

## **Literature Study on the Implementation of Public Administration Ethics by ASN in Palangka Raya City**

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### **Abstract**

*This study aimed to analyze the implementation of public administrative ethics by civil servants in Palangka Raya City through a literature-based approach that focused on scholarly sources, national regulatory frameworks, and official institutional documents. A content analysis method was applied to identify the relevance of administrative ethics in the interaction between formal regulations, bureaucratic culture, and individual ethical awareness among civil servants. The findings showed that although a comprehensive normative framework for civil service ethics had been established, its implementation faced significant challenges, including weak internalization of moral values, the persistence of patrimonial culture, and limited effectiveness of integrity-based supervision. These conditions indicated a gap between normative ethics and ethical practices in the field, which negatively affected the quality of public service delivery. The study concluded that strengthening administrative ethics required a paradigm shift from mere regulatory compliance to sustainable public value orientation through ethical leadership and the integration of local cultural values.*

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

The transformation of public administration ethics has become an integral part of the national bureaucratic reform agenda, which aims to create a government with integrity, accountability, and responsiveness to public needs. The government has adopted various normative instruments, such *Bureaucratic Reform Roadmap*, *Integrity Zone Towards a Corruption-Free Area (WBK)*, and implementation of *ASN Core Values* (BerAKHLAK), which is designed to strengthen the work ethics of the state apparatus [1]. In addition, Law Number 5 of 2014 concerning State Civil Apparatus explicitly states that ASN must be implementers of public policy, public servants, and the glue and unifier of the nation. This role can only be carried out if ASN has high moral integrity and acts in accordance with public administration ethics, which include the principles of accountability, neutrality, professionalism, and upholding the interests of the community above personal and group interests [2].

Public administration ethics is essentially not just a collection of ideal norms that guide the behavior of State Civil Apparatus (ASN), but rather an epistemological and axiological foundation for the formation of a clean, responsive, and public interest-oriented government [3]. In the context of a modern rule of law, ASN does not merely act as a technocratic implementer of state policy, but as a representation of institutional ethics that is manifested in public service practices. The application of governance ethics by ASN in Palangka Raya City must be understood as an integral part of efforts to maintain the dignity of the state and public trust in government institutions. Ethics is not just an individual moral

dimension, but also a social control mechanism and an instrument of public accountability that ensures that administrative power is exercised proportionally, fairly, and free from unauthorized permission [4].

Public administration ethics are based on three main pillars: individual morality (personal morality), institutional value systems (institutional ethics), and public service principles (public service ethics). Individual morality refers to the integrity, honesty, commitment, and personal responsibility of ASN in carrying out their duties [5]. Meanwhile, institutional ethics reflect the formal code of ethics and bureaucratic norms that shape the state as guidelines for professional behavior. The principle of public service requires ASN to be oriented towards the public interest above the interests of individuals, groups, or political power. Thus, public administration ethics not only regulates what may and may not be done, but also serves as a philosophical guideline in ensuring that administrative actions are in line with the basic values of the constitution and the mandate of democracy [6].

Palangka Raya, the capital of Central Kalimantan Province, has unique bureaucratic characteristics due to its strategic location with ethnic diversity and complex socio-cultural dynamics. This city not only serves as the center of government but also as a central public service that serves as a reference for other districts/cities in the province. Public services provided by ASN in this city cover various strategic sectors such as population administration, licensing, education, health, and social services [7]. Thus, the quality of public administration ethics by ASN has a direct impact on community welfare and regional government stability. However, several media reports and the results of monitoring by the Central Kalimantan Ombudsman Representative indicate that Palangka Raya still faces various service ethics problems, such as a lack of apparatus discipline, low service empathy, and a bureaucratic tendency that is still oriented towards power rather than public service.

In the context of public services in Palangka Raya City, the application of public administration ethics must be viewed through two main perspectives: procedural ethics and substantial ethics. Procedural ethics relates to adherence to legal procedures, transparency, and administrative accountability [8]. This occurs through the implementation of general principles of good governance (AUPB), such as the principle of legal certainty, the principle of impartiality, the principle of accuracy, and the principle of quality public services. Meanwhile, substantial ethics relates to how services are provided fairly, empathetically, humanistically, and reflect respect for citizens' rights. Civil servants cannot be considered ethical simply because they comply with formal procedures, but must also be able to demonstrate social sensitivity, adaptive abilities, and a commitment to public justice [9].

