

FAQ's

Q: What is the Board of Ethics?

A: The bi-partisan Board of Ethics is composed of five members appointed by the Town Board to oversee the Town's financial disclosure program, investigate ethics complaints, and provide ethics advice and training to current and former Town officers, employees and independent contractors.

Q: What is an ethics violation?

A: To ensure integrity in Town government, Town officers and employees are required by law to adhere to a code of conduct. This code of conduct is primarily found in the Town of Southampton Code of Ethics available on this website. Among other things, the Code of Ethics regulates:

- Doing business with the Town,
- Outside employment and investments that conflict with official duties,
- Prohibited gifts and favors,
- Disclosure of confidential Town information,
- Personal use of Town property, and
- Hiring and supervision of relatives

An ethics violation occurs when a Town officer, employee or independent contractor violates a code of conduct imposed by federal, state or local law.

Q: How do I submit an ethics complaint?

A: You may submit an ethics complaint electronically, using the form available on this website, or you may submit a written complaint to the Board of Ethics at the address shown on this website. Anyone may file an ethics complaint. The person submitting an ethics complaint will be afforded the whistleblower protections provided by law, to the extent that they apply. The Board of Ethics will accept anonymous complaints, but may be better able to investigate if it is able to contact the person who submitted the complaint.

Q: Who may ask for ethics advice?

A: The Board of Ethics provides advice to current and former Town officers, employees and independent contractors seeking advice about themselves, and the heads of Town departments, agencies, boards and commissions seeking advice about someone they supervise.

Q: How do I ask for ethics advice?

A: Ethics advice may be requested electronically, using the form available on this website, or by submitting a written inquiry to the Board of Ethics at the following address:

Secretary to Board of Ethics
Office of the Town Attorney
116 Hampton Road
Southampton, NY 11968
Phone: 631-283-6000
ethicsboard@southamptontownny.gov

Q: Is ethics advice confidential?

A: Advice given by the Board of Ethics will not be disclosed to anyone other than the person who requested the advice, except that a failure to adhere to the advice may result in disclosure to the appropriate department head or law enforcement agency. The Board of Ethics may post its ethics advice on this website, but only after removing any information that might identify the person who sought the advice.

Q: Can the public inspect and copy financial disclosure statements filed by Town officers and employees?

A: Annual Statements of Financial Disclosure are generally available for public inspection and copying pursuant to the New York Freedom of Information Law. However, before releasing a disclosure statement for public inspection, the Board of Ethics will delete the categories of value, home address, and the names of dependent

children. Town officers and employees may request that the Board of Ethics also withhold from public disclosure other information that, if disclosed, would result in an unwarranted invasion of personal privacy. The Board of Ethics will consider the request, and make its determination based on the requirements of the New York Freedom of Information Law.

Q: Is ethics training available?

A: The Board of Ethics provides periodic ethics training to Town officers and employees. Group ethics training is available upon the request of a Town department, agency, board or commission.