

CITY OF CORAL GABLES

CIVILITY CODE

In 2015, the City Attorney published CAO 2015-104 detailing the rules of public participation and decorum during City Commission and City Board/Committee meetings. That opinion is incorporated herein as exhibit A.

The purpose of this Civility Code is to further establish rules of decorum and civility for members of the public addressing City staff, in addition to the City Commission and City boards/committees, during public meetings. (For purposes of this Code, the term “public meeting” includes any and all meetings that are open to the public not only those considered “public meetings” under the Florida Sunshine Law). The policy is intended to facilitate an open, orderly and respectful environment for all those in attendance and to foster an atmosphere of fairness, courtesy and respect for differing points of view.

All individuals attending a public meeting must:

1. Wait to be acknowledged by the chair or staff member running the meeting before speaking;
2. Not interrupt the staff member or an individual who has the floor or speak over that person;
3. Refrain from behavior which will disrupt the public meeting. This includes making loud noises, clapping, speaking in a significantly raised voice, shouting, booing, hissing or engaging in any other activity that disrupts, disturbs, hinders or impedes the orderly conduct of the meeting;
4. Refrain from behavior that can be interpreted as physically threatening to those conducting the meeting or to anyone in attendance, such as encroaching into their personal space, pointing of a finger toward a person in particular.
5. Refrain from using profanities, insults or other disparaging remarks;
6. Refrain from making comments, references or statements regarding race, gender, ethnicity, religion or sexual orientation;
7. Refrain from creating, provoking or participating in any type of disturbance involving unwelcome physical contact;
8. Refrain from speaking on their cell phone while the meeting is in session;

9. Endeavor to cite only the truth and not knowingly misrepresent, mischaracterize or misquote information received from others (this behavior may also violation the City's False Claims Ordinance, Ch. 39 of the City Code).

Any individual who violates this Civility Code during a Board/Committee meeting shall be warned to stop the behavior immediately; failure to do so will subject the individual to removal from the meeting pursuant to the procedures detailed in No. 11 through No. 14 of exhibit A. If the meeting is conducted by City staff, the staff member running the meeting has the full discretion to conclude the meeting and is not required to continue if the behavior in violation of this Code does not cease.

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