



CODE OF ETHICS

FOR THE CHIEF SECRETARY'S OFFICE

CENTRAL PROVINCE

INTERNAL AFFAIRS UNIT
CHIEF SECRETARY'S OFFICE - CENTRAL PROVINCE

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Code of Conduct

Chief Secretary's Office – Central Province

1. Introduction

A Code of Ethics is being introduced for public officers to uphold and observe, with the aim of establishing an exemplary public service in Sri Lanka, fostering professionalism and ethical conduct among public officials, and building a dignified service culture that preserves public trust. This Code of Ethics will serve as a guideline for the professional conduct and ethical performance of duties for all staff members serving in the Central Province Chief Secretary's Office.

This Code of Conduct must be implemented in conjunction with and subject to the Constitution of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, all currently applicable laws and regulations, provisions, the Establishments Code, the procedural rules of the Public Service Commission, Financial Regulations, Central Province financial rules, circulars, and other instructions and directives issued by competent authorities. Accordingly, all staff members serving in the Office of the Chief Secretary of the Central Province are required to strictly adhere to the following ethical standards and guidelines for conduct.



2. Objectives of the Code of Conduct

I. Upholding integrity and transparency

Building an exemplary culture of integrity that is free from corruption, reflecting the highest standards of discipline, transparency, and honesty within the public service.

II. Ensuring commitment to public service, responsibility, accountability, and public trust

Further strengthening public confidence in governance by working with enthusiasm and dedication to achieve the government's policy objectives.

III. Ensuring professional competence and the delivery of efficient and effective services

Providing high-quality services by making optimal use of the skills possessed by officers

IV. Ensuring a pleasant work environment

Minimizing mental stress among officers and ensuring an environment conducive to working in a pleasant atmosphere.

3. Core Ethical Values / Principles

In the performance of their duties, all staff members must adhere to principles such as compliance with laws and regulations; dedication to the public service and the provision of quality service; responsibility and accountability; integrity; ensuring financial transparency; avoidance of negligence; courtesy and decorum; trustworthiness; impartiality and fairness; efficiency; good governance; professional competence; cooperation and mutual respect; and ethical conduct.



3.1. Compliance with Laws and Regulations

One must be knowledgeable about and act in accordance with the Constitution, the Public Service Commission's procedural rules, Financial Regulations, the Establishments Code, provincial financial rules, financial regulatory circulars, Cabinet decisions, procurement guidelines, public administration circulars, current directives/orders, regulations and provisions, and other relevant laws and regulations.

3.2. Commitment to Public Service and Professionalism

- I. **Maintaining a professional image and reputation:** A public officer must maintain proper conduct both during and outside of working hours, refraining from unlawful, improper, disrespectful, or unbecoming behavior. One must avoid any activity that damages the reputation of the institution or the government.

One must interact cordially with others. When performing one's duties, it is essential to uphold high standards of responsibility and accountability, avoid negligence, and act in a manner that fosters trust. Furthermore, decisions and actions must be taken in the public interest, without seeking financial or material benefits or personal advantages for oneself or one's associates. One must report to work dressed in attire appropriate for the office.

- II. **Efficient performance of duties:** One must report for duty, leave, and record attendance at the scheduled times, and carry out assigned tasks promptly and diligently, in compliance with laws, guidelines, instructions, and professional standards.



- III. **Avoidance of inappropriate conduct:** Refrain from interacting with staff or the public using obscene, harassing, or divisive language or behavior.
- IV. **Proper use of official leave:** Obtain prior approval before taking leave, except in cases of genuine emergencies.
- V. **Identification:** Wear official identification cards or name badges during duty hours, or readily disclose one's identity, to ensure accountability.
- VI. **Guidance:** Assist subordinates and new officers—in a supportive and kind manner—to overcome shortcomings and develop their skills, while providing opportunities for such growth.
- VII. **Abstaining from intoxicants:** Strictly refrain from consuming alcohol or using illegal drugs within the institution's premises or during duty hours.
- VIII. **Political neutrality:** Perform duties without the influence of personal political views and respect the authority of the government.

