



## **GUIDELINES FOR ETHICAL PRACTICES OF COMMISSIONERS**

This code of ethics expresses the personal ideals which the Commission believes should guide each Commissioner's activities.

In all actions as a Commissioner, the Commissioner's first commitment is to the well-being of the children of Ventura County from the prenatal stage to five years of age.

Commissioners also have other major commitments to:

- The Community. Each Commissioner is responsible to all residents of the County, not solely to those who appointed him/her nor solely to any organization to which he/she may belong.
- Individuals. Each Commissioner has a direct concern for every individual in the community. As an integral part of his/her duties, he/she represents the authority and responsibility of government. This authority must be exercised with as much care and concern for the least influential as for the most influential member of the community.
- Decision-making. Each Commissioner is obliged by law to participate in decisions pertaining to the Commission. As an appointed representative of the people, the Commissioner can neither relinquish nor delegate this responsibility to any other individual or group.
- Individual Feelings and Philosophy. Every individual Commissioner has something to contribute to society.

Understanding and acting upon the foregoing premises, each Commissioner shall:

- Consider his/her position on the Commission as a public trust and not use it for private advantage or personal gain. A Commissioner shall recuse himself/herself from participation in the decision-making process of the Commission if he/she has an actual conflict of interest in a matter before the Commission. A Commissioner may decline to participate in activities or decisions that he/she as an individual feels would give the appearance of impropriety, even if such participation is not an actual conflict of interest.
- Be constantly aware that he/she has no legal authority except when acting as a member of the Commission. Commissioners shall present their concerns and concepts through the process of Commission debate. If in the minority of any decision, they shall abide by and support the majority decision. When in the majority, they shall respect divergent opinions.
- Encourage ideas and opinions from the residents of the County and endeavor to incorporate community views into the deliberations and decisions of the Commission.
- Devote sufficient time, thought and study to proposed actions so as to be able to base decisions upon all available facts and vote in accordance with honest convictions, unswayed by partisan bias of any kind.
- Recognize that the deliberations of the Commission in closed session may be released or discussed in public only with commission approval.
- Make use of opportunities to enlarge his/her potential as a Commissioner through participation in educational conferences, workshops and training sessions made available by local, state and national agencies.