Purpose of the Rules

1. The aim of these Rules is to establish standards of ethical conduct that should be followed by the LG bodies during the performance of their daily duties, in order to restore the declining public confidence.

2. These Rules should not be viewed as a separate document, but as an integral part of political process, administrative procedures or internal procedures regulating the LG activities, highlighting the need to ensure the ethical aspect of the LG activity and make it a government function.

3. These Rules constitute a set of provisions, with the LG expressing its commitments towards the values contained in them.

Justification

1. In the context of the improvement of the LG Self-Government system, the framework of the activities of LG bodies (community council, community head, community servants, people occupying discretionary positions) expands: the society expresses increasingly higher demands towards the quality of their work.

2. In the context of the state implemented decentralization policy, the LG bodies undertake new powers and functions that are necessary to fulfill with scarce resources, by ensuring the participatory decision-making and applying different formats of public-private partnerships.

3. It is not possible to ensure a real wide-ranging civil participation in the local government without strengthening public confidence in LG bodies, and ensuring accountability, transparency and good governance in their work.

4. These Rules derive from the spirit of the LG governing legislation (RA Constitution, European Charter of Local Self-Government, Law on the Local Government, RA Law on Community service, etc.). However, some issues relating to the sphere of ethics and conduct are either not regulated by the law or the present regulations are in need of additional details.

5. The adoption of these rules creates a counterbalance against the abuse or arbitrary use of powers, dishonest behaviour and misuse of the discretionary right on the local self-governance level.

6. These rules are aimed to promote anti-corruption measures in Armenia on the local level, especially considering not only individual manifestations of corruption, but also viewing it as systemic flaw that should be prevented.

Rules

1. The LG bodies – community council, community head, community servant, discretionary officials (hereinafter: LG representatives) -- shall exercise their functions and powers solely in public interest and not in the interest of individual people, groups or for personal gain.

2. The LG representatives admit that their only function is to serve public --their employer, and try to continuously improve their knowledge and professional capacity in order to improve the quality of the provided services.

3. LG representative shall display an exemplary behaviour, refrain from bad behaviour. Constant friendly and educated attitude towards citizens are integral to the image of the LG representative.
4. LG representative shall **refrain from partial attitude**, which may raise questions about one's impartiality and undermine the confidence of citizen's towards LG.

5. LG representative shall **refrain from discriminatory behaviour** and be guided by the principles of equality and respect towards human rights.

6. Respecting the right of citizens to receive information, ensuring requirement to perform a transparent and accountable work, LG representative shall **refrain from the unauthorised disclosure of information** accessed by him/her, deriving from individual or any group interest.

7. LG representative shall **refrain from conflict of interests**, when the individual interest of the LG representative is given prevalence over the professional or public interest. When assuming the office or being elected the LG representative shall declare his/her interests.

8. When laying down one's powers or resigning from one's post, the LG representative shall not use the information and connections acquired in one's former office in order to ensure **privileges or benefits** in one's new office.

9. In the cases, when locally elected LG representative has personal, material, monetary or other direct interest in the issue being voted for, then the representative shall inform about this to the LG, **shall not participate** in the discussions and **voting on** that issue, in order to avoid any conflict of interest.

10. LG representative shall be attentive to the **restriction of holding two or more offices**. In particular, LG representatives cannot have functions that suggest supervision over each other.

11. When making decisions the LG representative shall not be guided only by the letter of the law, but also by the general idea and spirit of the law. In this regard, during the adoption of each decision the LG representative shall take into account the ethical aspect of his/her decision. For example, if the decision can harm anyone or any group, if the given issue is economically appropriate, if the decision is based on complete information, which version of the decision does take into account the interests of all the stakeholders, which version can lead to contentment, etc.

**Application**

1. These Rules are a guideline, and can be amended or localised by LG bodies, after which they shall be adopted in the community council meeting.

2. Being elected or assuming one's office the LG representative gets acquainted with these rules and signs a respective form that is attached to one's personal file.

3. The LG body forms an Ethics Commission that is comprised of LG officials and well-known citizens of the community. The Commission shall supervise the performance of the rules, monitor the reports and cases on the breach of these rules, take the note of the declarations concerning the conflict of interests of the LG representative and establish and apply penalties applicable in case of the breach of these rules.

4. The rules are open and accessible for the public.