

COUNCIL POLICY MANUAL

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. ~~City resources and support for Councilmembers. This policy is supplementary to and in no way intended to conflict with the City Charter. For further information on this subject, see:~~

- ~~City Charter, Section 807~~
- ~~Code of Ethics and Conduct for Elected Officials (available on the City's internal Web site or in the Office of the City Clerk)~~

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 ~~Officer~~ shall be copied on all IGR-related correspondence.

Comment [HK1]: Added for consistency with last sentence in C, below .

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 ~~to political organizations~~ in support or pursuit of ~~a political office, either for themselves or for in support of someone else's pursuit of a political office.~~

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 ~~minor~~ viewpoint of the Councilmember. (See Code of Conduct for Elected Officials for more information).

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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, 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.

~~III. Implementation:~~

~~The City Manager shall monitor those provisions of this policy within the City Manager's Charter responsibilities. Disagreement in interpretation shall be resolved by the City Council. The City Manager shall institute administrative policy to implement this policy. At the time a new Councilmember is seated, the Mayor and City Manager should review this policy with him/her.~~

~~Annually, the City Manager shall review the resource requirements necessary to support the level of service specified in this policy, and recommend as a part of the proposed budget necessary changes of budget resources.~~

(Adopted: Council Policy Update, RTC #14-0061 (November 25, 2014))

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