



HOUSTON–GALVESTON AREA COUNCIL
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TO: Transportation Policy Council Members
SUBJECT: Ethics Policy Acknowledgement
FROM: Allie Isbell, Assistant MPO Director
DATE: June 17, 2025

Dear TPC Primary and Alternate Members:

According to the Transportation Policy Council Bylaws, a copy of the Ethics Policy Acknowledgement Form shall be distributed to each policy board member each year. Please see TPC Bylaws Attachment B, page 10 (<http://www.h-gac.com/transportation-policy-council/default.aspx>).

Attached for your information and signature is the Ethics Policy form. This form should be signed by both TPC Primary and Alternate members and will be kept on file with the MPO. Ex-Officio members are not required to sign the form.

Please sign and return the attached form to Lucinda Martinez at lucinda.martinez@h-gac.com.

Thank you for your cooperation.



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Ethics Policy Acknowledgement Form

I, _____ a voting or an alternate member of the Transportation Policy Council (TPC) for the Houston-Galveston Metropolitan Planning Area, acknowledge that I have received the TPC Bylaws and Operating Procedures, including the Ethics Policy. I understand as a voting or an alternate member, I am subject to all applicable provisions of the Bylaws and Operating Procedures, including Ethics Policy.

Print Name

Signature

Representing

Title

Date

Please return form to:
Lucinda Martinez
lucinda.martinez@h-gac.com
713-993-4516

ATTACHMENT B

Transportation Policy Council for the Houston-Galveston Transportation Management Area

ETHICS POLICY

The Transportation Policy Council (TPC) is committed to conducting its business in an ethical and open manner. To ensure ethical conduct by members of the TPC and its employees, the following rules have been adopted:

Definitions

- Agent is defined as a third party who undertakes to transact some business or manage some affair for another person by the authority or on account of the other person.
- Business relationship is defined as a connection between two or more parties based on commercial activity of one of the parties. The term does not include a connection based on:
 1. A transaction that is subject to rate or fee regulation by a federal, state, or local government entity or an agency of a federal, state, or local government entity;
 2. A transaction conducted at a price and subject to terms available to the public; or
 3. A purchase or lease of goods or services from a person that is chartered by a state or federal agency and that is subject to regular examination by, and reporting to, that agency.
- Contract: a written agreement for the sale or purchase of real property, goods, or services.
- Family member: a person related to another person within the first degree by consanguinity or affinity, as described by Subchapter B, Chapter 573, Government Code, except that the term does not include a person who is considered to be related to another person by affinity only as described by Section 573.024(b), Government Code.
- Goods: personal property.
- Investment income: dividends, capital gains, or interest income generated from:
 1. a personal or business checking or savings account, share draft or share account, or other similar account;
 2. a personal or business investment; or
 3. a personal or business loan.

Transportation Code Requirements

- No TPC member or employee of the MPO may accept or solicit any gift, favor or service that might reasonably tend to influence the member or employee in the discharge of official duties or that the member or employee knows or should know is being offered with the intent to influence the member's or employee's official conduct.
- No TPC member or employee of the MPO may accept other employment or engage in a business or professional activity that the member or employee might reasonably expect would require or induce the member or employee to disclose confidential information acquired by reason of the official position.
- No TPC member or employee of the MPO may accept other employment or compensation that could reasonably be expected to impair the member's or employee's independence of judgment in the performance of official duties.

- No TPC member or employee of the MPO may make personal investments that could reasonably be expected to create a conflict between the member's or employee's private interest and the public interest.
- No TPC member or employee of the MPO may intentionally or knowingly solicit, accept, or agree to accept any benefit for having exercised official powers or performed the official duties in favor of another.

