

The mission of the **Governor M. Jodi Rell Center for Public Service at the University of Hartford** is to provide a community and academic forum for the discussion of:

ethics in government
the importance of civil discourse in politics, and
citizen involvement in public service and government

The Center also seeks to encourage students and others to pursue careers in public service and to assist in providing a clearinghouse for student public service internships.

Learn more at
<https://hartford.edu/rell>

This is an initiative of the Governor M. Jodi Rell Center for Public Service at the University of Hartford in partnership with the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education (CABE), Connecticut Conference of Municipalities (CCM), Connecticut Council of Small Towns (COST) and through support from the State of Connecticut



Use this QR code to download free digital copies in letter or poster form from our website.

Please feel free to use, share, and copy!

Dear friends,

With so much anger and frustration being displayed everywhere these days, I thought a gentle reminder of how we can all contribute to more civility would be helpful. People know how to be civil, but sometimes in the heat of the moment we forget. We can all contribute to maintaining respectful dialogue while working towards building a better Connecticut. Remembering to maintain a respectful dialogue can go a long way to finding the right solutions for community concerns.

This brochure and the poster version that can be found online are intended for widespread distribution. Feel free to display the posters in meeting rooms and copy and distribute the brochures to committees, boards, and to the public as you wish.

Our goal is to foster environments where discussion –guided by courtesy, curiosity of thought, and understanding— flourishes. Please help us spread the message of civility far and wide.

With warm regards,

former Governor of Connecticut

Sources
Bridging Divides Initiative, Princeton University (2024). Elevating De-Escalation and Community Safety Approaches. Accessed from the web: <https://bridgingdivides.princeton.edu/policy-response/elevating-de-escalation-and-community-safety-approaches>
Ceres, California (2024). Civility Code. Accessed from the web: https://library.municode.com/ca/ceres/codes/municipal_code?nodeId=TIT2ADPE_CH17CICO
City of Manhattan Beach, California (2019) Civility Policy. Accessed from the web: <https://www.manhattanbeach.gov/government/city-council/city-council-rules-of-decorum-and-civility-policy/#:~:text=The%20Civility%20Policy%20promotes%20mutual%20employees%20re%20from%20disruptions>
City of Manhattan Beach, California (2019) Rules of Decorum. Accessed from the web: <https://www.manhattanbeach.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/40752/63705097595570000>
Ellington Boards of Education, Finance, and Selectmen (2024). Seeds of Civility. Accessed from the web: <https://www.ellingtonpublicschools.org/seeds-of-civility>
Institute for Local Government (2011). Tips for Promoting Civility in Public Meetings. Accessed from the web: www.ca-ilg.org
Orientation Materials New Hampshire Municipal Association (2024) Choosing Civility. Accessed from the web: <https://www.nhmunipal.org/town-city-article/choosing-civility-twenty-five-rules-considerate-conduct>
San Carlos, California (2024). Rules of Decorum and Civility at Public Meetings. Accessed from the web: [https://cms3.revize.com/revize/sancarlos/Rules of Decorum and Civility at Public Meetings.pdf](https://cms3.revize.com/revize/sancarlos/Rules%20of%20Decorum%20and%20Civility%20at%20Public%20Meetings.pdf)
Sandpoint, Idaho (2024) Rules of Civility. Accessed from the web: https://codelibrary.amlegal.com/codes/sandpoint/latest/sandpoint_id/0-0-0-225

KEEP IT CIVIL!

KEY STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS IN PUBLIC MEETINGS

KEEP IT CIVIL!

KEY STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS IN PUBLIC MEETINGS

Listen Attentively

Listen and seek to understand someone else's point of view.

Assume positive Intent

Assume others have an interest in the greater good.

Consider how your behavior seems to others

Being passionate is a good thing. Intimidation, threats, insults, shouting, or using offensive language erode civility in public meetings.

Stay focused on the issues at hand

Avoid personalizing issues or using personal attacks when you disagree.

Be courteous

Treat everyone respectfully, even those you disagree with.

Make room for respectful disagreements

Foster respectful disagreements. Dissent is a democratic right.

Share your perspectives thoughtfully

Respect the time allotted to all members of the public and to meeting leaders.

