

Updated: 12/18/15

CORE VALUES

MARATHON COUNTY OFFICE OF CORPORATION COUNSEL

We know we are living the core value of **SERVICE** when we:

- Make access a priority by being available for consultation;
- Provide legal services in an atmosphere where people are treated with understanding, fairness and dignity;
- Meet our time commitments for hearings, meetings, deadlines;
- Respond to inquiries, including voicemail messages and e-mails in a timely manner;
- Consider individual facts and circumstances of each case, prioritize work assignments, and adjust our deadlines and strategies accordingly;
- When the public or another County Department contacts our office with a question and we don't know the answer to it, or which department they should be transferred to, connect the person with the question to the person most likely able to answer.

Behavioral Example: Someone comes to the front desk who is confused about what kind of hearing they are scheduled to attend. All staff members take it upon themselves to make sure person understands where they need to go for hearing. Legal secretaries involve lawyers when appropriate and lawyers respond quickly when asked.

We know we are living the core value of **INTEGRITY** when we:

- Protect confidentiality;
- Communicate openly and honestly and listen without personal bias or prejudice;
- Are consistent in our decisions, actions and treatment of county employees and the public;
- Comply with the professional code of ethics in its entirety.
- Be courteous and treat others with respect, whether they are members of the public or other county employees.

Behavioral Example: One of the lawyers thinks they might have a conflict of interest in a case, they bring it to corp. counsel or dep. corp. counsel to discuss the existence of an actual conflict or the appearance of impropriety.

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We know we are living the core value of **QUALITY** when we:

- Stay current in our education of the areas of law in which we specialize;
- Completely analyze and research legal opinions;
- Are well prepared for hearings and meetings;
- Seek input and feedback from the agencies we represent and take all reasonable action necessary to better serve them and the clients we share;
- Actively seek out opportunities for self-development and make full use of development and educational opportunities provided.

Behavioral Example: All lawyers and legal secretaries and the paralegal participate in IT training on the same issues together so that we can all discuss topics at team meetings

We know we are living the core value of **DIVERSITY** when we:

- Respect others and appreciate differences in perspective, history and values;
- Adhere to professional standards for both work related and personal interactions with all internal and external consumers;
- Take responsibility to know and understand other cultures through continuing education and community involvement;
- Demonstrate tolerance with those who are unfamiliar with or have difficulty in navigating the legal process.

Behavioral Example: A person appears in court who says that they understand English sufficiently to participate in proceedings, but lawyer believes this is not the case. Lawyer takes personal initiative to obtain telephone interpreter for the purpose of proceeding with hearing.

We know we are living the core value of **SHARED PURPOSE** when we:

- Work in cooperation with the other County departments and their representatives;
- Solve problems in a manner which builds good relationships and contribute to the common objective;
- Provide counsel and advice to others to assist in achieving their program and service objectives.

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- Work with our partners in applying lean principles.

Behavioral Example: Lawyers, legal secretaries and paralegal all take the time to develop relationships with agency personnel so that they feel they have a working partner in Corporation Counsel. Lawyers and paralegal work on policy statements and procedures that can be used for training. Legal secretaries make it a priority to schedule time for communication between lawyers and agency partners regarding questions or requests.

We know we are living the core value of **STEWARDSHIP OF RESOURCES** when we:

- Consistently make productive use of our work time;
- Invest in our employees by promoting continuing education and training through in-house training and continuing legal education;
- Are comprehensive in our legal work, looking for practical, realistic solutions to problems which achieve our intended objectives and minimize the amount of time invested in unnecessary litigation.

Behavioral Example: All Corp. Counsel staff participate in Team meetings.