



Ontario Horticultural Association

Code of Conduct - Society

Oath of Office & Confidentiality Agreement

Oath of Office and Confidentiality Agreement

I, _____, a member of the _____,
(here after referred to as "the Society") declare that, in carrying out my duties as a member of
the Society, I will:

1. Fulfill my responsibilities in good faith, to the best of my abilities and in the best interests of the Society.
2. Carry out these responsibilities exercising all reasonable care.
3. Respect and support the Constitution and By-Laws, Policies and Procedures, Code of Conduct of the Society and the decisions of the Board/Executive of the Society and the membership of the Society.
4. Review all related meeting information prepared in advance, attend and participate in discussions of the Board/Executive, its various committees and the membership of the Society, and at all times keeping in mind the best interests of the Society as a whole.
5. Conduct myself in a spirit of collegiality and respect for the collective decisions of the Board/Executive and membership of the Society and set aside my personal interests to the best interests of the Society.
6. Immediately declare any personal conflict of interest that may come to my attention.
7. Immediately report any potential breach of this Code of Conduct to the Secretary of the Society in writing and immediately step aside until such time as a review has been conducted. If upon a full review and decision by the Board/Executive and following any subsequent appeal, I am found in breach of the Code of Conduct, resign my membership effective immediately.
8. Immediately step aside if an issue of breach has been raised by either the Board/Executive of the Society or any member of the OHA. If upon a full review and decision by the Board/Executive of the Society and following any subsequent appeal, if any, I am found in breach of the Code of Conduct, comply with the decision of the Board and/or appeal body.
9. Respect the confidentiality of discussions at a Board/Executive and membership meetings of the Society as directed or required.

Code of Conduct

Board/Executive members and staff of _____ (here after referred to as "the Society") will at all times conduct themselves in a manner that:

1. Supports the objectives of the Society.
2. Serves the overall best interests of the Society.
3. Brings credibility and good will to the Society.
4. Respects the principles of due process and fair play.
5. Demonstrates respect for individuals in all manifestations of their cultural and linguistic diversity and life circumstances.
6. Respects and gives fair consideration to diverse and opposing viewpoints.
7. Demonstrates due diligence and dedication in preparation for and attendance at meetings, special events and in all other activities on behalf of the Society.
8. Demonstrates good faith, prudent judgment, honesty, transparency and openness in their activities on behalf of the Society.
9. Ensures that the financial affairs of the Society are conducted in a responsible and transparent manner with due regard for all fiduciary responsibilities and public trustees.
10. Avoids real and perceived conflicts of interest.
11. Conforms with the Constitution and By-Laws and the Policies and Procedures approved by the Board/Executive of the Society.
12. Publicly demonstrates acceptance, respect and support for decisions legitimately taken in transaction of the business of the Society.
13. Adheres to the [Agricultural and the Horticultural Organizations Act R.S.O. 1990 c. A.9.](#)
14. Encourages a positive environment in which individual contributions are encouraged and valued.
15. Employs established communication channels when questions or concerns arise.

16. In dealing with other organizations or persons, they do not accept payment nor benefit financially through Society involvement, other than the reimbursement out of pocket expenses pursuant to the Financial Policy and Procedure of the Society and/or generally acceptable financial practices and/or through the normal business practices of the Society.
17. Contributes from personal, professional and life experiences to enhance the decision making process of the Board/Executive and the membership of the Society.
18. Refrains from trying to influence other Board/Executive and society members outside of Board/Executive and membership meetings that might have the effect of creating factions and limit free and open discussion.
19. Discloses any involvement with other organizations, businesses or individuals where such a relationship might be viewed as a Conflict of Interest.
20. Does not act in any manner which may be perceived as or is actually harassment of a personal or sexual nature.

