

The purpose of the **Code of Ethics** is to assure public confidence in local government. Every town official and town employee (TO/TE) as defined by the law is required to sign that he/she has read and agreed to the personal and professional rules and standards defined in Chapter 24 of the Town Code.

TO/TE Standards of Conduct - Always work toward a positive and constructive environment for citizens and businesses dealing with the Town and for all those serving on Town committees and commissions.

- Never use a Town position for financial or material gain for him/herself, a relative, or any private organization in which he/she has an interest.
- Never share confidential information acquired through a TO/TE position.
- Never engage in abusive conduct, personal charges, or attacks upon the character or motives of another TO/TE or the public, nor encourage anyone else to do so.

TO/TE Conflicts of Interest - Always work toward a conflict-free term of employment or service, avoiding even the appearance of a conflict of interest.

- Never accept a gift worth more than \$25, or gifts worth more than of \$75 per year, if the gift can be assumed to intend to influence a TO/TE.
- Never accept payment for services related to Town matters except when they were not anticipated by the TO/TE before Town review or when the TO/TE recuses him/herself from the matter.
- Never fail to disclose personal or material interest in any Town matter, legislation or action.
- Never invest in or hold direct or indirect investments or business ownership if the investment conflicts with Town duties.
- Never engage in any private employment that will require disclosure or use of confidential information or require more than occasional recusal and abstention.
- Never create a conflict of interest by hiring or working with a family member in a direct or indirect supervisor/subordinate position.
- Never discriminate in hiring a member of a state or federal legally protected class.

Did you know?
For two years after leaving office, a TO/TE may not appear before the Town in any matter or application related to his/her former Town position.

TO/TE Political Contributions and Considerations – Always respect and maintain the separation between the political affairs of the Town and those of the private citizen.

- Never attempt to compel a TO/TE, or a TO/TE position applicant, to make a political contribution.
- Never act to affect the status or compensation of a TO/TE, or applicant for a TO/TE position, on the basis of whether or not he/she makes a political contribution.
- Never hold office in any political party, political club or association, committee or society while serving as a TO/TE.

Did You Know?
When campaigning for public office as a private citizen, a TO/TE may solicit and receive contributions for a first-time campaign.

TO/TE Disclosure of Conflicts of Interest – If you are required to complete a Disclosure Form, you will need to update it annually so that it includes any change in information submitted in the previous year.

If the updated information reveals a Conflict of Interest a TO/TE must recuse him/herself from discussion of the related matter and abstain from voting in any related decisions. In the event that a conflict of interest is not clear or that a TO/TE’s recusal and abstention is not voluntary, the matter will be decided by a Board of Ethics.

Visit the Town website to learn more about the Board of Ethics–how it works and who makes up its membership.

The Board of Ethics

When there is an ethics inquiry the Board of Ethics (BoE) will review the matter and offer an advisory opinion and recommendation to the Town Board.

The Review Process

Did you know?

When required, the TO/TE Disclosure Form must be filed 1) within 30 days of taking office or 2) within 15 days if there are changes or additions to the previous year’s information.

All TO/TE Disclosure Forms are confidential and are kept by the Town Clerk as part of an individual’s personal file.

- All BoE opinions are advisory and confidential.
- The identity of the concerned TO/TE will never be disclosed except to authorized people and agencies.
- All opinions will be based on the advice of a lawyer hired by the Board of Ethics or by the Attorney to the Town Board.
- Within two days of the Town Board making a decision, it will be given to the concerned TO/TE. This decision will include the Town Board’s determination and the advisory opinion of the Ethics Board.

No TO/TE may attempt to influence the Board of Ethics in the independent exercise or performance of its duties and responsibilities with respect to any inquiry.

Confidentiality Exception: All advisory opinions are subject to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and, if required, will be reported to the Town Clerk and will be made available to the concerned TO/TE and to the public in accordance with the law.

Chapter 24

As required by New York State Law (Article 18), Marbletown has an ethics code that covers the following topics.

- 24.1 Purpose of The Code of Ethics
- 24.2 Definition of Terms
- 24.3 Standards of Professional and Personal Conduct
- 24.4 Conflict of Interest
- 24.5 Disclosure of Conflict of Interest
- 24.6 Recusal and Abstention
- 24.7 Establishment, Composition, Removal and Operation of the BoE
- 24.8 Powers and Duties of the BoE
- 24.9 Administration of the BoE
- 24.10 Appropriation of Funds
- 24.11 Filing of Claims Against Town
- 24.12 Penalties for Offenses