

Code of Business Conduct for Employees

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2011



Iascach Intíre Éireann
Inland Fisheries Ireland

1. Introduction

All employees of Inland Fisheries Ireland (IFI) are required, as a condition of employment, to ensure that they have read and comply with the Code of Business Conduct for Employees. This Code of Business Conduct does not affect obligations under the legislation underpinning the employment or other relevant legislation e.g. Equality Act, Ethics in Public Office acts, Data Protection Acts etc.

It is essential that we continue the ethical business practices our customers and business stakeholders have learned to expect.

Please read the Code and think about how it applies to you. It is imperative that we all strive to live up to the contents of this code in our day-to-day dealings. If you have any questions, please contact your Line Manager or appropriate Senior Manager.

By maintaining awareness of proper business conduct, we can continue to take pride in our reputation for integrity and fair dealing.

2. Purpose of the Code

Inland Fisheries Ireland is widely regarded throughout the communities in which it operates for its honesty, fairness and business integrity, all of which are vital to the overall success of the organisation. To maintain this high reputation it is incumbent on all employees to conduct themselves in a manner that does not adversely reflect on IFI.

It is now common practice for larger organisations to introduce a formal Code of Business Conduct that provides guidance to employees in recognising and resolving the ethical and legal issues they encounter in conducting the organisation's business. It is also a legal requirement for all State Bodies, such as IFI to have such a Code.

IFI aspire to be honest and ethical in all of their operations and dealings and to adhere to the highest accepted standards of corporate governance in all their financial and management practices and to behave responsibly towards the health, safety and welfare of their employees, customers, stakeholders and the environment.

Every employee is responsible for their own personal conduct and while this Code provides guidance and standards on the type of business conduct required by IFI, common sense and good judgment should be applied to all situations.

The work culture must be free from discrimination and harassment based on age, race, religion, gender, disability, sexual orientation, marital or family status and membership of the travelling community.

IFI operate rigorous policies in relation to alcohol and substance misuse and corrective action.

This Code forms part of each employee's terms and conditions of employment at Inland Fisheries Ireland. This Code will be updated when necessary to continually reflect and clarify our practices. Failure to adhere to the Code, or breaches of it, will be regarded as a disciplinary issue and will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment. Any queries regarding business conduct should be directed to the employee's Line Manager or appropriate Senior Manager.

3. Principles of the Code

The Code of Business Conduct is based on the following principles that form part of IFI's business objectives and outline the practices to be adhered to by all employees:

- Integrity
- Loyalty
- Legality
- Confidentiality
- Fairness

IFI will provide assistance to employees in adhering to it's Code of Business Conduct and has developed the Code to be consistent with the organisation's objectives.

Integrity

IFI conducts all business transactions in accordance with best business practice. The principle of integrity is that each employee should be open, truthful and honest in all of their dealings with and on behalf of IFI.

Conflict of Interest

IFI operates under strict corporate governance and on this basis there should be no conflict of interest between the work of the employee in the Fisheries Service and any outside interest. This would apply to all transactions of whatever size or scale and would include the purchase and sale of goods or services by or to Inland Fisheries Ireland and all aspects of each such transaction.

Any staff member who is involved with any outside organisation, whether economic, social, cultural or political, has the responsibility to ensure that such involvement is not prejudicial to the interests of IFI and that it does not create a conflict of interest or potential conflict with their employment. An employee becoming aware of such a conflict/ potential conflict must declare this to his/ her Line Manager/ Senior Manager immediately, who will decide how the situation should be dealt with.

Gifts and Entertainment

Under no circumstances may a staff member solicit, either directly or indirectly, gifts, hospitality, entertainment etc for personal use, gain or benefit.

The offer of any unsolicited gifts, including hospitality, travel, payments, services, entertainment or benefits-in-kind on a scale which could affect, or be considered to affect, the ability of the staff member to exercise independent judgment on IFI matters, must be declined and notified to his/ her Line Manager/ Senior Manager. However, gifts or entertainment of a nominal value may be accepted if, in doing so, no obligation is imposed on either the employee or IFI.

The same principles of integrity should be applied to gifts an IFI employee is considering offering to a customer.

Fees paid to employees in respect of writing articles or media appearances on fisheries matters should not be retained by the employee and should be paid over to IFI.

Loyalty

Implied in each employment relationship with the Fisheries Service is the requirement that all employees are loyal and committed to the organisation and do not engage in, or support, an outside activity or organisation that is competing against or opposing Inland Fisheries Ireland.

An employee may not perform outside work or solicit such business, on IFI premises or while on working time, including time-off you are given with pay to handle personal matters. In the event that an employee is involved in an outside activity/ business (whether remunerated or otherwise), there will be no conflict of interest that would impact on the employee's attendance, performance or support of colleagues, in all matters relating to IFI's activities, which must remain your priority. You are also not permitted to use equipment, telephones, materials, resources or proprietary information for any outside work.

Employees are expected to be supportive of one another and co-operate with and respect the rights and roles of their colleagues.