Chapter 171, Local Government Code Requirements

- If a TPC member has a substantial interest in a business entity or in real property, the TPC member shall file, before a vote or decision on any matter involving the business entity or the real property, an affidavit stating the nature and extent of the interest and shall abstain from further participation in the matter if:
 1. in the case of a substantial interest in a business entity, the action on the matter will have a special economic effect on the business entity that is distinguishable from the effect on the public; or
 2. in the case of a substantial interest in real property, it is reasonably foreseeable that an action on the matter will have a special economic effect on the value of the property, distinguishable from its effect on the public.
- If a TPC member is required to file and does file an affidavit, the TPC member is not required to abstain from further participation in the matter requiring the affidavit if a majority of the policy board members are likewise required to file and do file affidavits of similar interests on the same official action.
- The TPC shall take a separate vote on any budget item specifically dedicated to a contract with a business entity in which a member of the TPC has a substantial interest. Except as provided in the preceding paragraph, the member may not participate in that separate vote. The member may vote on a final budget if:
 1. the member has complied with Chapter 171, Local Government Code; and
 2. the matter in which the member is concerned has been resolved.
- A person has a substantial interest in a business entity if:
 1. the person owns ten (10%) percent or more of the voting stock or shares of the business entity or owns either ten (10%) percent or more, or \$15,000 or more, of the fair market value of the business entity; or
 2. funds received by the person from the business entity exceed ten (10%) percent of the person's gross income from the previous year.
- A person has a substantial interest in real property if the interest is an equitable or legal ownership with a fair market value of \$2,500 or more.
- A TPC member is considered to have a substantial interest if a person related to the policy board member in the first degree by consanguinity or affinity, as determined under Chapter 573, Government Code, has a substantial interest.
- A county judge or county commissioner engaged in the private practice of law has a substantial interest in a business entity if the official has entered a court appearance or signed court pleadings in a matter related to that business entity.
- A TPC member may not act as surety for a business entity that has work, business or a contract with the TPC.

Chapter 176, Local Government Code Requirements

- A TPC member shall file a conflicts disclosure statement in the form prescribed by the Texas

Ethics Commission with respect to a person who enters or seeks to enter into a contract with the TPC or with respect to the agent of a person who enters or seeks to enter into a contract with the TPC if:

1. the person enters into a contract with the TPC or the TPC is considering entering into a contract with the person; and
 2. the person:
 - a. has an employment or other business relationship with the TPC member or a family member of the TPC policy board member that results in the member or family member receiving taxable income, other than investment income, that exceeds \$2,500 during the 12-month period preceding the date that the TPC member becomes aware that:
 - i. a contract described by (1) above has been executed; or
 - ii. the TPC is considering entering into a contract with the person; or
 - b. has given to the TPC member or a family member of the TPC member one or more gifts that have an aggregate value of more than \$250 in the 12-month period preceding the date the TPC member becomes aware that:
 - i. a contract described by (1) above has been executed; or
 - ii. the TPC is considering entering into a contract with the person.
- A TPC member is not required to file a conflicts disclosure statement in relation to a gift accepted by the member or a family member of the member if the gift is:
 1. given by a family member of the person accepting the gift;
 2. a political contribution as defined by Title 15, Election Code; or
 3. food, lodging, transportation, or entertainment accepted as a guest.
 - A TPC member shall file the conflicts disclosure statement with the records administrator and Chairman of the TPC not later than 5 p.m. on the seventh business day after the date on which the TPC member becomes aware of the facts that require the filing of the statement.
 - The TPC may extend the requirements of Chapter 176 to any employee of the MPO who has the authority to approve contracts on behalf of the TPC. The TPC shall identify each employee made subject to Chapter 176 and shall provide a list of the identified employees on request to any person.
 - The TPC shall provide access to the disclosure statements and questionnaires required to be filed under Chapter 176 on its website, and/or the website of its fiscal agent, if it has a website.

Incorporation of Statutes:

All provisions of Section 472.034, Transportation Code, Chapter 171, Local Government Code, and Chapter 176, Local Government Code, are intended to be incorporated into this ethics policy. In the case of any uncertainty as to the applicability of any of these statutes, the TPC member or employee should refer to the statutes.

Penalties:

Any employee who violates the Ethics Policy is subject to termination or other employment related sanctions. Any TPC member or employee of the MPO who violates the Ethics Policy is subject to applicable civil or criminal penalties if the violation also constitutes a violation of a state or federal statute or rule.

Distribution:

Upon adoption of the Ethics Policy by the TPC, a copy shall be distributed to each TPC member and MPO employee.

The Ethics Policy adopted by the TPC shall be provided to each new employee no later than three (3) business days after the date on which the person begins employment.

The Ethics Policy adopted by the TPC shall be provided to each new policy board member no later than three (3) business days after the date on which the person qualifies for office.

Multiple Ethics Policies:

Because employees of the MPO are subject to the H-GAC Ethics Policy as well as the TPC Ethics Policy, in cases of conflict between the two policies, the H-GAC Ethics Policy prevails.