3.3. Responsibility

Officers shall discharge the duties and responsibilities of their positions honestly and faithfully, in a manner that upholds the dignity of the public service, and in accordance with relevant laws, regulations, circulars, procedures, and policies.

3.4. Integrity and Impartiality

Performing official duties in a manner that upholds integrity and impartiality.



3.5. Efficiency

Efficiently performing assigned duties and providing efficient and effective service to clients.

3.6. Equality, Fairness, and Equity

Providing services equally to every individual, regardless of rank or social status; acknowledging diversity and ensuring equal opportunities; and upholding fairness at all times.

3.7. Maintaining Good Public Relations

Adopting a standard of professional conduct that fosters and sustains public trust and acceptance; ensuring clients are well-received, addressed respectfully, and provided with friendly service.

3.8. Displaying the Citizens' Charter and providing efficient and effective service to clients in accordance with it.

3.9. Upholding the public's right to information regarding the officers providing them with services.

3.10. Non-misuse of state resources and services

State resources must be used solely for official government functions and not for personal purposes.

4. Refraining from accepting gifts or gratuities.

All staff members are prohibited from soliciting or accepting any gift, award, personal discount, free service, invitation, or any other benefit that could—or could appear to—directly or indirectly influence their official decisions or duties. In instances where a gift cannot be refused, action must be taken in accordance with the provisions of the Establishments Code.



5. Abstaining from bribery and corruption

I. Abstaining from acts of bribery: Requesting or accepting any gratification (money, property, favors, etc.) as an inducement or reward for performing, expediting, delaying, obstructing, or refraining from performing any official duty constitutes bribery; all staff members must strictly refrain from such actions.

All staff members must immediately report any instance where a bribe is offered to them, an unlawful payment is solicited, or they become aware of such an attempt, to the Head of the Institution, the internal affairs unit established within the institution, or the relevant authorities.

II. Abstaining from acts of corruption: Abusing one's position as a staff member to carry out actions with the intent of causing an unlawful loss to the government or securing an unlawful advantage for oneself or another is considered an act of corruption, and such actions must be strictly avoided.

All staff members of the institution must immediately report any instance of corruption, attempted corruption, or information regarding such an act to the head of the institution, the internal affairs unit established within the institution, or the designated authorities.

All forms of conduct involving the offering, accepting, or soliciting of bribes, as well as engagement in corrupt practices, constitute serious disciplinary violations and are considered offenses punishable by law, for which criminal prosecution may be initiated.



6. Prevention of Conflicts of Interest

A conflict of interest arises when a staff member's familial, business, personal, or social relationships create a risk that their official decisions may not be made impartially, fairly, or in the public interest.

The following guidelines must be strictly adhered to in situations involving a conflict of interest:

- i. Upon becoming aware of an actual or apparent conflict of interest regarding any official decision or activity, the matter must be reported in writing to the relevant superior authority as soon as possible, and actions must be taken in accordance with the instructions received.
- ii. One must refrain from serving on a decision-making committee where such a conflict of interest exists; participation in the process should occur only if direct written approval has been granted by the designated authority.
- iii. One must not engage in businesses, secondary employment, professional activities, or board memberships that conflict with official duties or allow for the use of confidential official information for personal gain.
- iv. All official decisions must be made solely based on the fulfillment of the institution's objectives, public interest, and the ethics of the public service.



7. Public Financial Management and Procurement

- I. **Financial Management:** Financial management must be conducted prudently and with due care, in compliance with financial laws and regulations.
- II. **Value for Money:** It must be ensured that public funds are utilized wisely and cost-effectively, exclusively for official purposes.
- III. **Financial Accountability:** It must be ensured that all transactions involving public funds are accurately accounted for, and that expenditure decisions are made only by authorized personnel.
- IV. **Procurement Transparency:** It must be ensured that all procurement processes including tender evaluations, contract awards, and project approvals are conducted fairly, legally, competitively, and impartially, in accordance with procurement guidelines.
- V. **Conduct Regarding Financial Matters**
Non-misuse of public funds. Compliance with provincial financial regulations, guidelines issued by the Finance Commission, and other circulars.

