



National Computer Board

Code of Ethics

1. National Computer Board

The National Computer Board (NCB) was set up in 1988 by an Act of Parliament; the National Computer Board Act (Act No.43), which is a parastatal body, administered by a Board of Directors and operates under the aegis of the Ministry of Technology, Communication and Innovation.

Vision and Mission

Our Vision

To be the key enabler in transforming Mauritius into a Cyber island and the regional ICT hub.

Our Mission

To e-power people, businesses and the public sector by developing and promoting ICT and ICT related services in Mauritius.

Core Values

- ▶ We are committed to quality and excellence
- ▶ We believe in teamwork and partnership
- ▶ We are determined to provide professional services to our stakeholders, customers and partners
- ▶ We aim at continuous improvement
- ▶ We invest in our people

Strategies and Objectives

E-Powering people through the promotion of ICT Culture

E-Powering businesses by promoting and developing the ICT industry

E-Powering the public sector by participating in e-Government initiatives

2. Purpose of the Code of Conduct and Ethics

The Code of Ethics states the correct ethical standards and expectations governing the conduct and behaviour of employees of the National Computer Board. The Code provides an ethical framework which promotes ethical conduct and responsible behaviour.

The Code of Ethics is intended to provide guiding principles on the fulfillment of professional and ethical obligations. It reinforces the moral principles and commitments by spelling out an acceptable and a responsible behaviour for all to adhere to on a consistent basis. The Code complements existing legislations and rules and its guiding principles are designed to maintain and enhance values that inspire trust and confidence in the integrity of NCB employees.

The Code of Ethics is applicable to all NCB Officers - permanent, part-time, casual, temporary and contractual employees - irrespective of gender, grade and rank. Officers should comply with the legislation, rules and regulations in force.

Officers are expected to observe the highest standards of ethical conduct in their workplace and in any event or function organized by the NCB or where they are representing the NCB. They should:

- Serve the public with fairness and impartiality
- Manage the organisation' resources properly and in a transparent manner
- Uphold trust and confidence of the public and those whom they serve;
- Strive to bring about a sound cultural climate where integrity prevails

3. Core Values

1. Integrity

Officers should demonstrate fairness, honesty and impartiality in their professional commitments, whilst treating others with dignity and respect.

2. Objectivity

Officers have to ensure meritocracy and make decisions based on fairness and analysis of evidence, without bias or external influence.

3. Accountability

Officers are accountable for their actions and decisions.

4. Openness

Officers must be open as possible on their decisions and actions taken and providing justifications whenever required.

5. Honesty

Officers are required to act in good faith in their decisions and actions.

6. Justice

Officers should act impartially and objectively and adhere to the principles of natural justice.

7. Selflessness

Officers must not seek personal, financial or other material benefits for themselves, their families or friends through their official positions.

4. Personal and Professional Behaviour

Officers, in the performance of their duties, should demonstrate a high degree of professionalism and carry out their roles with dedication and commitment to the National Computer Board and its core values.

In the performance of their duties, Officers should not act arbitrarily or to the detriment of any person, group or body and should have due regard for the rights, duties and relevant interests of others. They are, in addition, required to respect the privacy of individuals when dealing with personal information.

Officers have the duty to always conduct themselves in such a way that confidence and trust of the public in the integrity, impartiality and effectiveness of the National Computer Board are preserved and enhanced.

Officers also have a duty to treat the public and their colleagues with courtesy and respect. They should therefore:-

- not cause embarrassment to colleagues or members of the public by their dress, speech or behaviour;

- not consume any alcoholic drink, not use and/or abuse illicit drugs or controlled substances; consuming alcoholic drinks in a public place, which also includes the workplace, is an offence liable to a fine not exceeding Rs 10,000 and imprisonment for a term not exceeding 12 months under the Public Health Act
- not smoke any tobacco product in any public place or any other indoor area which is open to the public or where the public is permitted to have access; smoking in a public place is an offence liable to fine and to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 12 months and a third or subsequent conviction.
- not engage in gambling by any means at the workplace;
- not cause distress to their colleagues, or otherwise contribute to disruption of the working atmosphere in the workplace;
- not discriminate against any person on ground of sex, marital status, colour, race, ethnic or national origin, age, disability, political opinion, occupation, status, sexual orientation, religious or ethical beliefs;
- not harass, bully or otherwise intimidate members of the public or colleagues;
- respect the privacy of individuals; and
- have due regard for the safety of the public and colleagues at the workplace.

