

CODE OF CONDUCT  
MINNESOTA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

1 A State Representative shall:

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3 Accept public office as a public trust and endeavor to be worthy of that trust – by  
4 respecting the principles of representative democracy, by exemplifying good citizenship and high  
5 personal integrity, and by observing the letter and spirit of laws and rules.  
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7 Promote the health of democracy – by fostering openness in government, full public  
8 understanding of government actions, and public participation in governmental processes.  
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10 Treat everyone with respect, fairness, and courtesy.

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12 Exercise sound judgment by deciding issues on their merits.  
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14 Be respectful of the House of Representatives as a fundamental institution of civil  
15 government.  
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17 Use the power and facilities of office only to advance the common good.  
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19 Respect and maintain confidential information obtained as a public official.  
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TIM PAWLENTY, CHAIR

DATE

54.6 The Secretary shall supervise the employees under the direction of the Committee on Rules and Administration.

## 55. SUBCOMMITTEE ON ETHICAL CONDUCT

55.1 The Subcommittee on Committees shall appoint a Subcommittee on Ethical Conduct of the Committee on Rules and Administration consisting of four members, two from the majority group and two from the minority group.

55.2 The subcommittee shall serve in an advisory capacity to a member or employee upon written request and shall issue recommendations to the member or employee. A member may request the subcommittee to provide its advice on a potential conflict of interest to the member in private. If so requested, the subcommittee shall conduct its proceedings on the advisory opinion in private. The request, proceedings on the request, and any advice given by the subcommittee in response to the request must remain private. The member may not use an advisory opinion from the subcommittee as a defense to a complaint under this rule unless the opinion has been adopted by the subcommittee at a public meeting.

55.3 The subcommittee shall investigate a complaint by a member of the Senate in writing under oath received before adjournment sine die in the last year of a senate term regarding improper conduct by a member or employee of the Senate. The subcommittee has the powers of a standing committee to issue subpoenas under Minnesota Statutes, section 3.153.

55.4 Within 30 days after receiving a complaint, the subcommittee must meet and either make a finding of no probable cause, vote to defer action until a certain time, or proceed with its investigation.

55.5 In order to determine whether there is probable cause to believe that improper conduct has occurred, the subcommittee may, by a vote of three of its members, conduct a preliminary inquiry in executive session to which the open meeting requirements of Rules 12.1 to 12.3 do not apply. The executive session may be ordered by a vote of three of its members whenever the subcommittee determines that matters relating to probable cause are likely to be discussed. The executive session must be limited to matters relating to probable cause. Upon a finding of probable cause, further proceedings on the complaint are open to the public.

55.6 The subcommittee may appoint special counsel to provide expert advice on how to conduct its proceedings. The subcommittee may appoint a suitable person to conduct the investigation and report findings of fact and recommendations for action to the subcommittee.

55.7 If, after investigation, the subcommittee finds the complaint substantiated by the evidence, it shall recommend to the Committee on Rules and Administration appropriate disciplinary action.

55.8 To minimize disruption of its public proceedings, the subcommittee

may require that television coverage be pooled or be provided by Senate media services.

55.9 If criminal proceedings relating to the same conduct have begun, the subcommittee may defer its proceedings until the criminal proceedings have been completed.

55.10 The Senate intends that proceedings of the Subcommittee on Ethical Conduct not be admissible in any criminal proceeding.

## **56. STANDARDS OF ETHICAL CONDUCT**

56.1 Members shall adhere to the highest standard of ethical conduct as embodied in the Minnesota Constitution, state law, and these rules. This standard applies until the legislature has adjourned sine die in the last year of a senate term.

56.2 A member shall not publish or distribute written material if the member knows or has reason to know that the material includes any statement that is false or clearly misleading, concerning a public policy issue or concerning the member's or another member's voting record or position on a public policy issue.

56.3 Improper conduct includes conduct that violates a rule or administrative policy of the Senate, that violates accepted norms of Senate behavior, that betrays the public trust, or that tends to bring the Senate into dishonor or disrepute.

## **57. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

A member who in the discharge of senatorial duties would be required to take an action or make a decision that would substantially affect the member's financial interests or those of an associated business, unless the effect on the member is no greater than on others in the member's business classification, profession, or occupation, shall disclose the potential conflict of interest by following the procedure set forth in Minnesota Statutes, section 10A.07.

## **58. LOBBYISTS**

58.1 A lobbyist shall not appear before a Senate committee pursuant to the lobbyist's employment unless the lobbyist is in compliance with the law requiring lobbyist registration, Minnesota Statutes, sections 10A.03 to 10A.06. A lobbyist, when appearing before a committee, shall disclose to the committee on whose behalf the lobbyist speaks and the purpose of the lobbyist's appearance. A lobbyist shall not knowingly furnish false or misleading information or make a false or misleading statement that is relevant and material to a matter before the Senate or any of its committees when the lobbyist knows or should know it will influence the judgment or action of the Senate or any of its committees, subcommittees, or divisions.