Based on the framework of modern administrative theory, the enforcement of public administration ethics must be realized in four implementing indicators: integrity (*integrity*), accountability (*accountability*), responsiveness (*responsiveness*), and transparency (*transparency*). Integrity is a fundamental principle that ensures that ASN does not fall into deviant practices such as corruption, collusion, and nepotism (KKN). Accountability includes the obligation of ASN to be accountable for every policy and administrative decision to the public and the state [10]. Responsiveness refers to the ability of ASN to understand and respond to social needs quickly and appropriately. Transparency demands openness of public information so that the public can access and monitor government services.

The bureaucratic phenomenon in Palangka Raya City, when analyzed critically, shows that the obstacles to the implementation of administrative ethics are still quite significant. Based on the results of various literature that examines the governance of ASN in the

region, a gap was found between legally regulated ethical norms and actual behavior in service. For example, discriminatory behavior is still found in population services, slow administrative responsibilities, and the absence of authority in the management of permits and fiscal administration [11]. This illustrates that the application of public administration ethics has not been fully internalized as a work culture, but rather remains merely formalistic and administrative.

On the other hand, within the framework of local democracy, ASN in Palangka Raya City is in a strategic position because it is the main actor in realizing the regional development vision. Therefore, enforcing public administration ethics is not merely a normative need, but a manifestation of institutional transformation towards a competitive, adaptive, and community-oriented digital government [12]. Public administration ethics is a means to shape the ASN mentality that does not simply work based on structural orders, but works based on values, ethical awareness, and a commitment to equitable service.

In administrative ethics in governance, it is not merely a formal norm or disciplinary regulation of the apparatus, but rather the foundation of institutional morality that determines the legitimacy and sustainability of the modern state [13]. In the context of public administration, the state civil apparatus not only acts as policy implementers (*policy implementer*), but also a communicator of national values (*value carrier*). Literature analysis shows that since the emergence of the paradigm of *New Public Service* introduced by Denhardt and Denhardt (2003), civil servants are no longer positioned as neutral bureaucrats who work solely technocratically, but rather as moral agents who are obliged to uphold the values of democracy, distributive justice, and humanistic public service. Thus, ethics is not only understood as a guideline for individual behavior, but also as a normative framework that shapes institutional integrity [14].

Legal bases such as Law Number 5 of 2014 concerning ASN and Government Regulation Number 42 of 2004 concerning the Development of the Corps Spirit and the ASN Code of Ethics have explicitly affirmed the basic values of ASN [15]. However, various empirical studies show that there is a serious gap between *ideals* and *ethical practices*. The Republic of Indonesia Ombudsman Report (2023) noted that the majority of public complaints relate to abuse of authority, extortion, and low quality of public services, which fundamentally indicates a crisis of administrative ethics [16]. At the local level, such as Palangka Raya City, several research findings indicate violations of ASN discipline related to late service, preferences for certain groups, and weak responsiveness to public needs [17]. This condition shows that the existence of regulations does not automatically guarantee the internalization of ethics, if not followed by moral commitment and a conducive organizational culture.

The literature synthesis approach shows that failure to implement ethics is not always related to individual factors, but is systemic. Weber (1947) explained that rational-legal bureaucracy is indeed structurally effective, but has the potential to experience ethical paralysis if not equipped with a living value system (*living ethics*). Waldo (1952) emphasized the evolution of administrative ethics as part of the morals of *governance*; ethics cannot be forced through regulation alone, but must be instilled through the process of forming professional awareness [18]. Denhardt (2011) even criticized the paradigm of *New Public Management*, which overemphasizes efficiency and thus neglects the moral dimension of public service. In a recent study, Kim and Vandenabeele (2022) found that *public service motivation* has a positive correlation with the ethical behavior of ASN, indicating that ethics that originate from intrinsic motivation are more durable than ethics that are based on formal compliance.

