

CODE OF CONDUCT AND CONFLICT OF INTEREST

(FOR STAFF & CONSULTANTS)

PURPOSE

To provide the Centre for Land Conservation (CLC) Staff and Consultants with policy and guidance for corporate behaviour that support and uphold generally accepted professional standards in order to:

- Promote integrity and excellence of the CLC in all its work with the public and other stakeholders including clients, funders, partners, and governments at all levels;
- Achieve the desired results for the CLC;
- Maintain a professional, effective, efficient and collaborative work environment.

The Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest policy in this document are intended to promote and support CLC Board Directors and Volunteers in the pursuit of excellence.

SCOPE

All Staff & Consultants will annually acknowledge that they have read, understood and commit to follow this Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest Policy. When employed or contracted by the CLC, Staff and Consultants shall acknowledge that they have read and understand this policy and shall declare any potential or perceived conflict of interest.

Standards of excellence include accountability, due diligence, adherence to governing policies, following of best practices, effective programs, managing risk, fair treatment, inclusive values, openness and transparency. As a registered charity, the CLC must also ensure standards of conduct and accounting are practiced in fulfilling its objects and responsibilities.

CODE OF CONDUCT

The conduct of CLC Staff and Consultants is expected to be generally consistent with this code for behaviour. To build and enhance quality in professionalism, all CLC Staff and Consultants will strive to:

- Act in good faith, honestly and with integrity;
- Exercise due diligence in considering issues and questions for judgement in an unbiased manner independent of personal interests;
- Engage in open and transparent business dealings and in communications that reflect general fairness, courtesy and respect for stakeholders and each other;
- Respect and understand the opinions and beliefs of others, even where such opinions and beliefs may be different from their own perspective;

- Take personal responsibility for their actions and decisions and follow through on their commitments to contribute as part of the organization;
- Ensure that public confidence and professional respect in the CLC are upheld and can bear close public scrutiny of corporate accountability;
- Maintain appropriate standards of confidentiality and avoid any real or perceived conflict of interest;
- Conduct themselves truthfully and professionally in accordance with their assigned duties and responsibilities;
- Ensure proper care and stewardship of financial assets and resources;
- Champion, support and implement decisions of the Board.

Anti-discrimination and anti-harassment

The CLC has a zero-tolerance policy with respect to discrimination and harassment.

Human rights are protected in Canada by Canada's Constitution and by federal, provincial and territorial legislation. Consistent with this framework, the CLC adheres to the principles of diversity, equity and inclusion in the conduct of its business and at all times will work to ensure its actions and activities are not discriminatory (i.e. based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, family status, disability or pardoned conviction).

Harassment is the improper conduct directed at and offensive to another individual and that is known or should be reasonably known to cause offence or harm. It comprises any objectionable act, comment or display that demeans, belittles, or causes personal humiliation or embarrassment, and any act of intimidation or threat. Harassment is the discriminatory behaviour, directed at an individual that is unwanted or unwelcome, causes substantial distress in that person and serves no legitimate purpose in the workplace.

See also [Human Rights Commitment](#), [Anti-harassment](#) and [Anti-violence Policies](#).

Implementation of this policy

Complaints should be made as soon as possible after an incident has occurred. To file a discrimination or harassment complaint, the individual should contact the Executive Director. Where the complaint relates to the Executive Director, the individual should contact the Board Chair. The complaint may be verbal or in writing. The Board Chair will record the details provided and begin an investigation. All complaints and investigation will be treated confidentially, to the extent possible, and information disclosed will be on a need-to-know basis.

See also, [Open Door Policy](#).

Confidentiality of information

The CLC has a legitimate interest in protecting from unauthorized disclosure of confidential information and technology which includes knowledge, records or data in any form (written, electronic or verbal). This includes, but is not limited to, project files, strategic plans, terms and conditions of contracts completed or under negotiation, donor information, employee salaries and software applications.

All information about CLC is proprietary. Inappropriate disclosure of this information could severely damage the interests of CLC. Staff and Consultants agree not to disclose, misuse or disseminate any such information to anyone outside CLC, except where such disclosure is necessary for the proper and bona fide execution of their duties, or where compelled to do so by law, without the prior written consent of CLC. Individuals are responsible for ensuring the privacy of confidential information and for exercising discretion in handling such information. The obligation not to disclose such information without written consent will continue to apply even after the individual is no longer an employee or consultant with the CLC.

See also, [Privacy Policy](#) and [Confidentiality of Client and Organization Information](#).

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The Centre for Land Conservation (CLC) recognizes that conflicts of interest involving staff and/or consultants can arise in the normal course of business. A conflict of interest arises when “insiders” such as a staff member or consultant is in a position, or perceived to be in a position, to benefit beyond the scope of their agreed upon compensation, or to create an improper benefit to a family member (typically taken to mean spouse, common-law spouse, parent, siblings, children and any other relative residing within the same household) or other organization to which they are associated by virtue of their position within the CLC. “Insiders” have an ability to influence decisions of the corporation and have access to information not available to the public.

Wherever the possibility of a conflict or perceived conflict of interest exists, CLC will carefully consider the circumstances and where it is determined such a conflict may harm the integrity, credibility, or reputation of CLC, CLC will not proceed with the transaction or activity.

If there is any possibility that a conflict of interest exists or that an action could give rise to the appearance of a conflict of interest, the action must be considered as soon as possible by the Board or its delegate before any commitment or action is taken. Any transactions which lead to an on-going conflict of interest must be reviewed by the Board or its delegate at least annually, to ensure they are still appropriate. A record must be kept of all decisions.

How to identify a potential Conflict of Interest:

If an Insider is doing business with CLC, directly or through a company or other organization in which he or she has an interest, or of which he or she is an officer, there is a potential conflict of interest between that person and the CLC. The same applies if the individual (or the company or organization) even proposes to do business with CLC. “Doing business” means doing a transaction that would benefit the Insider financially, whether directly or indirectly through their company or organization. Thus, contracting a family member to provide services to CLC would be treated as a potential conflict of interest.

Raising a potential conflict of interest

It is not always clear that a conflict exists, and if there is any doubt, the issue should be treated as if it were a conflict of interest. Because of the importance and delicacy of the question, the person who is in doubt should speak to the Executive Director. Where the matter involves the Executive Director, the matter should be raised with the **Director of Operations**.

Transactions with Insiders

Transactions with insiders are not always prohibited. However, the Board or its delegate must first determine that a more advantageous arrangement could not have been obtained with reasonable effort under the circumstances.

Avoiding influencing decisions or actions

Where there is a conflict, whether disclosed or not, the Staff member or Consultant must not take any step that would influence any decision or action relating to the subject matter of the conflict. If the Conflict of Interest concerns a Staff member or Consultant, they must recuse themselves from all discussion relating to the matter.

Prohibited conflict situations

Any transactions or other situations where there is a conflict of interest between an Insider and CLC that could cause harm to CLC are prohibited. Additionally, situations where it may be perceived that they could cause harm to CLC or its reputation are also prohibited. Where a transaction or other activity creates a conflict or potential conflict, the approval of the Board or its delegate is required prior to entering into the transaction or undertaking the activity.

Conflicting opportunities

It is understood that CLC Insiders may also be involved with other charities or community organizations. CLC cannot justifiably require them not to assist in raising funds or providing assistance for such groups. Where, however, the Insider is aware of the possibility or possible appearance of a conflict between CLC and another such group, they should follow the procedure above for reporting potential Conflict of Interest.

Procedure if this Policy is violated

Any willful violation of this policy will result in any necessary corrective action being taken, which could include termination of contract or staff position.