8. Confidentiality and security of data and information

- I. **Confidentiality:** Personal, professional, or sensitive data and information obtained during the course of official duties must be kept confidential; such information shall be disclosed only by the Head of the Institution, an officer authorized by the Head of the Institution, or in instances expressly permitted by law.



- II. One must strictly refrain from disclosing information obtained during the performance of official duties to unauthorized parties for personal gain or commercial benefit.
- III. **Information System Security:** Usernames, passwords, and access codes must be kept confidential and must never be shared with unauthorized parties. Modifying, copying, or destroying software and data systems on computers is strictly prohibited.
- IV. **Media Relations:** One must refrain from expressing views to the media or releasing information on social media regarding Ministry/institutional policies or any official matters without the permission of the competent authority.
- V. **Reporting:** Any suspicious incidents regarding information security must be promptly reported to the relevant authority.
- VI. **Confidentiality and Security**
All staff members bear the responsibility of maintaining the information systems, data repositories, and communication networks they use in a secure, accurate, and reliable manner.

9. Purchase of State Property by Public Servants

Staff members should not engage in the purchase of state property through government-conducted auctions, tenders, or sales processes in instances where their official position would afford them an unfair advantage.

When a staff member purchases state property, all relevant laws, gazette notifications, and procedures must be fully adhered to, ensuring transparency, fairness, and approval from the proper authority.



10. Work Environment and Culture

- I. **Peaceful Work Environment:** A peaceful work environment, free from harassment, threats, and intimidation, must be created to enable all staff members to perform their duties effectively.
- II. **Sexual Harassment:** Any behavior constituting sexual harassment must be strictly prevented, and a safe work environment must be ensured for all staff members.
- III. **Drug-Free Environment:** An environment free from alcohol and drugs must be maintained within the office premises and during working hours.
- IV. **Prohibition of Smoking:** Smoking is prohibited within the office premises and in designated non-smoking areas.
- V. **Health and Well-being:** It is the responsibility of the staff to maintain a clean, safe, and conducive work environment, adhere to health and safety protocols and standards in all office and field activities, and pay attention to their own physical and mental well-being.
- VI. **Respect for Others:** All staff members bear the responsibility of conducting themselves in a manner that upholds mutual respect—regardless of rank or position—and ensures that no staff division, harassment, or other unfair practices occur.
- VII. **Teamwork:** It is the responsibility of the staff to work collectively with mutual trust and unity to achieve the organization's goals.



11. Restrictions on Political Activities

- I. **Participation in political activities:** Exercising one's political rights subject to the limitations set out in the Establishments Code and other circular provisions.
- II. **Expression of political views:** While staff members have the right to hold personal political views, they must maintain strict political neutrality in the discharge of official duties.
- III. **Non-use of office resources for political activities** the use of official authority, state resources, buildings, vehicles, equipment, information systems, or working hours to promote political parties, candidates, or election campaigns is prohibited.



12. Providing official news/information to the media or the public, and expressing views on social media networks

- I. News or information must not be provided to the media, social media networks, or the public without authorization.
- II. Media and social media networks must not be used to criticize government policies or to air grievances.

13. Compliance with the Code of Conduct

- I. This Code of Conduct serves to guide all staff members in maintaining workplace discipline and proper conduct. Therefore, staff must read, understand, and adhere to this Code. Should any ambiguity arise, necessary clarifications must be sought from the appropriate authority.
- II. Adherence to this Code of Conduct ensures that the Office of the Chief Secretary of the Central Province provides a reliable, respectful, and efficient service to the Sri Lankan public.



14. Acknowledgement Form

I have thoroughly read and understood the Code of Conduct of the Central Province Chief Secretary's Office. I agree to act in accordance with the guidelines set out therein.

Signature of the Officer

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Full Name of the Officer

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Designation of the Officer

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Date

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