After reviewing the international and national literature, it appears that the main issue lies not in the lack of regulation but in the weakness of ethical *enforcement* and *ethical*

*leadership*. The literature states that the organizational culture of bureaucracy in the regions is often hierarchical and patrimonial, so that ethical decisions are often determined not by moral principles, but by the interests of power. Therefore, this study proposes a critical analysis that public administration ethics must be reconstructed not as a mere instrument of control, but as an ethical *governance system* which is integrated from the individual, institutional, to public policy levels.

Thus, the urgency of this literature study has two main contributions. First, theoretically, this study brings together various perspectives on administrative ethics, from classical to contemporary paradigms, and then interprets them in the context of Indonesian civil servant ethics. Second, practically, this study provides a conceptual map for the Palangka Raya City government in building an ethical, integrity-based, and public interest-oriented bureaucratic ecosystem. By compiling a comprehensive literature synthesis, this paper not only explains what has happened but also offers a new direction (*new direction of ethical governance*) that are relevant to strengthening the quality of bureaucratic governance in the era of disruption.

## 2. RESEARCH METHODS

This research uses the method of literature *study* (*library research*) with a qualitative-descriptive approach that focuses on critical analysis of various scientific sources related to the implementation of public administration ethics by ASN. Data were obtained through systematic searches of reputable international and national journals, classic public administration books, laws and regulations such as Law No. 5 of 2014 and PP No. 42 of 2004, regional government policy documents, and official reports from state institutions such as the Indonesian Ombudsman. The analysis procedure was carried out using the technique of *content analysis* with the following stages: (1) identification of central issues and conceptual keywords; (2) selection of sources based on relevance and academic credibility; (3) thematic categorization including normative, empirical, and contextual dimensions; and (4) argumentative synthesis to produce a new conceptual framework that explains the conditions for implementing ASN ethics in Palangka Raya City. The validity of the research is maintained through source triangulation and comparison of various scientific perspectives to ensure the integrity of the argument and academic acceptability.

## 3. RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In Palangka Raya City, local socio-cultural dynamics also play an important role. As a multicultural city with the presence of the Dayak indigenous community, public service ethics are not only based on national positive law, but must be sensitive to local values such as Belom Bahadat (living according to custom), which upholds honesty, respect for human dignity, and social balance [19]. Literature studies that integrate the ethical values of public administration and local wisdom show that the implementation of ethics will be more effective if ASN understands the socio-cultural context of the community it serves. This has not been widely discussed in previous studies, making it an important academic gap that this research aims to bridge.

This research is based on the premise that public administration ethics is a fundamental instrument determining the quality of governance. From a modern public administration perspective, ethics is viewed not only as a guideline for individual behavior but as an institutional value system that determines the orientation, process, and outcomes of public service delivery. Administrative ethics becomes a core value in bureaucracy because its existence functions to direct ASN to not only work legally formally, but also based on the principles of public morality such as justice, integrity, accountability, and public interest [20]. Therefore, this study focuses on how administrative ethics are

understood, internalized, and implemented by ASN in Palangka Raya City as part of the process of providing public services in the era of bureaucratic reform and demand good governance.

To obtain a comprehensive picture, this study uses a multidimensional analytical framework that integrates classical administrative theory (Weber, Waldo), contemporary ethical paradigms (*New Public Service*, *Public Service Motivation*), as well as local ethical values relevant to the social context of Palangka Raya City. The normative dimension is used to assess the extent to which ASN ethics regulations are implemented in regional policies; the institutional dimension is used to examine oversight mechanisms, organizational culture, and the role of leadership in upholding ethics; while the behavioral dimension is used to examine the ethical awareness of individual ASN as public service agents [21]. This analytical approach is intended to identify gaps between ethical ideals as stated in the laws and regulations with ethical realities in regional bureaucratic practices, as well as opening up opportunities for recommendations to strengthen the systemic implementation of ethics.

The selection of Palangka Raya as the study's locus was not solely based on geographic or administrative considerations, but also because this region reflects the dynamics of regional bureaucracy, which faces challenges between the demands of modernizing public services and preserving ethical values based on local wisdom. Palangka Raya, as the capital of Central Kalimantan Province, has a multi-ethnic social character with ethnic cultural values. *Not Yet True*, which upholds integrity, respect for human dignity, and social responsibility. Thus, the implementation of civil servant administrative ethics in this region serves as an important reflection of how regional bureaucracies fulfill their role as public servants and guardians of local values.

