



**Ghawth**  
for Relief and Emergency

## Conflict of Interest

In their day-to-day work employees are not routinely faced with situations in which personal interest conflicts with their duties. Occasionally, however, such situations do arise and staff might be uncertain about how to deal with them.

A conflict of interest exists when employees are engaged in business activities outside the organization that could influence their judgment in their assignment or give an unfair competitive advantage to their client or outside employer. Ghawth employees are obligated to avoid conflict-of-interest situations and to report any such conflict or apparent conflict to their line managers and to the Human Resources / Personnel staff who should investigate and assist employees in avoiding conflicts. Employees could find themselves in an apparent or real conflict-of-interest situation as a result of many different kinds of circumstances. They might find, for example, that in the course of their regular daily duties they become involved with a certain contract or other agreement with an organization with which they have a consulting, employment, or significant financial interest. They could become aware of confidential information relating to future purchases, activities or projects which could be of benefit to the outside organization with which they are associated. They could, in their work for Ghawth make or influence decisions relating to the daily activities that could benefit them in their other activities, or benefit an organization with which they have a consulting, employment, or significant ownership interest. They could be working with a consultant to Ghawth whose employer or other clients could benefit from information available to Ghawth employees but not generally available to the public.

Allegations of conflict of interest may come from third parties, such as outside organizations. In these and similar circumstances, employees should be aware of possible conflict of interest. Outside activity must not be undertaken if a conflict of interest exists or seems to exist. It must not be continued if any conflict or potential conflict arises after the activity has been approved by Ghawth Employees who consult other agencies must be careful to arrange their payments with the relevant departments of Ghawth so that they are not paid twice for the same working hours from two or more different places.

### Purchases from Employee Connected Firms

Ghawth does not encourage purchases from businesses connected to employees or their near relatives (spouse, children, parents, brothers, sisters, in-laws, or step relatives in the same relationships). Prior approval from the Support Division / Department and the Human Resources Department / Unit should be obtained if necessary to purchase from an employee or a near relative.

### Employees engaged in Civic and Community Organizations

In their role as private citizens, employees may act in support of or opposition to public policies or legislation, including presentation of testimony before legislative committees or government agencies. However, they must avoid the appearance of acting in the name of Ghawth.

Employees may be candidates for and serve in elective and appointive government positions if the activity does not interfere with their duties towards Ghawth . They must be careful to avoid any possible conflict of interest when matters affecting Ghawth are presented to them for consideration.



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### Conflict of Interest Code

This code sets out some principles to guide behavior in this area. The purpose of the code is to prevent the conferring of unfair advantage or disadvantage on employees or other individuals resulting from particular forms of personal, familial or financial relationship. These may include friendships of different types where one party may be in a position to secure advantage for the other in areas such as recruitment, employment, contracts for services and academic life. Although all managers act as a check on the individual abuse of power and privilege, there remain circumstances in which, to avoid unnecessary suspicion, further procedures are required. These are identified within the code of conduct. The operation of the code depends for its success upon trust and agreed procedure. It relies heavily upon staff taking responsibility themselves to declare potential or actual conflicts of interest or to seek the guidance of their superior when in doubt. The code is, therefore, largely self-policing but if it is found that a member of staff has failed to comply with its provisions, this will be investigated and could lead to disciplinary action. Ghawth expects that the professional conduct of all staff is of the highest standard and according to the following code:

1. The central principle of this code is that staff should not allow self-interest or personal factors to interfere with their commitment to their work and duties, and should ensure that their behavior towards colleagues contributes to a positive working environment
2. All staff are entitled to work within an environment characterized by a spirit of openness, in which information about the conditions of their work and the effective discharge of their duties is always available.
3. It is expected that staff will take every precaution to avoid situations where conflicts of interest or any suspicion of them would arise in the carrying out of their duties.
4. Staff should take care that financial, familial, or personal relationships entered into on a consensual basis, do not disadvantage or unfairly advantage any member of staff, volunteers, beneficiaries, donors or other individuals (i.e., applicants for jobs or service providers).
  - a) Should such relationships occur staff are expected to inform their line managers as soon as any actual, perceived, or potential conflict of interest arises to ensure that it can be minimized.
  - b) Managers will always treat these matters in confidence and will, in consultation with the member of staff, find ways in which conflicts of interest might be avoided.
  - c) If staff are working in the same department or section or are in a supervisory relationship and the actual or perceived conflict of interest cannot be resolved by other means and is interfering with the effectiveness of work, it may be necessary to explore the possibility of one party being moved to another area of work or work location.
  - d) If staff have a close personal or familial relationship with an applicant for employment it will normally be necessary for the member of staff to avoid any involvement in the appointment process (i.e., membership of an appointment panel or acting as a referee).
  - e) External and internal applicants for posts will be asked to declare any close personal or familial relationships on the application form for the post.
5. Staff must ensure the highest standards of behavior in the accepting of gifts or rewards. Any gifts that might attract the suspicion of improper motives should be rejected and declared to their immediate supervisor.



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6. Staff should not allow intellectual or personal differences to undermine the work of their departments or to impinge upon their relationships with others. In such cases where significant personal differences between staff occur, it is the responsibility of all staff:

- a) In the first instance, to seek clarification and resolution within the relationship in which the dispute occurred.
- b) Senior staff should be asked for assistance only when attempts to resolve the problem have been fully exhausted between the parties concerned.

7. If a member of staff is in any doubt about the application of this code to their personal situation, they have a duty to seek clarification from an appropriate the line manager.



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