

Policy 7.4.7 Council Correspondence

POLICY PURPOSE:

It is the purpose of this policy to establish guidelines and standards regarding the preparation, signature authorization, and limitations pertaining to Council correspondence.

POLICY STATEMENT:

I. Preparation of correspondence relating to official City business will be provided upon request within the resource restraints of the adopted budget.

II. Correspondence Preparation

A. The Mayor or his/her designee shall sign all correspondence on behalf of the entire Council. All correspondence in which the City takes a position on a piece of legislation or issue shall be signed by the Mayor with a copy placed in the Mayor's Correspondence File (accessible to all public and Councilmembers for review). Before routing to the Mayor for signature, all correspondence in which the City takes a position on a piece of legislation or issue must be approved by the department Director. City Manager approval is required in cases when it is unclear if an official City policy supports performing advocacy. The originating department Director, City Manager and OCM IGR Liaison shall be copied on all IGR-related correspondence.

All correspondence conveying thanks or appreciation on behalf of the entire City Council shall be signed by the Mayor. This does not preclude individual Councilmembers from creating their own personal correspondence. However, a Councilmember may not request nor use City resources in the preparation of personal correspondence or correspondence in support or pursuit of political office, either for themselves or for someone else.

B. Staff will not prepare correspondence representing a Councilmember's personal point of view or a dissenting point of view from an official City policy or Council position. If Councilmembers use their title, position, or City letterhead to express a personal opinion, the official City position must be stated clearly so the audience understands the difference between the official City position and the viewpoint of the Councilmember. (See Code of Conduct for Elected Officials for more information). A copy of any and all correspondence developed by or for a Councilmember on City letterhead shall be provided to the Office of the City Manager for filing.

C. The City Manager is responsible for assigning appropriate staff to assist the City Council in the preparation of correspondence. Assigned staff prepares correspondence for signature and submits it to the Executive Assistant to the Mayor and Council for coordination of the Mayor/Councilmember's signature. Unless the Mayor/Councilmember determines that revision(s) to the document are required,

COUNCIL POLICY MANUAL

signed correspondence is returned by the Executive Assistant to the preparer for mailing, distribution, and filing with their department. Copies of all correspondence signed by the Mayor or Council are maintained in the Council Files by the Executive Assistant and are open to public inspection during normal business hours.

(Adopted: Council Policy Update, RTC #14-0061 (November 25, 2014); RTC #15-0491 (November 17, 2015))

Lead Department: Office of the City Manager

For reference, see also:

- 7.4.9, Receiving and Responding to Community Member Inquiries and Concerns
- City Charter, Section 807
- Code of Ethics and Conduct for Elected Officials