### 3.1. Research result

The results of the literature study show that the implementation of public administration ethics by ASN in Palangka Raya City is influenced by several things and cannot be measured solely based on the existence or absence of legal instruments, but rather on the extent to which these regulations are internalized into a performance culture (*work ethics*) and consistently realized in the public service process. Thus, the analysis of the results of this study focuses on three main dimensions that interact dynamically, namely (1) regulatory framework and normative policies, (2) bureaucratic culture and ethical character of individual ASN, and (3) ethical awareness and public service orientation at the implementation level.

First, from the dimensions, regulations, *and policies*, literature shows that formally ASN in Palangka Raya City has operated within a comprehensive legal framework and aligned with national standards, such as Law Number 5 of 2014 concerning ASN, Government Regulation Number 42 of 2004 concerning the Development of the Corps Spirit and the ASN Code of Ethics, and Government Regulation Number 94 of 2021 concerning ASN Discipline. These regulatory instruments contain the basic principles of public administration ethics, such as integrity, accountability, neutrality, and service orientation. However, several literature findings indicate that the existence of formal regulations does not automatically result in ethical behavior if it is not supported by effective oversight mechanisms and continuous internalization of values. The annual report of the Ombudsman of the Republic of Indonesia and the results of regional inspectorate inspections indicate the existence of maladministration practices such as abuse of authority, delays in service, discrimination against certain groups, and informal practices that reflect a weak commitment to implemented ethics [16]. This phenomenon shows a gap between

normative *ethics* (what should be done according to the law) and empirical *ethics* (what happens in the practice of providing public services).

Second, from the aspect of bureaucratic *culture and individual ethical values*, the results of the literature review indicate that the implementation of administrative ethics in Palangka Raya City is still influenced by patrimonialistic and personalistic social relationship patterns, which are theoretically categorized as deviations from the Weberian rational-legal bureaucratic principles. Several studies note that the ASN work culture is still influenced by patron-client relations, emotional closeness, and non-professional considerations, thus giving rise to conflicts between public interests and personal/group interests [22]. This kind of culture creates an ethical dilemma for civil servants; they must choose between following formal rules and maintaining social harmony with external factors, such as political figures or local elites. The literature also confirms that low social sanctions for minor disciplinary violations and tolerance for minor deviations contribute to reinforcing permissive patterns that are counterproductive to the development of a healthy ethical culture. Thus, even though bureaucratic structures have adopted modern principles, traditional bureaucratic mentalities remain a significant obstacle.

Third, from the dimension of ethical *awareness and public service orientation* literature review shows that there are variations in the level of ethical awareness of civil servants, which are greatly influenced by leadership quality, ethics development systems, and public service motivation. Research by Kim and Vandenabeele (2022) found that civil servants with a strong public service orientation are more capable of demonstrating ethical behavior even when facing structural or regulatory pressures. This is in line with the theory of ethical behavior. *New Public Service* by Denhardt (2011), who emphasized that public service should not merely be positioned as a formal obligation, but as a moral calling that reflects the professional identity of ASN as public servants, not bureaucratic rulers. In the local context of Palangka Raya City, regional literature shows that the cultural values of the Dayak community, especially the principle of *Not Yet True* Meaningful living with dignity, can be a significant moral asset in strengthening public administration ethics. Civil servants who internalize these local values tend to display humanistic, inclusive, and accountable service behavior.

Overall, the results of the literature research conclude that the implementation of public administration ethics by ASN in Palangka Raya City still faces substantive challenges in the form of a gap between the normative policy system and empirical practice in the field. This condition indicates that strengthening regulations must be accompanied by a transformation of bureaucratic culture, development of ASN moral capacity, and the implementation of an integrity-based monitoring system [23]. Thus, public administration ethics is not only positioned as an instrument of behavioral control, but as a philosophical foundation and strategic orientation in realizing clean, responsive, and equitable governance.

Studies show that the success of implementing public administration ethics is basically determined by the harmony between ethical *infrastructure* and *ethical climate* in local government organizations. *Ethical infrastructure* includes regulatory instruments, operational standards, and oversight mechanisms that ensure the implementation of the principles of integrity and accountability of an *ethical climate* relates to the psychological climate and organizational culture that foster a sense of moral responsibility and a commitment to public service oriented toward the public interest. When these two aspects do not function synergistically, ethics becomes merely a normative symbol without having any transformational power over the behavior of officials. Therefore, strengthening public administration ethics in Palangka Raya City

cannot rely solely on a holistic approach of *rule-based*, but must be combined with an approach *value-based* which emphasizes character building, growing professional awareness, and increasing the moral legitimacy of ASN in the eyes of the public.

