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iml.org/civility

SUGGESTED IDEAS FOR INCORPORATING THE CIVILITY PLEDGE:

- Have all elected and appointed officials individually sign the pledge.
- Have all members of the council or board sign the pledge together.
- Post the pledge at municipal buildings.
- State the pledge after the Pledge of Allegiance at public meetings.

*More information and materials to help municipalities
incorporate the civility pledge can be found
at iml.org/civility*

Civility Pledge

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Aldersperson/Trustee/Councilman

Aldersperson/Trustee/Councilman

Aldersperson/Trustee/Councilman

Mayor/Village President/Town President

City/Village/Town Clerk

Date





Civility

BY ILLINOIS MUNICIPAL LEAGUE PUBLIC AFFAIRS STAFF

CIVILITY PLEDGE

For decades, politics and government at all levels have experienced their fair share of division, and we have witnessed individuals on opposite ends of the political spectrum disagree with or dislike individuals on the other side. We have observed the discord and conflict among state and local officials during meetings, and we have seen a rising number of physical encounters erupting across the nation.

With political divisions deepening, there are growing calls for more civility. Therefore, the conversation must shift to how we begin to turn around this trend that often ends in hostility. The Illinois Municipal League (IML) is taking a first step by providing all 1,295 cities, villages and towns with an opportunity to usher in an era of political civility.

IML is proud to introduce a Civility Pledge, which can assist local officials as they focus on bettering their communities. IML encourages all elected and appointed officials to sign the Civility Pledge. The pledge has four parts that explain how individuals can work together to do what is best for the municipality.

The first and second parts of the pledge are listening to and respecting others. Listening is a great communication tool that

allows others to know that you respect their viewpoints, even if you don't agree with them. While you might not agree with their thoughts, it is appropriate to practice civility towards those individuals.

The third and fourth parts are remembering that everyone involved is held equally responsible and accountable for improving their community and developing different ideas that will accomplish that task. Elected and appointed officials are encouraged to foster and build relationships with each other while finding solutions for the betterment of their municipality.

Everyone is on the same team, even with differing political opinions, striving to accomplish the broad objective of making a community better. This pledge is meant to ensure that communication remains open, honest and transparent. It aims to cultivate trust through building positive and productive relationships.

President Abraham Lincoln closed his first Inaugural Address by saying, "We are not enemies, but friends. We must not be enemies. Though passion may have strained, it must not break our bonds of affection." Those words still ring true today, and now is the time for local officials in communities across Illinois to lead the charge in promoting and improving civility.