

# **UNION OF BC MUNICIPALITIES**

## **CODE OF CONDUCT**

**Adopted September 23, 2007**

**Amended April 26, 2013**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

Union of British Columbia (the UBCM) shall behave and be perceived to behave as an ethical organization. The fundamental relationship between employee and/or director and the UBCM must be one of trust; essential to trust is a commitment to honesty and integrity. Ethical conduct within this relationship imposes certain obligations.

### **PART 1 - DIRECTORS AND EMPLOYEES**

### **2. COMPLIANCE WITH LAW**

Employees and Directors:

- (a) Must obey all applicable laws (e.g. UBCM Act) and regulations (e.g. UBCM Bylaws and Executive Policies) and must avoid any situation which could be perceived as improper or indicate a casual attitude towards compliance.
- (b) Shall not commit, condone or instruct an unethical or illegal act.
- (c) Shall be sufficiently familiar with legislation (as in point a) that applies to their work, recognize potential liabilities and know when to seek legal advice.
- (d) Must not falsify any record of transactions.

### **3. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

Employees and Directors:

- (a) The UBCM expects employees and directors to perform their duties conscientiously and in a manner which will not put their personal interest in conflict with the best interests of the UBCM.
- (b) In general, a conflict of interest exists for employers or directors who use their position at the UBCM to benefit them, friends or family.

- (c) Accepting gifts, favours or kickbacks from suppliers, employment by another organization, ownership of a significant part of another organization or business, close or family relationships with outside suppliers, passing ALONG confidential information and using privileged information inappropriately could give rise to a conflict of interest.
- (d) Employees and directors should avoid situations which could be seen as a conflict of interest, despite good intentions on the part of the employee or director.
- (e) The UBCM requires full disclosure of all circumstances that could be construed as a conflict of interest to the Executive Director who may recommend any actions needed to eliminate a conflict of interest. This will resolve unclear situations and give an opportunity to dispose of conflicting interests before any difficulty can arise.

#### **4. RELATIONS WITH SUPPLIERS AND BUSINESS ASSOCIATES**

It is essential that all those who do business with the UBCM have access to the UBCM on equal terms.

Employees and Directors:

- (a) Along with members of their immediate family, should not accept entertainment, gifts or favours, which create or appear to create a favoured position for doing business with the UBCM, except as provided in sub-section d.
- (b) May not offer gifts or favour to any outside person in order to secure preferential treatment for the UBCM, except as provided in sub-section d.
- (c) May not offer or receive cash, preferred loans, securities, or secret commissions in exchange for preferential treatment. Any employee or director experiencing or witnessing such an offer must report the incident to management immediately.
- (d) Gifts and entertainment may only be accepted or offered by an employee or director in the normal exchanges common to business relationships. The following criteria will guide your judgment:
  - i. the benefit is a token value (under \$100);
  - ii. you could easily reciprocate
  - iii. the exchange creates no obligation; and
  - iv. it occurs infrequently
- (e) Inappropriate gifts received by an employee or director should be returned to the donor with an explanation. In some cultures or business settings, the return of a gift or refusal of a favour would be offensive; in these cases, an employee or a director

should refer the benefit and the circumstances to management or the Board for guidance. Full and immediate disclosure to management of borderline cases will always be taken as good-faith compliance with this Code.

## **5. ENVIRONMENT AND SAFETY**

Employees and Directors have a role in ensuring:

- (a) UBCM operations comply with environmental legislation and standards;
- (b) a safe and healthy workplace through appropriate work practices and conditions;  
and
- (c) all prudent precautions are taken in every activity, not just to ensure personal safety, but also to avoid creating any danger to others.

## **6. RESPONSIBILITY**

Any employee or director who knows or suspects the existence of a conflict of interest or employee and director harassment situation, or a fraud or theft from the UBCM, has a responsibility to report it to the President and/or Executive Director.

## **7. WHERE TO SEEK CLARIFICATION**

- (a) In the case of a director, the President of the UBCM will provide guidance on any item in this Code of Conduct. You may then be directed to the sources of information, including relevant policy.
- (b) In the case of an employee of the UBCM, your immediate supervisor or the Executive Director will provide guidance on any item in this Code of Conduct.

## **8. SEEKING PROVINCIAL OR FEDERAL OFFICE**

A director may remain on the board while seeking a nomination for provincial or federal office. If the director is successful in securing the nomination, he/she will take a leave of absence from the board until the election is over. If successful in the election, the director will resign from the board; if not successful the board member may return to the Executive.

## **PART 2 - EMPLOYEES**

### **9. OUTSIDE BUSINESS INTERESTS**

Employees:

- (a) Must declare outside business activities to the Executive Director.
- (b) May not hold a financial interest, either directly or through a relative or associate, or hold or accept a position as an officer or director in an organization, which by virtue of his or her position in the UBCM, could benefit the other organization by influencing the purchasing, selling or other decisions of the UBCM.

### **10. CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION**

Employees:

- (a) May not disclose to any outside person confidential information that belongs to the UBCM (includes proprietary, technical, business, financial, partnership, and client information) without the permission of the UBCM.
- (b) Must treat all matters discussed in Board and Committee Meetings as confidential.
- (c) May not use confidential information for personal gain, or to benefit friends, relatives or associates.

### **11. OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT**

Employees:

- (a) An employee who accepts work with any organization that could lead to conflict of interest or situation prejudicial to UBCM interests must advise the Executive Director of his or her new employment situation.
- (b) Outside interests should not adversely affect an employee's performance by absorbing time and concentration at work or use of the UBCM's property.

### **12. NON-PROFIT AND PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS**

Employees:

- (a) Are encouraged to contribute to their communities through involvement with charitable, community service and professional organizations, but use of UBCM

time or resources for such activities must be with the prior agreement of the Executive Director.

- (b) May reach positions of leadership in non-profit associations where they may be viewed as spokespersons for those groups and these individuals should ensure they are seen as speaking for their organizations or as individuals, and not as employees or a spokesperson of the UBCM.

### **13. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

The UBCM encourages and supports the professional development of its employees. Where staff are members of a recognized profession, they are expected to:

- (a) keep abreast of professional developments in their fields;
- (b) perform their duties in accordance with the recognized standards of that profession; and
- (c) abide by any code of ethics adopted by their professional associations.

### **14. USE OF UBCM PROPERTY**

With respect to Employees the UBCM assets:

- (a) must not be misappropriated for personal use;
- (b) must be maintained in good condition; and
- (c) must be disposed except in accordance with UBCM guidelines.

### **15. PATENTS AND DISCOVERIES**

Employees are often engaged in various forms of research or problem solving for the UBCM. The product of their efforts produced within the scope of their employment belongs to the UBCM (including computer programs, technical processes, inventions, research methods, reports or articles, and any other form of innovation or development), whether the product was concluded while actually at work or not. Patents, rights or copyright, as appropriate, must be assigned to the UBCM.

### **16. POLITICAL PARTICIPATION**

Employees are encouraged to participate fully as private citizens in the democratic process at any level but must do so on their own time and must take care to separate their personal activities from their association with the UBCM.

I ACKNOWLEDGE that I have read and understood the Code of Conduct for employees and directors of Union of British Columbia Municipalities. I agree to conduct myself in accordance with this Code of Conduct.

September 23, 2007

April 26, 2013-amended to include s. 8.

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