THE MUNICIPALITY OF WOODSTOCK, VERMONT

PROCESS FOR INVESTIGATION AND ENFORCEMENT OF ETHICAL VIOLATIONS

1. Reporting Violations

- **Who Can Report:** Any employee, official, or member of the public.
- **How to Report:**
  - Submit a complaint using the Woodstock Ethics Complaint Form via email to the Ethics Liaison at ethicsliaison@townofwoodstock.org
  - Alternatively, use the VT State Municipal Ethics Commission Complaint Form, available here: FORM HERE. The Vermont State Ethics Commission is a non-partisan, independent State agency empowered to accept, review, refer, and track complaints related to ethical conduct in State and municipal government.
  - If there are alleged violations of the Vermont Municipal Code of Ethics. 3 V.S.A. § 1223(b), the complaint should be made to the VT State Municipal Ethics Commission using the form above.

For complaints reported to the Municipality of Woodstock, this is the process:

2. Initial Review

- **Who Reviews:** Ethics Liaison
- **What Happens:**
  - Check if the complaint is valid and under the policy's scope.
  - Decide if an investigation is needed or dismiss the case with an explanation.
  - The Ethics Liaison will seek advice if needed from the State Municipal Ethics Commission in making these determinations.

3. Investigation

- **Who Investigates:** A neutral investigator or team.
- **Steps:**
  - Collect evidence and talk to involved parties.
  - Keep everything confidential as much as possible.
  - Wrap up within 30 days, if possible.

4. Findings and Actions

- **What Happens Next:**
  - Investigator presents findings to the Town Selectboard or Village Trustee Chair or Town Manager depending on who has filed a complaint. A complaint against an employee is investigated by the Town Manager and a complaint against an official is investigated by the Town Selectboard or Village Trustee Chair.
  - The Chair or Town Manager decides on actions, which could include warnings, training, suspension, or other penalties.
- **Notification:** Inform the accused and complainant about the decision.

5. Appeals

- **How to Appeal:**
  - The accused can appeal within 10 days,
  - Either the Chair or Town Manager reviews the case and makes the final decision.

6. Recordkeeping

- Save all reports and decisions securely while following confidentiality and public record laws.