5. Adopting a Green Behaviour

Officers should encourage ‘green behaviour’ at work and lead by example by developing a ‘green mindedness’ demonstrated by the following concrete measures, amongst others:

A. Saving Paper

- by reducing paper used;
- by re-utilizing used envelopes;
- by using both sides of a sheet;
- by limiting the number of photocopies;
- by thinking twice before pushing the ‘print’ command;

- by always asking “is the copy/print really required? Is the whole document needed or only a few pages?”
- by sharing documents;
- by capitalizing on the use of IT– send more documents, especially bulky ones, by e-mail; and
- by using misprints as notepaper

B. Saving Energy

- by optimizing the energy settings for computers and other electrical devices;
- by switching off office lights in unutilized spaces and electrical appliances such as air conditioners, fans and computers when not in office and at the end of the working day;
- using natural lighting and ventilation as far as possible;
- by using air conditioners carefully as per set norms;
- by plugging in scanners and other devices that are used periodically only when in use;
- by cutting down on the use of the lift – using the stairs is so much better for the health
- by walking short distances instead of using the car; and
- by promoting the use of renewable energy;

C. Saving water

- by using water in a responsible way;
- by turning off taps when not in use;
- by ensuring proper maintenance of waterworks to avoid leakages; and
- by using water efficient devices, e.g. installing taps which shut off automatically after use;

D. Recycling

- by sorting paper from other wastes; and
- by recycling paper and disposing of wastes in a responsible way;

6. Adherence to Policies of the NCB Board

It is the responsibility of the Board to determine the NCB policies in line with government policies. It is the duty of all employees to:

- Give honest, comprehensive and impartial advice without fear or favour;
- Provide all the information at their disposal which may have a bearing on policy decisions;
- Carry out decisions efficiently, effectively and economically;
- Maintain a high standard of performance and deliver a quality service.
- Officers should comply with all policies and procedures set by the NCB Board.

7. Good practices during a Pre-Election period

The pre-election period, starting as from the date of issue of writs for an election or dissolution of the National Assembly until the declaration of the election results, or in the event of a change of Government, until the new Government is appointed, is characterized by a period of reduced decision making. Care should be exercised when taking decisions, particularly with regards to expenditure. While routine government business should proceed as usual, Officers should, during such a period, exercise restraint in so far as the making of significant appointments or entering into major contracts or undertakings are concerned, where they may unduly limit the freedom of action of any incoming Government.

Officers should avoid becoming possibly the subject of complaints for having been used to further or foster partisan purposes. They should, in particular:

- not use NCB resources or their positions to support particular issues or parties during the election campaign;
- not become caught up in party political activities or be used for logistical support for political functions;
- not wear political badges or display political matter; and
- when scheduled to speak at public functions, avoid controversial issues and limit their statements to facts and matters of administration.

8. Political Impartiality

Officers should observe political neutrality in their day-to-day functions and avoid activities likely to impair, or seen to impair their political impartiality. They should not, therefore, act in a way that is determined by party political considerations or use official resources for party purposes.

9. Responsibility towards the Public

Officers shall in all circumstances be polite, courteous and respectful towards the public. They shall treat members of the public with fairness and equity.

Officers shall address the needs of any member of the public regardless of the status, religion or sex of the person.

Officers shall understand that, while discharging their duties, they are doing no favour to members of the public. They shall diligently, fairly and sympathetically attend to inquiries from members of the public.

10. Conflict of Interest

A conflict of interests is described as a situation in which a public official, while in the exercise of his public duties, has a personal/direct or indirect interest or where his relative or an associate of his has a direct or indirect interest in a decision that he or the public body has to take and which can improperly influence the public official in discharging his functions. Such direct or indirect interest could be termed as the private interest.

Anybody can find himself in a situation of conflict of interests. However, in such situations, it is important to act in line with the provisions of Section 13 of the Prevention of Corruption Act 2002.

Officers have a duty to disclose promptly, fully and in writing, any situation of conflict of interests and the nature of such interests.