There must be no conflict of interest or potential conflict between a staff member's IFI work/ responsibilities and his/ her involvement in any employment (including self-employment) outside of work.

Under the Organisation of Working Time Act, 1997, employees cannot 'double-job' if the aggregate hours worked exceeds the 48-hour per week average. Employees must notify IFI, in writing, if they work additional hours for another employer.

Legality

It is the policy of the Fisheries Service to comply with all relevant Statutory and Regulatory requirements governing its operations. It is IFI's policy, at all times, to adhere to best business practice. To ensure this policy is complied with all employees are required to:

- Enforce all Fisheries Laws as it pertains to their role.
- Comply with all health & safety regulations and IFI's Safety Statement in their day to day activities;
- Comply with all internal regulations and procedures designed to prevent fraud or injury to persons or the property of the Fisheries Service, or the interest of the Service generally;
- Comply with all relevant employment legislation;
- Comply with the policies and procedures outlined in IFI employee handbook (or other available documentation);
- Comply with all rules, regulations and guidelines in relation to competitive tendering for the procurement of goods or services;
- Comply with IFI policies relating to compliance with the Data Protection Act, 1988 and the Freedom of Information Act, 1997 and 2002.
- Each employee who holds an office designated under the Ethics in Public Office Act, 1995 must comply with the provisions of that Act and in particular make the appropriate disclosure of interest provided for in that Act to Inland Fisheries Ireland.

Confidentiality

Every employee is required to maintain confidentiality around all information, which they obtain in the course of their employment, relating to the business of the Fisheries Service.

Employees shall not disclose or appropriate to their own use, or to the use of any third party, at any time during or subsequent to their employment with the Fisheries Service, any confidential information of IFI whether or not developed by the employee.

Employees who are responsible for maintaining personal information on Board's employees must ensure that the information is not disclosed inappropriately or misused.

On termination of employment each employee is required to return to IFI all manuals, letters, notes, notebooks, diaries, reports and other materials of a confidential nature. It is recommended that employees keep personal diaries separate to their business diaries, as business diaries are considered to be company property. Persons no longer employed by the Fisheries Service who are found to have disclosed confidential information will be subject to legal action. All queries in relation to confidentiality should be raised by the employee with either their Line Manager or the appropriate Senior Management.

An employee, on ceasing to hold that position, should treat commercial information received while acting in that capacity as confidential.

Fairness

Inland Fisheries Ireland value and treat all employees, customers, suppliers and associates equally and are at all times committed to fairness in their business dealings. All employees are therefore required to uphold IFI's values on fairness in their individual dealings with employees, customers and stakeholders. IFI's policies on Equal Opportunities and Respect and Dignity at work are intended to reflect the organisation's commitment to the proactive management of equality issues in a respectful and non-discriminatory manner and meet our requirements under legislation.

4. Other Operating Principles

Reporting of Offences

Staff who witness any Fisheries offence or otherwise obtain any substantive evidence relating to any fishery offence have a duty to ensure that all such information is reported immediately to their Line Manager or appropriate Senior Management and to make any necessary reports/ statements to the Gardaí.

Use of Inland Fisheries Ireland's Assets

Personal items that you consider private should not be kept in offices, workspaces, desks, or file cabinets. Management may gain access to these areas when required. Unless you have prior management or relevant employee approval, you should not search for or retrieve articles from another employee's individual workspace.

Upon termination of employment, all employees are required to return any Board property which has been assigned to them during the course of their employment.

Internal Information Services:

IFI is increasingly reliant upon internal information and communications systems to carry out their business. To ensure that their integrity is maintained, these systems should be used only for conducting business. Their unauthorised use, whether for personal gain or not, is an inappropriate use of assets or facilities. It is your responsibility to make sure that your use of any system is authorised and proper.

Inadvertent Disclosure:

The unintentional disclosure of proprietary information can be just as harmful as intentional disclosure. To avoid unintentional disclosure, never discuss with any unauthorised person information that has not been made public by the Fisheries Service.

Speaking Out:

It is inappropriate to give the appearance that you are speaking or acting on the Fisheries Service behalf, if speaking out as an individual on public issues other than on fisheries business.

Reports or statements to the media on fisheries issues may only be made with the approval of the CEO or his/her nominee.

Participation in Political Life:

IFI will not make contributions or payments to political parties or candidates. In this regard, your work time is the equivalent of such a contribution. Therefore, you will not be paid by the Fisheries Service for any time spent running for public office, serving as an elected official or campaigning for a political candidate. Such activities may be undertaken during approved paid or unpaid leave.

Dress Code:

All staff are expected to maintain acceptable standards of neat and appropriate dress and footwear and where required, to wear a uniform/work/protective clothing. The application of the dress code will comply with Health and Safety standards at all times.

Status of this Code:

This Code supersedes any/ all previous Codes of Conduct for Employees.

As it is not possible for this Code of Conduct to provide for every situation which may arise, staff must bear in mind that it is primarily their personal responsibility to ensure that all their activities, whether covered specifically or otherwise in this Code of Conduct, are governed by the ethical considerations implicit in the Code.

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