

CASE # 2025-3

Complaint Form

(Please print or type)
(Additional pages may be added)

City of Santa Fe
Ethics & Campaign Review Board


Date: 10/28/2025

1. Name of person and/or group charged with alleged violation. City Councilor Alma Castro
2. Please explain briefly the nature of the alleged violation. See attached.
3. Please state which specific provision(s) or part(s) of the Code of Ethics or Election Code you believe have been violated. See attached.
4. Please state the facts you have regarding the violations, including:
 the date(s) 10/14/2025
 the time(s) Specific time is unknown.
 the place(s) Facebook
 people involved City Councilor Alma Castro, Pat Feghali
 other facts _____
5. Are there any witnesses to the violation who are willing to confirm your charge?
Please list with addresses, phone numbers and what they know. _____
6. Attach documentation of actual evidence you have to support your complaint, to this form.
7. What is your name? Suzanne Romero
8. Address? 210 MAYNARD ST, SANTA FE, NM Zip Code 87501
9. Telephone Number? (505) 239-3275 Work: _____
10. Email Address? sfsuz1@yahoo.com

Received on: October 28, 2025
 By: [Signature]
 City Clerks Office

To the best of my knowledge, the above statements are true and complete.
[Signature]
 Signature

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 28th day of October 2025

(Seal)  **XAVIER I VIGIL**
 Notary Public
 State of New Mexico
 Comm. # 1132968
 My Comm. Exp. Mar 25, 2029

[Signature]
 Notary Public

ETHICS COMPLAINT

Submitted to: Ethics and Campaign Review Board

Re: Councilor Alma Castro – Violation of Santa Fe Code of Ethics

Submitted by: Suzanne Romero

Date: 10/28/2025

I. Introduction

Pursuant to Section 1-7 SFCC 1987 (“Code of Ethics”), I, Suzanne Romero, a resident of the City of Santa Fe, hereby submit this formal ethics complaint against Councilor Alma Castro, elected representative for District One, for conduct that appears to violate multiple provisions of the City’s ethics rules. This conduct centers on her public use of an official-appearing Facebook platform to engage in political activity, specifically endorsing a candidate for Santa Fe City Council.

II. Alleged Conduct

On or about October 14, 2025, Councilor Alma Castro published a post endorsing candidate Pat Feghali for Santa Fe City Council, District 1. This endorsement appeared on a Facebook page where Councilor Castro:

- - Identifies herself as “City Councilor for District One”
- - Lists her position as part of the “Governing Body at City of Santa Fe”
- - Displays the official Santa Fe crest or shield in her profile header
- - Routinely uses the page to communicate with the public in her official capacity

Despite public objection and concern that such an endorsement creates the appearance of a city-sanctioned action, Councilor Castro replied that it was “just my socials”—yet she did not dispute the page’s visual and representational links to her governmental role.

III. Violations of the Code of Ethics

1. Improper Political Campaigning – Section 1-7.7(H)

“A public official or public employee shall not engage in political campaigning while on duty for the city, or use city funds, supplies, vehicles or facilities to benefit or assist a political campaign.”

Councilor Castro's public endorsement occurred via a page closely tied to her official government role, as evidenced by its branding, official city language, and continued use for constituent updates. As such, her political endorsement constitutes campaigning while using city-associated resources and persona, which is expressly prohibited.

2. Misuse of City Resources – Section 1-7.7(E)

"A public official or public employee shall not use city services, personnel or equipment for personal benefit, convenience or profit, except when such use is generally available to the public."

Though Councilor Castro may claim the Facebook account is personal, the consistent use of city-identifying markers, including the official Santa Fe crest or shield, and references to her council position transform the account into a functional extension of her office. This violates restrictions on using city-associated resources for personal or political gain.

3. Undermining Public Trust – Sections 1-7.2 and 1-7.3(B)-(C)

These provisions emphasize that city officials must operate with impartiality and ensure their actions do not erode public confidence in the government's integrity.

Councilor Castro's actions blur the line between official city messaging and personal political opinion, fostering confusion among constituents. This concern is reflected in public comments, such as:

"By utilizing the City Shield, you are misleading the public into believing you are endorsing from a public page. Presentation is everything. Trust is everything."

IV. Supporting Evidence

1. Screenshot of the October 14, 2025 endorsement post from Councilor Castro's Facebook page, which includes her amplification of a post endorsing Pat Feghali.

2. Visual evidence of the Facebook profile, including:

- - Official title: "City Councilor for District One"
- - Affiliation: "Governing Body at City of Santa Fe"
- - Display of the official Santa Fe crest or shield in the profile header

3. Public comment threads, including my own statements, which document concern from members of the public regarding the appearance of impropriety and misuse of office.

4. Councilor Castro's public response, in which she asserts it is "just my socials," yet continues to use that page in a manner consistent with official communications.

V. Requested Remedies

I respectfully request that the Ethics and Campaign Review Board:

1. 1. Open a formal investigation into this conduct.
2. 2. Issue a public finding that confirms this conduct violates the Code of Ethics.
3. 3. Provide clear guidance on the use of official titles and imagery in digital platforms.
4. 4. Recommend any appropriate sanctions, censure, or corrective action to prevent recurrence.

VI. Conclusion

Councilor Alma Castro's use of her official image, title, and the Santa Fe crest to endorse a political candidate is a clear violation of the ethical standards applicable to public officials. Even if technically made from a private account, the branding and function of the account serve as an extension of her public office. This creates confusion, erodes public trust, and breaches the integrity expected of elected officials.

Respectfully submitted,

Suzanne Romero



49m

Alma Castro

3.4K friends

City Councilor for District One

 Friends

 Message



Posts

Photos

Reels

Details

 she/they

 governing body at **City of Santa Fe**

 Went to Santa Fe High

 Studied at **Oberlin College**

... See Alma's About Info



Alma Castro

Oct 14 · 🌐



Lead Locally · Follow

Oct 14 · 🌐

We are thrilled to endorse **Pat Feghali for Santa Fe City Council, District 1!**... See more



👍 Alma Castro + 14

5 comments 1 share

 Alma Castro + 14

1 share

most relevant ▾



Joseph Anaya · 1w

Sorry, voting for another that puts the people of Santa Fe first.

Reply



▾ View 1 reply



Suzanne Romero · 1d

Councilor-You have violated ethics of your role as City Councilor by endorsing a candidate on your City sponsored page. Ms. Feghali should also have been aware of this violation. Very disappointing.

Reply



Alma Castro · 1d

Suzanne Romero it's not a city sponsor page... it's just my socials 😊 but mostly I'm excited to know about this organization: **Lead Locally!!** How cool and thank you for the Interest in our little community ❤️❤️❤️

Reply



Suzanne Romero · 1d

Councilor, by utilizing the City Shield, you are misleading the public into believing you are endorsing from a public page. Presentation is everything. Trust is everything. This endorsement for Feghali is misleading and makes me and my friends and family comfortable that we did not rank her. It just seems like more sneaky from City Hall.

Reply