Where an officer or his relative or his associate has a personal interest in a decision of the public body, the officer shall not take part in the proceedings or vote or intervene in any manner whatsoever of that public body relating to such decision.

Officers can download the guide on “Managing Conflict of Interest” available on the website of ICAC for reference or additional information.

11. Outside Employment

Officers should not be involved in any private work either for remuneration or otherwise unless prior approval has been obtained from the NCB.

NCB Staff shall not disclose information or make ‘Public comment’ only if required to do so by law or upon obtaining proper authority and approval of the NCB Board concerning the nature and extent of information to be disclosed.

In cases where approval of the Board has been obtained, the information disclosed shall be factual and shall not be altered in any way that would cause prejudice to NCB. Officers reporting information shall not make any public comment or give their opinion on the information disclosed or on any official policy or practice.

‘Public comment’ includes taking part in public speaking engagements, making comments on radio and television and expressing views in letters to the newspapers or in books, journals or notices or where it might be expected that the publication or circulation of the comment will spread to the community at large.

Officers should continue to observe their duties of confidentiality even after they leave the service.

13. Use of the NCB’s Resources

Officers should be scrupulous in the use of NCB’s property and services and should not permit their misuse by any other person or body. They should manage the organisation’s assets and resources effectively and efficiently. They should strive to obtain value for money and to avoid wastage or extravagance in the use of these resources.

Officers should ensure that assets and other facilities mentioned below, provided to them for official duties or functions should be strictly used for Business purposes.

- *IT Equipment*
- *Internet, E-mail and other social network*

- *Telephone*
- *Stationaries*
- *Photocopy and fax*
- *Transport*
- *Consumables*

14. Acceptance of Gifts and Other Benefits

Officers should not solicit for themselves or for other persons, gifts or other benefits, other than their lawful remuneration.

In case, a token of appreciation is offered to an officer, he should immediately report it in writing and disposed of as directed. For more information, please consult the Gift Policy of the NCB.

15. Good Governance and Integrity Reporting

Officer shall have the duty to report on the basis of reasonable grounds any person suspected of acquiring unexplained wealth.

16. Respect for the Law

Officers should comply with the laws, rules and regulations that govern the conduct of the business and should report any suspected violation. As such they are expected to:

- Uphold the law of the Republic of Mauritius;
- Strive to be familiar with and abide by all statutory and other instructions applicable to their conduct and duties;
- Put public interest first in the execution of their duties; and
- Co-operate with public institutions
- Implement the policies and decisions of the Board in an impartial manner.

17. Respect for Colleagues

Officers should treat their colleagues with respect and dignity. They should promote team spirit and work coherently in close collaboration with the colleagues to achieve the objectives of the organisation.

Officers should share a mutual respect and understanding and be courteous to each other to build up a healthy and friendly environment.

18. Fraternization

Officers employed in a managerial or supervisory role needs to heed the fact that personal relationships with employees who report to them maybe perceived as favoritism, misuse of authority or potentially sexual harassment.

An officer of duty conduct is generally regarded as private as long as such conduct does not create problems with the organisation.

Employees should not allow personal relationships with a co-worker that adversely affects the organisation. If such relationships exist, this may lead to conflict of interest. Officers have the duty to inform management of such relationship.

19. Transparency & Accountability

Officers should be opened to public scrutiny. They should act in a transparent and accountable manner and ensure that decisions taken are fully justified.

20. Positive Work Environment

Officers should foster a positive working environment and should uphold the principles of integrity, fairness, non-discrimination, discipline and good conduct.

21. Decision-Making

Officers should take decisions, in a timely manner and without regards to partisan, special interests and fear of criticism. Decisions should be taken after thorough consideration and examination of relevant information.

22. Post Separation Employment

Officers should not use their position to obtain opportunities for future employment. Former employees should not use, or take advantage of, confidential information obtained in the course of their official duties.

All staff should be careful in their dealings with former employees of the organisation and make sure that they do not give them, or seek to give them, favourable treatment or access to privileged information.

Non-Compliance with the Code

Depending upon the nature and seriousness of breaches, disciplinary actions may be taken against officers who do not comply with the provisions of their code of conduct.

Endorsement

- This policy has been endorsed by the Board at its 280th meeting held on 29 October 2020.