Definitions:

a) Harassment:

Harassment consists of offensive, abusive, belittling or threatening behaviour directed at a person or people, because of a particular characteristic of that person or people, including the person or peoples' level of empowerment relative to the harasser. The behaviour must be unwelcome and the sort of behaviour a reasonable person would recognize as unwelcome and likely to cause the person to feel offended, humiliated, or intimidated.

b) Sexual Harassment:

A person is deemed to have sexually harassed another person (the person harassed) if

- a) the person makes an unwelcome sexual advance, or an unwelcome request for sexual favours, to the person harassed, or
- b) the person engages in unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature in relation to the person harassed, As Amended in Ottawa, Ontario, October 2 2016 17 in circumstances in which a reasonable person, having regard to all the circumstances, would have anticipated that the person harassed would be offended, humiliated, or intimidated. "Conduct of a sexual nature" includes making a statement of a sexual nature to a person, or in the presence of a person.

c) Behaviour constituting harassment:

Can take many different forms and may be explicit or implicit, physical, verbal, or non-verbal. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- a. jokes or comments directed at a person's body, looks, age, race, religion, sexual orientation, or disability;
- b. abusive behaviour aimed at humiliating or intimidating someone in a less powerful position;
- c. unwelcome remarks including teasing, name-calling, or insults;
- d. innuendo or taunting;
- e. homophobic comments and/or behaviours;
- f. uninvited touching, kissing, embracing or messaging;
- g. unwelcome staring, leering or ogling;
- h. unwelcome smutty jokes and comments;
- i. unwelcome persistent or intrusive questions about a person's private life;
- j. repeated invitations to go out, especially after prior refusal;
- k. unwelcome sexual propositions;
- l. the use of promise or threat to coerce someone into sexual activity;
- m. sexual insults, taunts, or name-calling;

d) Abuse:

Abuse can be defined as, but not limited to any act of threat involving molestation, harassment, corporal punishment or any form of physical, sexual or mental abuse; the misuse of power or authority; treatment of an individual or persons in a harmful, injurious, and or offensive manner; speaking insultingly, harshly and /or unjustly to or about another person(s); or committing an act of sexual assault.

Conflict of Interest Guidelines

A Conflict of Interest refers to situations in which personal, occupational or financial considerations may affect or appear to affect a Board/Executive member's or member's objectivity, judgment or ability to act in the best interests of _____ (here after referred to as "the Society") A Conflict of Interest may be actual, potential or perceived in nature.

Examples may include but are not limited to:

1. Personal interests which conflict with the interests of the Society or are otherwise adverse to the interests of the Society.
2. Accept payment or benefit financially through Society involvement, other than reimbursement of out of pocket expenses pursuant Financial Policy and Procedures of the Society and/or generally acceptable financial practices and/or through the normal business practices of the Society.

Complaint Process

1. The Board/Executive members of _____ (here after referred to as "the Society") shall, at the Board/Executive meeting held after the Society AGM form a Code of Conduct Committee comprised of five members. The general membership of the Society shall be advised of the Committee Chair.
2. Any member of the Society who is In Good Standing, may file a complaint regarding an alleged breach of the Code of Conduct by any member of the Society.
3. The complainant shall deliver a written complaint to the Secretary of the Society. Should the Secretary be the subject of the complaint, the complainant shall deliver a written copy of the complaint to the President of the Society..
4. The person receiving the complaint shall deliver a copy of the complaint to the Chair of the Code of Conduct Committee.
5. The Chair of the Code of Conduct Committee shall advise two members of the Code of Conduct Committee and cause an investigation to be made regarding the complaint.
6. The Chair of the Code of Conduct Committee shall advise the person who is the subject of the complaint that an investigation has been commenced.
7. The Chair of the Code of Conduct Committee shall advise the person who is the subject of the complaint of its findings and its decision. The decision of the Code of Conduct Committee shall be in writing and is final, subject to any appeal process.
8. Any person found by the Code of Conduct Committee to be in violation of the Code of Conduct and subject to the subsequent ramifications, may, within 15 days of being notified of the decision of the Code of Conduct Committee, appeal the decision of the Code of Conduct Committee to the Board/Executive of the Society. The appeal shall be in writing and set out the reasons for the appeal.
9. The decision of the Board/Executive of the Society regarding an appeal of the decision of the Code of Conduct Committee shall be final and there is no further appeal process available within the structure of the Society, the District to which the Society is aligned or the OHA.

Once read, the lower right corner of each page should be initialed by the member to indicate that each page has been read.

Signed this _____ day of _____, 20_____.

(Signature)