will comply with policies adopted by the AISWCD Board of Directors.

Outside Employment and Other Activities

Employees ensure that outside employment and other activities do not interfere with their responsibilities within the AISWCD and do not adversely affect the AISWCD. Employees are encouraged to inform their supervisor of any significant outside activities. Employees do not use AISWCD resources to facilitate any outside employment or other activity.

Favoritism

Favoritism based on family or close personal relationships is unfair to other employees. The appearance of favoritism is easily perceived, even in some cases of friendship that otherwise are harmless. Accordingly:

- Persons related to AISWCD employees by blood or marriage are not employed except under special circumstances that are clearly in the best interest of the AISWCD and disclosed immediately to the AISWCD Board of Directors.
- AISWCD employees do not supervise or exercise management authority over staff with whom they have a relationship that adversely affects impartiality.
- AISWCD employees consider the nature and appearance of their relationships with other employees to ensure that their decisions and actions are fair to all staff.
- AISWCD employees with decision-making authority do not improperly influence the selection of consultants or service providers, who are affiliated with, employ or are employed by a person with whom they have a relationship that adversely affects impartiality.

Solicitations

AISWCD employees are not subjected to outside solicitation. Further, employees are free from unwanted interruptions in the form of solicitation from other employees, in order to concentrate on work. AISWCD employees:

- Do not solicit or distribute literature for purposes inconsistent with the AISWCD mission on premises.
- Do not use AISWCD work time for non AISWCD purposes.
- Are never required to contribute or respond to a solicitation for fear that their response will be a factor in their career standing.

Confidential Information

Confidentiality is a hallmark of professionalism. AISWCD employees:

- Ensure that all information that is confidential or privileged or that is not publicly available is not disclosed inappropriately.
- Ensure that all non-public information of other persons or firms acquired by the AISWCD in dealing with outside firms on behalf of the AISWCD is treated as confidential and not disclosed.

Disclosure

AISWCD employees and representatives are encouraged to disclose any perceived breaches of the Code of Ethics of which they are aware. Disclosure should be made to a supervisor or to the AISWCD President. Any reported breaches will be investigated and appropriate action, if needed will be taken. Confidentiality will be maintained for the employee disclosing the breach, unless the matter raises serious legal implications. In such instances, the employee disclosing the breach will be notified. AISWCD management will not take any adverse action against employees solely for disclosing perceived breaches of the Code. AISWCD encourages all employees to be prompt, open and forthright in reporting perceived breaches of the Code of Ethics.

This code of Ethics is annually examined, updated and restated through a joint effort of the Outlook Committee, Executive Director and President and approved by the Board of Directors.

Adopted _____

**Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts
Code of Ethics**

This code of Ethics has been developed and approved by the Outlook Committee and the Board of Directors of the AISWCD. Officers, employees and Board Members set an example for member districts and other organizations by their high standards of performance, professionalism and ethical conduct.

I have read, understand and agree to abide by this Code of Ethics.

Signature

Date