

FRIENDS OF FLORIDA STATE FORESTS CODE OF ETHICS

PREAMBLE

- (1) It is essential to the proper conduct and operation of Friends of Florida State Forests (herein “DSO”) that its board members, officers, and employees be independent and impartial and that their position not be used for private gain. Therefore, the Florida Legislature in Section 112.313, Florida Statute (Fla. Stat.), requires that the law protect against any conflict of interest and establish standards for the conduct of DSO board members, officers, and employees in situations where conflicts may exist.
- (2) It is hereby declared to be the policy of the State that no DSO board member, officer or employee shall have an interest, financial or otherwise, direct or indirect, or incur any obligation of any nature which is in substantial conflict with the proper discharge of his or her duties for the DSO. To implement this policy and strengthen the faith and confidence of the people in Direct Support Organizations, there is enacted a code of ethics setting forth standards of conduct required of Friends of Florida State Forests board members, officers, and employees in the performance of their official duties.

STANDARDS

The following standards of conduct are enumerated in Chapter 112, Fla. Stat., and are required by Section 112.313, Fla. Stat., to be observed by DSO board members, officers, and employees.

1. Prohibition of Solicitation or Acceptance of Gifts

No DSO board member, officer, or employee shall solicit or accept anything of value to the recipient, including a gift, loan, reward, promise of future employment, favor, or service, based upon any understanding that the vote, official action, or judgment of the DSO board member, officer, or employee would be influenced thereby.

2. Prohibition of Accepting Compensation Given to Influence a Vote

No DSO board member, officer, or employee shall accept any compensation, payment, or thing of value when the person knows, or, with reasonable care, should know that it was given to influence a vote of other action in which the DSO board member, officer, or employee was expected to participate in his or her official capacity.

3. Salary and Expenses

No DSO board member or officer shall be prohibited from voting on a matter affecting his or her salary, expenses, or other compensation as a DSO board member or officer, as provided by law.

4. Prohibition of Misuse of Position

A DSO board member, officer, or employee shall not corruptly use or attempt to use one's official position or any property or resource which may be within one's trust, or perform official duties, to secure a special privilege, benefit, or exemption.

5. Prohibition of Misuse of Privileged Information

No DSO board member, officer, or employee shall disclose or use information not available to members of the general public and gained by reason of one's official position of one's own personal gain or benefit or for the personal gain or benefit of any other person or business entity.

6. Post-Office/Employment Restrictions

A person who has been elected to any DSO board or office or who is employed by a DSO, may not personally represent another person or entity for compensation before the governing body of the DSO of which he or she was a board member, officer, or employee for a period of two years after he or she vacates that office or employment position.

7. Prohibition to Employees Holding Office

No person may be, at one time, both a DSO employee and a DSO board member at the same time.

8. Requirements to Abstain From Voting

A DSO board member or officer shall not vote in official capacity upon any measure which would affect his or her special private gain or loss, or which he or she knows would affect the special gain or any principal by whom the board member or officer is retained. When abstaining, the DSO board member or officer, prior to the vote being taken, shall make every reasonable effort to disclose the nature of his or her interest as a public record in a memorandum filed with the person responsible for recording the minutes of the meeting, who shall incorporate the memorandum in the minutes. If it is not possible for the DSO board member or officer to file a memorandum before the vote, the memorandum must be filed with the person responsible for recording the minutes of the meeting no later than 15 days after the vote.

9. Failure to Observe DSO Code of Ethics

Failure of a DSO board member, officer or employee to observe the Code of Ethics may result in the removal of that person from their position. Further, failure of the DSO to observe the Code of Ethics may result in the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services terminating its Agreement with the DSO.

(Chapter 2014-96, Laws of Florida SB No. 1194), FFSF Board Approved 8.4.14