

CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY

Standards of conduct known as ethical responsibilities are critical to the function and integrity of the staff and volunteers of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Cape Breton.

Conflict of interest occurs when a staff person or volunteer (Board or Committee member) participates in discussion or decision-making about a matter which may benefit that person, regardless of the size of the benefit. The conflict must result in direct or indirect benefit to the staff person or volunteer, or someone with whom they have a close personal relationship.

Volunteers and staff must represent non-conflicting loyalty to the interests of the agency. This accountability supersedes the personal interest of any member acting as an individual consumer of the organization's services.

Volunteers and staff must avoid actual and perceived conflict of interest with respect to their fiduciary responsibility. A volunteer or staff will be considered to have a potential conflict of interest where s/he or a member of her/his family (including "spouse" as defined in the Family Law Act) has a direct or indirect financial interest in a matter involving the agency and where the volunteer or staff could influence, or appear to be able to influence, any decision on that matter by the agency.

Volunteers or staff members and their families shall not enter into any business arrangement with the agency in which they have an interest directly or indirectly except: a) on a written and competitive sealed quotations basis, and b) having declared any interest therein, and having refrained from voting therein.

The chairperson of any meeting of the board or of any committee of the board shall request any member who has declared an interest in any business or other financial arrangement with the agency which is being discussed, to absent her/himself during the discussion of, and vote upon the matter, and the event shall be recorded in the minutes.

Board members may not attempt to exercise individual authority over the agency except as explicitly set forth in board policies.

- a. Board members' interaction with the Executive Director or with staff must recognize the lack of authority in any individual board member or group of board members except as noted above.
- b. Board members' interaction with the public, press or other entities must recognize the same limitation and the similar inability of any board member or board members to speak for the board.

It is the sole responsibility of individual volunteer or staff members to determine whether a conflict of interest declaration is warranted.

Board members, their children, parents, siblings, relatives or spouses shall not be employees of the agency. Board members and staff shall not have their children, parents, siblings, relatives or

spouses sit on the Board of Directors while they are active members of the local association. Board members may not resign their board position in order to gain employment with the agency.

Funding sources shall be informed of conflict of interest issues likely to result in legal and/or media attention.

The final resolution of the conflict of interest shall be at the sole discretion of the Board of Directors.

POLICY STATEMENT:

1. That before any meeting of the Board of Directors, an agenda be circulated to each Director, with agenda items specified in order to permit the Director to identify possible conflicts of interest.
2. That prior to the commencement of any substantive business at the Board meeting or a committee meeting, each member shall declare any conflicts of interest regarding specified agenda items.
3. That if a Director, committee member or staff has disclosed conflict of interest regarding an agenda item, the person or persons shall leave the meeting room when the meeting reaches that agenda item. The person's departure from the meeting room shall be noted in the minutes, and there shall be no discussion of that agenda item by the Board or Committee until the person has left the room.
4. That following completion of the discussion by the Board or Committee of that item, the person shall return, and the return shall be noted in the minutes.

EMPLOYEES

It will be considered a conflict of interest for an employee to:

- Influence directly or indirectly, anyone who approaches the agency for service to obtain that service from her or from any other employee on a private basis
- To accept as a private client, a person who has been a client within the previous six months
- To compete directly or indirectly with the agency for outside service contracts.
- No employee may be a member of the Board of Directors.
- Staff members shall not sell goods, materials or services to the agency, its clients or volunteers.

- Employees including the Executive Director shall not, in the absence of advance written authorization, engage in outside employment with any person or corporation where such outside employment poses or may pose a conflict of interest with her duties within the agency. For the purpose of this policy, outside employment shall mean any type of employment outside of the agency for which the staff member is personally remunerated. Written authorization for all employees excluding the Executive Director shall be provided by the Executive Director. Written authorization for the Executive Director shall be provided by the Board.
- An employee shall not provide on a volunteer or paid basis, any form of continued service (including the provision of goods) to former clients within six months of the client's termination of service.