

# The Code of Ethics

(adopted 12/01/2015)

## I. Personal and Professional Integrity

All staff, board members and volunteers of the organization act with honesty, integrity, transparency, and openness in all their dealings as representatives of the organization. The organization promotes a working environment that values respect, fairness and integrity.

*Honesty:* The quality of being fair and truthful.

*Integrity:* The state of being whole and undivided.

*Openness:* The unrestricted access to knowledge and information, as well as collaborative or cooperative management and decision-making rather than a central authority.

*Respect:* The act of giving particular attention and esteem.

*Transparency:* The act of actively infusing greater disclosure, clarity, and accuracy into communications.

## II. Mission

The organization has a clearly stated mission and purpose, approved by the board of directors, in pursuit of the public good. All of its programs support that mission and all who work for or on behalf of the organization understand and are loyal to that mission and purpose. The mission is responsive to the constituency and communities served by the organization and of value to the society at large.

## III. Governance

The organization has an active governing body that is responsible for setting the mission and strategic direction of the organization and oversight of the finances, operations, and policies of the organization. The governing body:

- Ensures that its board members or trustees have the requisite skills and experience to carry out their duties and that all members understand and fulfill their governance duties acting for the benefit of the organization and its public purpose;
- Has a conflict of interest policy that ensures that any conflicts of interest or the appearance thereof are avoided or appropriately managed through disclosure, recusal or other means; and
- The board is responsible for the hiring, firing, and regular review of the performance of the chief executive officer with input from the steering committee, and ensures that the compensation of the chief executive officer is reasonable and appropriate;
- Ensures that the CEO and appropriate staff provide the governing body with timely and comprehensive information so that the governing body can effectively carry out its duties;
- Ensures that the organization conducts all transactions and dealings with integrity and transparency;
- Ensures that the organization promotes working relationships with board members, staff, volunteers, and program beneficiaries that are based on mutual respect, fairness and openness;
- Vigilantly pursues the goal that the organization is fair and inclusive in its hiring and promotion policies and practices for all board, staff and volunteer positions;

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- Ensures that policies of the organization are in writing, clearly articulated and officially adopted;
- Ensures that the resources of the organization are responsibly and prudently managed; and,
- Ensures that the organization has the capacity to carry out its programs effectively.

## IV. Legal Compliance

The organization is knowledgeable of and complies with all laws, regulations and applicable international conventions.

## V. Responsible Stewardship

The organization and its subsidiaries manage their funds responsibly and prudently. This should include the following considerations:

- It spends a reasonable percentage of its annual budget on programs in pursuance of its mission;
- It spends an adequate amount on administrative expenses to ensure effective accounting systems, internal controls, competent staff, and other expenditures critical to professional management;
- The organization compensates staff, and any others who may receive compensation, reasonably and appropriately;
- Organizations that solicit funds have reasonable fundraising costs, recognizing the variety of factors that affect fundraising costs;
- Organizations do not accumulate operating funds excessively;
- Organizations with endowments (both foundations and public charities) prudently draw from endowment funds consistent with donor intent and to support the public purpose of the organization;
- Organizations ensure that all spending practices and policies are fair, reasonable and appropriate to fulfill the mission of the organization; and,
- All financial reports are factually accurate and complete in all material respects.

## VI. Openness and Disclosure

The organization provides comprehensive and timely information to the public, the media, and all stakeholders and is responsive in a timely manner to reasonable requests for information. All information about the organization will fully and honestly reflect the policies and practices of the organization. Basic informational data about the organization, such as the Form 990, reviews and compilations, and audited financial statements will be posted on the organization's website or otherwise available to the public. All solicitation materials accurately represent the organization's policies and practices and will reflect the dignity of program beneficiaries. All financial, organizational, and program reports will be complete and accurate in all material respects.

## VII. Program Evaluation

The organization regularly reviews program effectiveness and has mechanisms to incorporate lessons learned into future programs. The organization is committed to improving program and organizational effectiveness and develops

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mechanisms to promote learning from its activities and the field. The organization is responsive to changes in its field of activity and is responsive to the needs of its constituencies.

## **VIII. Inclusiveness and Diversity**

The organization has a policy of promoting inclusiveness and having its staff, board, and volunteers reflect diversity in order to enrich its programmatic effectiveness. The organization takes meaningful steps to promote inclusiveness in its hiring, retention, promotion, board recruitment and constituencies served.

## **IX. Fundraising**

Organizations that raise funds from the public or from donor institutions are truthful in their solicitation materials. Organizations respect the privacy concerns of individual donors and expend funds consistent with donor intent. Organizations disclose important and relevant information to potential donors.

In raising funds from the public, organizations will respect the rights of donors, as follows:

- To be informed of the mission of the organization, the way the resources will be used and their capacity to use donations effectively for their intended purposes;
- To be informed of the identity of those serving on the organization's governing board and to expect the board to exercise prudent judgment in its stewardship responsibilities;
- To have access to the organization's most recent financial reports;
- To be assured their gifts will be used for the purposes for which they were given;
- To receive appropriate acknowledgement and recognition;
- To be assured that information about their donations is handled with respect and with confidentiality to the extent provided by the law;
- To expect that all relationships with individuals representing organizations of interest to the donor will be professional in nature;
- To be informed whether those seeking donations are volunteers, employees of the organizations or hired solicitors;
- To have the opportunity for their names to be deleted from mailing lists that an organization may intend to share; and,
- To feel free to ask questions when making a donation and to receive prompt, truthful and forthright answers.

## **X. Grantmaker Guidelines**

Organizations that are grantmakers have particular responsibilities in carrying out their missions. These include the following:

- They will have constructive relations with grantseekers based on mutual respect and shared goals;
- They will communicate clearly and on a timely basis with potential grantees;
- They will treat grantseekers and grantees fairly and with respect;
- They will respect the expertise of grantseekers in their fields of knowledge;

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- They will seek to understand and respect the organizational capacity and needs of grantseeking organizations; and,
- They will respect the integrity of the mission of grantseeking organizations.

## **XI. Review**

The organization regularly reviews the Code of Ethics and Conflict of Interest policies. All necessary revisions will be made available to the public by the organization.