CODE OF ETHICS
for
EMPLOYEES
in
RIGHT OF WAY AND LAND SURVEYS
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Recognizing our responsibility to our Department and to the people of the State of California and feeling that we should encourage and foster high ethical standards in our organization, we do hereby subscribe to the following Code of Ethics for our constant guidance and inspiration, predicated upon the basic principles of trust, justice, and fair play.

• To show faith in the worthiness of our profession by industry, honesty, and courtesy in order to merit a reputation for high quality of service and fair dealing.

• To add to the knowledge of our profession by constant study and to share the lessons of our experience with our fellow employees.

• To build an ever-increasing confidence and goodwill with the public and our employees by poise, self-restraint, and constructive cooperation.

• To ascertain and weigh all the facts relative to real properties in making an appraisal thereof using the best and most approved methods of determining just compensation.

• To conduct ourselves in the most ethical and competent manner in our negotiations with affected property owners, thus meriting confidence in our knowledge and integrity.

• To accept our full share of responsibility in constructive public service to the community, state, and nation.

• To strive to attain and to express a sincerity of character that shall enrich our human contacts ever aiming toward that ideal -- the practice of the “golden rule.”
# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

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1.01.00.00 - RIGHT OF WAY MANUAL OVERVIEW

1.01.01.00  Purpose

The Right of Way Manual is prepared by the Division of Right of Way and Land Surveys (R/W&LS) to provide uniform procedures and guidance for Right of Way (R/W) functions of the California Department of Transportation (Department). This manual is neither intended as, nor does it establish, a legal standard for these functions. Policies and practices established herein are for the information and guidance of the officers and employees of the Department and those under its oversight. It implements 23 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 710.201(c) which in part mandates each state department “which receives funding from the highway trust fund shall maintain a manual describing its right-of-way organization, policies, and procedures.” The CFR further obligates other public land acquisition organizations or private consultants under the Department’s oversight on Federal-aid projects to comply with State and Federal laws, regulations, and the Department’s policies and practices. While this manual outlines some aspect of Land Surveys’ role in project delivery, more detailed guidance for the Land Surveys function is found in the Land Surveys Manual.

1.01.02.00  Authorities

- Code of Federal Regulations (CFRs):
  - Title 23 – Highways
  - Title 36 – Parks, Forests, and Public Property
  - Title 43 – Public Lands: Interior
  - Title 49 – Transportation
  - Title 50 – Wildlife and Fisheries

- California Codes:
  - Business and Professions Code (BPC)
  - Civil Code (CIV)
  - Code of Civil Procedure (CCP)
  - Education Code (EDC)
  - Evidence Code (EVID)
  - Financial Code (FIN)
  - Fish and Game Code (FGG)
  - Government Code (GOV)
  - Health and Safety Code (HSC)
  - Insurance Code (INS)
  - Labor Code (LAB)
  - Probate Code (PROB)
  - Public Contract Code (PCC)
  - Public Resources Code (PRC)
  - Public Utilities Code (PUC)
  - Revenue and Taxation Code (RTC)
  - Streets and Highways Code (SHC)
  - Vehicle Code (VEH)
  - Water Code (WAT)
  - Welfare and Institutions Code (WIC)

- Stewardship and Oversight Agreement (Federal Highway Administration/Caltrans)
1.01.03.00 Scope

The manual includes R/W policies, instructions, and standard practices, as well as forms and exhibits intended to aid field and office operations. This manual is not a textbook or a substitute for law, statute, regulation, knowledge, experience, or judgment.

Administrative regulations, statutory references, and citations from U.S. Code (U.S.C.) and the CFR are referenced but not quoted in their entirety, except where noted. Citations are contained in the exhibits or in other books and pamphlets that are available to the region/district. Flowcharts have been developed for those chapters where applicable and helpful to the reader.

1.01.04.00 Manual Organization

Chapters, sections and subsections are identified by a decimal numbering system to facilitate referencing chapter and section headings in bold print. Quoted text of any referenced law, statute, or regulation is shown in bold italicized print. Abbreviations and acronyms are used wherever possible. A list of all current forms and exhibits immediately follow the chapter sections to which they relate.

This manual is organized along R/W’s normal project delivery workflow as much as possible. The first chapters deal with planning, financing, and federalization of R/W activities. The manual then proceeds through the project development process, from initial estimates to final project closeout. Some activities are accomplished after construction of a project, for example, Airspace leasing and disposal of Excess Land. R/W activities not directly related to the Department’s project delivery are covered in the last chapters.

1.01.05.00 Forms and Exhibits

Use of a given form or exhibit is mandatory for its stated purpose (unless stated as optional).

- Forms are available online at http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/row/rowman/forms/index.htm
- Exhibits are available online at http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/row/rowman/exhibits/index.htm

As Forms and Exhibits are not located within the R/W Manual, please visit the websites above to ensure you are using the most current version of a Form/Exhibit.

1.01.06.00 Revisions


The R/W Manual is published each January. In order to accommodate statewide review and allow for comment incorporation and publishing time, deadlines for new content in the next publication of the R/W Manual are on the following schedule:

**Publication Deadlines for Next R/W Manual (1/2020)**

- 10/25/2019 – last date Authors can submit approved drafts to Publications Manager for review
- 10/28/2019-11/15/2019 – last available statewide review period
- 11/18/2019 – 11/20/2019 – all review comments compiled and submitted to Author
- 11/21/2019-12/12/2019 – Author’s incorporation of review comments, final edit/review period
- 12/12/2019 – final approved edits due to Publications Manager
- 12/13/2019-12/31/2019 – incorporation of all final edits for publication
- 1/2/2020 – publication date

1.01 - 2 (REV 1/2019)
When immediate revisions are required, Right of Way Manual Directives (RWMDs) are published. These interim policy memos are posted online at [http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/row/rowman/revision/index.htm](http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/row/rowman/revision/index.htm). RWMDs will serve as the official policy for that revised item until incorporation into the next manual publication.

1.01.07.00 **Accessing the Manual**


Subscribe to the Right of Way Manual Updates email list to receive direct email alerts for all revision information, including interim policy updates, updated forms and exhibits, etc. The email subscription sign-up is located at [http://dot.ca.gov/hq/row/rowman/manual/](http://dot.ca.gov/hq/row/rowman/manual/).