



CODE OF CONDUCT

MEMBERS OF THE PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA

PREAMBLE

Members of Parliament recognise that their actions have an impact on the lives of all Tasmanian people. Fulfilling their obligations and discharging their duties responsibly requires a commitment to the highest ethical standards to maintain and strengthen the democratic traditions of the State and the integrity of its institutions.

Compliance with the law may not always be enough to guarantee an acceptable standard of conduct. Members must not only act lawfully, but also in a manner that will withstand close public scrutiny.

This Code sets out ethical standards and principles to assist Members in observing expected standards of conduct in public office and to act as a benchmark against which their conduct can be measured.

Neither the law nor this Code is designed to be exhaustive, and there may be instances where Members find it necessary to adopt more stringent norms of conduct in order to protect the public interest, and to enhance public confidence and trust. In making choices about conduct, Members should have regard to community values and standards.

Members should also, where possible, avoid giving unnecessary offence to groups in the community whose beliefs and views differ from those held by the Members or by groups the Member represents.

Members are expected to promote and support this Code by leadership and example.

STATEMENT OF VALUES

This Code is derived from the fundamental values of the institution of the Parliament in this State. By adopting and upholding this Code, all Members of Parliament share in and support these values.

As Members of Parliament, we value:

- the public interest and the fundamental objective of public office to act solely in terms of the public interest;
- the improvement of the economic and social conditions of all Tasmanian people, and our service to our fellow citizens to achieve this;
- the promotion of human, social and environmental welfare through the responsible execution of our official duties;
- integrity, honesty, accessibility, accountability, fairness, transparency, courtesy, respect and understanding, without harassment, victimisation or discrimination;
- respect for differences, equity and fairness in political dealings, with fellow Members of Parliament; and
- ethical political practices that support the democratic traditions of our State and its institutions, and the rejection of political corruption.

ETHICAL STANDARDS

Conflict of interest

A Member protects and upholds the public interest by taking all reasonable steps to avoid, disclose and manage any conflict of interest that arises, or is likely to arise, between their personal interests and their official duties.

A conflict of interest may be financial or non-financial and may be potential, actual or perceived.

A conflict of interest does not exist where the Member, their spouse or domestic partner, relative or associate is affected only as a member of the public or of a broad class of persons.

Each Member is individually responsible for avoiding and managing conflicts of interest.

Declaration of personal interests

A Member is personally responsible for full and accurate disclosure of their financial and other interests, in accordance with their obligations under the *Parliamentary (Disclosure of Interests) Act 1996*.

Use of public office

A Member makes proper use of their office to represent and serve the community, conducting themselves in ways that maintains the trust and confidence of the public.

A Member must not use their influence as a Member to improperly obtain appointment, promotion, advancement, transfer or any other advantage or benefit on behalf of themselves or other persons.

A Member must not appoint their spouse, domestic partner or relative to a position in their own office.

A Member must not receive or seek to receive any fee, payment, retainer or reward, nor permit any compensation to accrue to their beneficial interest, for or on account of, or as a result of, their position as a Member, other than compensation to which they are entitled as a Member of Parliament.

Use of official information

A Member makes appropriate use of official information strictly for the purpose of performing their role as a Member of Parliament in the best interests of the public.

A Member must take care to protect confidential and official information in their possession or knowledge.

A Member must not use official information which is not in the public domain, or information obtained in confidence in the course of their official duties or position, for the advantage or benefit of themselves or another person.

Use of public resources

A Member uses public resources and assets strictly for the purpose of performing their role as a Member of Parliament, and in accordance with any rules and guidelines regarding the use of those resources and assets.

A Member must not use public resources, or allow such resources to be used by others, for personal advantage or benefit.

A Member must be scrupulous in ensuring the legitimacy and accuracy of any claim they make on the public account.

Gifts and benefits

A Member must adhere to standards of transparency and accountability in relation to gifts or benefits, and carry out their duties as a Member of Parliament without being influenced by gifts or benefits.

A Member must not solicit, encourage or accept gifts, benefits or favours which may improperly influence the Member in the exercise of their duties, or may give the appearance of improper influence. Exceptions to this are incidental gifts or customary hospitality of nominal value.

A Member must declare gifts and benefits received, as required by the *Parliamentary (Disclosure of Interests) Act 1996*.

Accuracy of statements

A Member must only make statements in Parliament and in public that are, to the best of their knowledge, accurate and honest.

A Member must not mislead Parliament or the public in statements that they make.

Whether any misleading was intentional or unintentional, a Member is obliged to correct the Parliamentary record, or the public record, at the earliest opportunity in a manner that is appropriate to the circumstances.

Outside employment

A Member must manage employment outside of Parliament to ensure that any such employment does not interfere with their duties as a Member of Parliament.

A Member must not engage in any employment outside Parliament that involves a substantial commitment of time and effort to the extent that it interferes with their duties as a Member.

Upholding the principles of respect, justice and inclusion for all Tasmanians

Members agree to respect the religious and cultural beliefs of others, in accordance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Members agree to uphold the principles of justice and inclusion among our multicultural society, making efforts to generate understanding of all groups.

Members agree to recognise and value diversity as an integral part of Australia's social and economic future.

Members should promote reconciliation with Indigenous Australians.

Parliamentary conduct

A Member conducts themselves in Parliament in ways that will protect the public interest, and enhance public confidence and trust in Parliament.

A Member must observe proper standards of parliamentary conduct by complying with Standing Orders, and directions of the Presiding Officer.

A Member must take particular care to consider the rights and reputations of others before making use of the unique protection available under parliamentary privilege. This privilege should never be used recklessly or without due regard to accuracy.

GENERAL INFORMATION – NOT PART OF THE CODE

Advice for Members

Members may seek confidential advice from the Parliamentary Standards Commissioner in relation to any matter arising under this Code including advice on how to avoid or deal with a possible breach of this Code.

Members should seek professional advice if they have any concerns regarding a potential conflict of interest.

Members have a personal duty to make themselves aware of all legislation pertaining to the role of a Member of the Tasmanian Parliament.

In any public expressions, Members are expected not to set aside the constitutional values of the freedoms of speech, association and religion, or the principle of the separation of powers.

Breaches of the Code

A breach of this Code may be determined by the House.

Review of the Code

The Code will be reviewed every four years by the Parliamentary Joint Standing Committee on Integrity.