

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR STAFF OF EXECUTIVE NON-DEPARTMENTAL BODIES

INTRODUCTION

1. This document sets out a Code of Conduct for employees of the Cairngorms National Park Authority. It is designed to reflect the statutory Code of Conduct for Board members and to ensure that probity and high ethical standards apply throughout the National Park.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

2. Employees of the Cairngorms National Park Authority should familiarise themselves with the contents of the Code and should act in accordance with the principles set out in it.
3. Employees of the Cairngorms National Park Authority have a duty:
 - To discharge public functions reasonably and according to the law.
 - To recognise ethical standards governing particular professions.
4. The Chief Executive as Accountable Officer has overall responsibility working under the Board for propriety in a broad sense, including conduct and discipline.

ACCOUNTABILITY

5. Employees of the Cairngorms National Park Authority should be aware of:
 - Their accountability to the Board of the Cairngorms National Park Authority through the Chief Executive;
 - The respective roles of the sponsor Department and the Cairngorms National Park Authority body as set out in the management statement/financial memorandum;
 - That the Minister responsible for the Cairngorms National Park Authority is ultimately accountable to the Parliament for its independence, effectiveness and efficiency.
6. The Board of the Cairngorms National Park Authority has responsibilities as an employer. These are set out in their own Code of Practice.
7. Employees of the Cairngorms National Park Authority should conduct themselves with integrity, impartiality and honesty. They should not deceive or knowingly mislead their management, the Board, the sponsor Department, Ministers, the Parliament or the public.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

8. Employees should abide by any rules, policies and procedures (which will be published on the shared drive) adopted by the Cairngorms National Park Authority in relation to private interest and possible conflict with public duty; the disclosure of official information; and political activities. They should not misuse their official

position or information acquired in their official duties to further their private interests or those of others. Key members of staff, such as the Chief Executive, the Directors, managers of large contracts, and staff working on contracts, should ensure that any possible conflicts of interest are identified at an early stage and that appropriate action is taken to resolve them.

9. The Park Authority will maintain a register of staff interests for internal use purposes only.

INTEGRITY

10. Employees of the Cairngorms National Park Authority should not use their official position to receive, agree to accept or attempt to obtain any payment or other consideration for doing, or not doing, anything or showing favour, or disfavour, to any person. They should not receive benefits of any kind from a third party which might reasonably be seen to compromise their personal judgement and integrity. Under the Prevention of Corruption Act 1916, employees of public bodies may be required to prove that the receipt of payment or other consideration from someone seeming to obtain a contract is not corrupt.

RELATIONS WITH THE PUBLIC

11. Employees of the Cairngorms National Park Authority who deal with the affairs of the public should do so sympathetically, efficiently, promptly and without bias or maladministration. As employees of a public body they should offer the public the highest standards of conduct and service.

RESOURCES

12. Employees of the Cairngorms National Park Authority should endeavour to ensure the proper, economical, effective and efficient use of resources.

CONFIDENTIALITY

13. Employees of the Cairngorms National Park Authority owe a general duty of confidentiality to their employer under civil law. They are therefore required to protect official information held in confidence. Nothing in this Code should be taken as overriding existing statutory or common law obligations to keep confidential, or in appropriate cases to disclose, certain information. Subject to this proviso, National Park employees are within the jurisdiction of the Parliamentary Ombudsman and should, therefore, act in accordance with the Code of Practice on access to Government Information.

STAFF CONCERNS ABOUT IMPROPER CONDUCT

14. If employees of the Cairngorms National Park Authority believe they are being required to act in a way which:
 - is illegal, improper, or unethical;
 - is in breach of a professional code;

- may involve possible maladministration, fraud or misuse of public funds;
- is otherwise inconsistent with this Code;

they should either raise the matter through the management line or else approach in confidence the Human Resources Manager. Staff should also draw attention to cases where:

- they believe there is evidence of irregular or improper behaviour elsewhere in the organisation, but where they have not been personally involved;
- there is evidence of criminal or unlawful activity by others;
- they are required to act in a way that, for them, raises a fundamental issue of conscience.

15. Where a member of staff has reported a matter covered in paragraph 9.1 above and believes that the response does not represent a reasonable response to the grounds of his or her concern, he or she may approach the next person in the line management chain, up to and including the Chief Executive. If the situation remains unresolved, the matter should be reported to the Convenor. If these channels have been followed and the staff member still has concerns, they should report the matter in writing, to the Environment and Forestry Sponsorship Hub, Future Environment Division, Scottish Government (the sponsor department) who will investigate the matter further.

AFTER LEAVING EMPLOYMENT

16. Employees of Cairngorms National Park Authority should continue to observe their duty of confidentiality (see paragraph 8.1 above) after they have left the employment of the Cairngorms National Park Authority.