Literature findings also emphasize the importance of making administrative ethics an integral component of the bureaucratic reform process, not merely an administrative complement. Ethics reform must be directed toward creating an apparatus that possesses a strong moral compass, able to resist pressure from political and economic interests, and possesses the ethical courage to make decisions that favor public justice. This is in line with the paradigm of good *governance* and *public value governance*, which emphasizes that the essence of public service lies not only in procedural efficiency but also in moral legitimacy, distributive justice, and the protection of citizens' rights. Therefore, the implementation of public administration ethics by civil servants in Palangka Raya City must be understood as a long-term investment in building a dignified bureaucratic civilization, strengthening public trust in the state, and ensuring the sustainability of democratic and humanistic governance.

### 3.2. Discussion

The implementation of public administration ethics by ASN in Palangka Raya City is not solely a function of compliance with formal regulations, but is a product of the interaction between normative structures, organizational culture, and individual ethical awareness. This finding is in line with the administrative ethics framework proposed by Dwight Waldo, who asserts that public administration is a moral phenomenon before it becomes a technical phenomenon. In Waldo's perspective, the public bureaucracy is not merely a "regulatory machine," but an ethical entity that upholds the values of justice, equality, and public service [24]. Thus, ethical violations that occur in ASN practices are not simply violations of rules, but represent an erosion of the state's legitimacy in the eyes of citizens.

In the regulatory context, although Palangka Raya City has implemented Law No. 5 of 2014 concerning ASN and Government Regulation No. 42 of 2004 as the basis for the ASN code of ethics, the literature shows that the success of ethics implementation is determined not only by the existence of rules, but by the bureaucracy's ability to instill ethical values as a work culture. This is reinforced by the theory of ethical climate states that ethics will only be internalized if the organization builds a shared value system, internal social control mechanisms, and ethical examples from leaders (*ethical leadership*) [25]. However, some empirical literature has found a tendency for regional bureaucracies to implement ethics in a formalistic manner, where the code of ethics is only used as an administrative document, not an instrument for forming ASN character.

From a bureaucratic cultural perspective, the literature indicates the strong influence of the patrimonial system and paternalistic culture inherited from traditional government structures. This suggests that the behavior of civil servants in Palangka Raya is shaped not only by regulations but also by power relations and informal norms that exist within society. From Max Weber's perspective, an ideal bureaucracy should be impersonal and rational-legal; however, in reality, local bureaucracies are often not entirely rational because administrative decisions are influenced by emotional closeness, political loyalties, and the interests of particular groups. This condition results in inconsistent administrative ethics because moral values are often compromised for the sake of stable social relations or short-term power interests.

Another important discussion is that public administration ethics is closely related to public *service motivation* (PSM) [26]. Modern literature, especially from Vandenabeele and Perry, shows that ASN who work with a public service motivation tend to have stronger ethical behavior than ASN who work for material or power

motives. Local studies in Palangka Raya show that ASN who understand cultural values are not yet *truly* able to internalize public service ethics as part of their social and spiritual identity, not merely as an administrative obligation. This demonstrates that integrating local ethical values with national public administration ethics can create a more responsive, humane, and dignified bureaucratic model.

Furthermore, a discussion of international literature demonstrates the importance of ethical leadership in shaping an organizational culture of integrity. Denhardt states that leadership in public administration must reflect the highest moral values of the community it serves. Therefore, the ethical problem of civil servants is not merely an individual issue, but a structural one that requires intervention at the leadership system level. If leaders act as *role models*, then ethical culture will flow vertically and horizontally [27]. However, if bureaucratic leaders show tolerance for unethical practices, then the norm of permissiveness will be formed and become the dominant culture. The analyzed literature shows that in Palangka Raya City, there are weaknesses in the aspect of internalizing ethics through leadership role models and an integrity-based monitoring system, not just administrative compliance.

