

## **Section 2: Ethical Conduct of Officers and Directors**

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(updated 05/20-CDP)

## Guidelines for the Ethical Conduct of Officers and Directors

As Officers and Directors of the American Radio Relay League, you are faced with a unique and challenging responsibility. You have been chosen from the membership to play a key role in representing them in the ARRL. The decisions that you make, or help to make may have a great influence on the fate of Amateur Radio not only in the US, but throughout the world. As high-ranking representatives of ARRL, you lose whatever anonymity you might previously have enjoyed. Your every action will be on public display. Every statement that you make, every cause that you support, will be subject to widespread public scrutiny.

It is the purpose of these guidelines to assist you in maintaining an ethical standard of conduct that will bring credit to yourself and to the ARRL.

What is ethics? According to Webster, it is the discipline dealing with what is good and bad and with moral duty and obligation. Perhaps Dr. Albert Schweitzer's definition would appropriately amplify Webster: "In a general sense, ethics is the name we give our concern for good behavior. We feel an obligation to consider not only our own personal well-being, but also that of others and of human society as a whole."

In your service as an Officer or Director, your sense of ethics must guide you in a pattern of behavior that will be beyond reproach.

As an elected official of the ARRL, your decisions must be for the good of ARRL and its members and there should be no opportunity for criticism that your decisions have benefited you or any small circle of your friends.

You will be reimbursed for the expenses necessary to carry out your constitutional duties. This money comes from the members who have chosen to support our association, and there must be no suspicion that even one cent has been used to your personal advantage, or that you have paid the expenses of those who are not entitled to such reimbursement.

Furthermore, as a custodian of membership money, you have the obligation to spend that money wisely and without excess.

Similarly, when you travel in an official capacity to a hamfest or convention, your expenses are reimbursed with money that comes from the membership. It is not proper, therefore, to permit your name to be entered in any prize drawing or lottery.

In your appearances at hamfests and conventions, and in your on-the-air activity, you will be measured by everything you do -- not as an individual amateur, but as a representative of the ARRL. You must bend over backwards to ensure that your conduct cannot be faulted.

As specific examples, on-the-air campaigning for elected office, criticism of fellow Directors, and/or promoting personal ideas, may not be appropriate, and are not sanctioned by ARRL.

It is not our intent, however, to outline every conceivable situation or every facet of ethical behavior. We have listed some of the general areas of consideration. An even more general consideration is that ethical behavior is simply common sense. If you understand that as an Officer or Director you have been placed upon a pedestal in Amateur Radio, then you will realize that you must be circumspect in your behavior, and beyond reproach in every aspect of your conduct. You will serve the ARRL with honor.

## **Policy Governing Contacts with Federal Government Officials by Members of the ARRL Board**

ARRL By-Law 31 provides that the President "shall, subject to the instruction from the Board of Directors, and with the assistance of the Chief Executive Officer, represent the League in its relationships with the public and the various governments, governmental agencies and officials with which the League may be concerned and shall be the official spokesman of the Board of Directors in regard to all matters of League policy."

The Chief Executive Officer is responsible to the President for contacts made by staff, including the Regulatory Information Manager and the Chief Technology Officer, in the performance of their duties. From time to time, assignments involving Federal government contact may be made by the Board to individuals or to ad hoc Committees, task groups or task forces; in such cases, the extent of contact authorized will be determined by the terms of reference.

It is important for the policies of the Board to be communicated to Federal government personnel in a consistent manner, and for the League to present a position of unity at all times. Accordingly, the only contact with FCC, congressional and other Federal government personnel which involves, or could be construed to involve, ARRL or Amateur Radio policy matters, shall be as outlined above.

Board policy prohibits the filing of comments in FCC proceedings by members of the Board, either on their own behalf or on behalf of other organizations. This policy is not to be construed prohibiting Board members from encouraging the filing of comments by others in support of League positions, or from contacting their own elected government representatives to gain support of League positions.

Expenses incurred while arranging for or engaging in Federal government contacts in contravention of this policy will not be reimbursed by the League.

## **Election Conduct**

### **Mass Communications during the Election:**

Minute 83, 1989 Annual Meeting of the Board, requires that the following policy shall be included in the Directors' Workbook and in the material forwarded to each candidate upon nomination.

"In any League election, during the campaign period (the period from the deadline for receipt of nominating petitions for Director and Vice Director until the day ballots are due) any mass communication at League expense in whole or in part, dealing with any candidate in any way or issued by a candidate, League or section official in the Division of the candidate, shall be approved by the Executive Committee prior to the issuance of such communications. The Executive Committee shall deny approval of any communications which in its opinion reasonably might affect the outcome of such election."

### **A 300-Word Statement for the Ballot:**

The following material (Minute 53, 2020 Annual Meeting) is to be included in the Directors' Workbook and in the materials sent to each candidate upon his nomination (Minute 44, 1989 Annual Meeting):

Each candidate for Director, Vice Director, or Section Manager may submit a 300-word statement for inclusion with the ballot. The submission of this statement shall be filed as elsewhere required, and must be, in all material respects, truthful and not misleading. With this statement, the candidate may submit his or her black and white photograph not larger than 3 inches high and 2 inches wide to likewise be included with the ballot. Alternatively, an equivalent electronic photograph in .jpg format at a minimum of 200 dpi may be submitted.

The standard of truth applies to all campaign material by a candidate. Campaign statements may include opinions (stated as such). Only complaints from a member eligible to vote in that election shall be accepted. All matters with respect to campaigns, including remedies for issues that arise, will be conclusively determined by the Ethics and Elections Committee.

As determined by the Executive Committee at their meeting August 27, 1988, the 300-word statements of unopposed candidates will not be mailed with ballots for the other office in the Division.

