

Conflict of Interest Policy



People's Oriented Program Implementation (POPI)

Scope

This policy applies to all employees of POPI.

Definitions

Conflict of interest

A situation where an individual, or the organization he/she represents or has an interest in, has a direct or indirect competing interest with the organization's activities. This competing interest may result in the individual being in a position to benefit from the situation or in the organization not being able to achieve a result in the best interest of the organization.

A conflict may arise where an individual is a party to a contract with the organization or has an interest in an enterprise, or is related to a person who is party to such a contract; or where an individual receives payment by the organization for services rendered to the organization other than reimbursement for reasonable out-of-pocket expenses measured according to the POPI's policies on expense reimbursement.

Conflict of interest for POPI also includes conduct which is not in keeping with the Fundamental Principles. In particular, the principles of neutrality and impartiality cannot be comprised.

Conflict of interest includes, but is not limited to situations

- Where an employee's private affairs or financial interests are in conflict with their work duties, responsibilities and obligations, or result in a public perception that a conflict exists
- Which could impair the employee's ability to act in the public interest
- Where the actions of an employee would compromise or undermine the trust

Policy application

All employees shall immediately disclose to their supervisor/ manager, in writing, any business, commercial or financial interest where such interest might be construed as being in real, potential or apparent conflict with their official duties.

Performance of duties

An employee will not vote on, or participate in, any discussion about a resolution to approve a contract in which he/she has an interest, nor will an employee approve and/or sign off on such circumstances.

In the performance of their duties, employees must not:

- Place themselves in a position of obligation to persons who might benefit or appear to benefit from special consideration with respect to POPI's business

- Have a monetary interest that would conflict with the discharge of the duties owed to POPI
- Disclose, discuss, use, take advantage of, benefit or appear to benefit from the use of information not generally available to the public and which has been acquired during their official duties of POPI
- Communicate with any level of government, or with any elected or appointed government official in relation to the business of POPI, unless they have specific authorization from POPI
- Assist private entities or persons in their dealings with POPI where this could result in preferential treatment to any person
- Directly or indirectly use, or allow the use of, POPI's property or information for anything other than officially approved activities

Outside employment

Staff members may engage in remunerative employment with another employer, volunteer activity, carry on a business, or receive remuneration from public funds for activities outside their position provided that:

- It does not interfere with the performance of their duties
- It does not bring POPI into disrepute
- They do not have an advantage derived from their employment as a POPI employee
- It is not performed in such a way as to appear to be an official act or to represent the organization's public positions or policies, including the Fundamental Principles
- It does not involve the use of POPI's premises, services, equipment or supplies to which the staff member has access by virtue of their employment, unless official authorization is secured.

Gifts

Staff must avoid the appearance of favoritism in all of their dealings on behalf of POPI and not accept personal gifts from those doing business or seeking to do business with POPI.

Financial

Staff and volunteers must not commit POPI to any unauthorized expenditure or other liability and must ensure that all commitments are approved in accordance with the appropriate by-laws, regulations and policies including all appropriate consultations and approvals.

Vendor relationships

Staff in leadership roles will not perform fee for service responsibilities for POPI in addition to their responsibilities as an employee of POPI. Nor will employees sell goods to POPI, unless by specific approval of the general counsel.

Goods shall not be purchased from a relative of an employee without consultation with applicable appropriate authority and a determination made as to whether the correct processes were undertaken and the impact of the decision. Where there is doubt on the subject, the issue is to be referred to the Executive Committee.

Client relationships

All employees are to understand the client's vulnerability and dependence on the employee to provide assistance, and to act accordingly. This includes recognition that personal relationships outside the scope of their professional roles are not in the best interest of either party or POPI. Conflict of interest situations between employees and clients are investigated immediately and resolved as appropriate.

Breach of conflict of interest

Employees are required to consult with their supervisor/manager whenever they have any question as to whether a particular circumstance may place them in a conflict of interest.

Persons who fail to comply with these standards during the course of their employment will be subject to such appropriate measures as may be determined by POPI including dismissal from employment.

Persons who fail to comply with these standards following termination of employment with POPI hereby acknowledge that the disclosure of confidential information will result in irreparable harm to the Society and the Society shall have the right to enforce its lawful rights and remedies against any offending person.

Reservation of rights

Where an individual fails to disclose a conflict or an interest according to this policy or according to other laws or regulations in Bangladesh, POPI reserves all rights it may have to deal with the contract, conflict and individual involved.

Responsibility

The Executive Director, is responsible for advising stakeholders, maintaining, monitoring, and revising this policy; and for authorizing exceptions. Staff members of POPI are responsible for applying and implementing this policy in each of their respective areas.