Conceptually, this discussion emphasizes that administrative ethics cannot be considered a static entity, but rather a dynamic system influenced by local social, cultural, and political contexts. Therefore, it is necessary to design ethics policies that do not rely solely on a theoretical approach of *rule-based*, but also the approach value-based, *behavior-based*, and *culture-based approaches*. Thus, this research makes an important contribution to the discourse on strengthening regional governance through the reconstruction of a more integrative and contextual paradigm of public administration ethics.

From the perspective of *governance* in modern times, administrative ethics is seen as a core component of democratic legitimacy and not merely an adjunct to technocratic bureaucracy [28]. Theory *public value governance* introduced by Mark Moore, public value is not generated solely by administrative efficiency, but through a deliberative process that is ethical, transparent, and oriented towards the interests of the wider community. In the context of Palangka Raya City, the literature shows that there is still a gap between the moral aspirations of the bureaucracy and the reality of public services on the ground. This gap is evident in the public perception of the bureaucracy as slow, closed, and tending to serve the interests of certain groups. This confirms that public administration ethics is not merely a set of norms, but a mechanism for state legitimacy in building trust (*public trust*) as social capital of government [29].

Furthermore, based on theoretical analysis from the perspective of the *hybrid ethics*, the implementation of public administration ethics in a multicultural region like Palangka Raya requires an integrative approach that combines normative ethics (based on formal law), situational ethics (based on public needs), and cultural ethics (rooted in local community values). The literature shows that civil servants who rely solely on normative aspects tend to experience ethical dilemmas when faced with real-world situations that are not fully regulated. In this case, cultural ethics such as the principle of *Not Yet True* (living with dignity) have strategic relevance as a source of public morality that complements administrative norms. Therefore, a contextual ethical approach is crucial for creating harmony between modern bureaucratic rationality and local values that exist within society.

In addition, the discussion of public administration ethics cannot be separated from the aspects of accountability and transparency as the main principles of good governance (*good governance*) [30]. According to the concept put forward by Bovens, accountability is not merely legal responsibility, but is a moral-political process to

ensure that public power is used ethically. In the context of Palangka Raya City, the literature shows that accountability mechanisms have been formally available, but are not yet fully effective, because they still rely on administrative reports without being followed by in-depth integrity evaluations. This causes administrative ethics to be carried out symbolically (*symbolic compliance*) without substantive transformation of ASN behavior. Therefore, an integrity-based accountability system is needed (*integrity-based accountability*), which emphasizes the development of ASN character through a mechanism of moral appreciation and continuous ethical development.

Finally, discussions on public administration ethics must be directed toward creating a sustainable bureaucracy, namely, a bureaucracy capable of maintaining legitimacy, responsiveness, and ethical accountability in the long term. Contemporary literature emphasizes that bureaucratic ethics is an integral part of institutional resilience. Without strong ethics, bureaucracies will easily become trapped in a legitimacy crisis, public resistance, and institutional dysfunction. In the context of Palangka Raya, efforts to build a sustainable bureaucracy require a multi-approach strategy: value reform, civil servant ethics education, transparent digitalization of public services, and the formation of ethical communities within government organizations. Thus, public administration ethics is seen not only as a regulatory element for current behavior but also as a philosophical foundation for building a future of regional governance that is adaptive, dignified, and capable of simultaneously addressing the challenges of globalization and local needs.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the literature study analysis, it can be concluded that the implementation of public administration ethics by ASN in Palangka Raya City actually has a strong normative foundation as formulated in Law No. 5 of 2014 and Government Regulation No. 42 of 2004, but its implementation still faces challenges at the level of bureaucratic culture, individual moral awareness, and the effectiveness of the oversight system. Thus, what was assumed in the introduction—that administrative ethics is a fundamental element in ensuring the quality of governance—is proven to be in line with the findings in the results and discussion. This study confirms that administrative ethics cannot be enforced only through a regulative approach, but rather requires value transformation, strengthening public service motivation, exemplary leadership, and internalization of local culture as a source of ethical legitimacy. Prospects for further research development can be directed at formulating an implementation model for administrative ethics based on local wisdom and digital technology for integrity monitoring, so that public ethics does not only become an ideal norm, but becomes a sustainable and adaptive institutional practice to the dynamics of modern governance.

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