



## CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY

<b>Policy Objective</b>	The purpose of this policy is to define conflict of interest and to identify circumstances in which volunteers, instructors, or employees must declare a conflict of interest.
<b>Policy Statement</b>	It is the policy of St. John Ambulance that all volunteers, instructors and employees are to act in the best interests of the organization and are responsible for ensuring that their private affairs do not present any real or perceived conflicts of interest relative to their duties to St. John Ambulance.
<b>Effective Date</b>	April 2006
<b>Applies To</b>	All volunteers, instructors and employees affiliated with St. John Ambulance in any capacity herein after referred to as “individuals”

### Policy Context

Consistent with the Code of Conduct, St. John Ambulance (SJA) pursues all activities with a commitment to basic values and principles of ethical behaviour and integrity. Many individuals within SJA have close personal relationships with each other and with those who have dealings with SJA.

The most common examples of individuals to whom this applies are:

- Relatives by blood or marriage. For the purpose of this policy, a relative shall include parents, spouse (including common-law or same-sex), child (including adopted), siblings and grandparents whether related by blood or marriage (e.g. step and in-laws).
- Partners
- Other persons with whom one has or has had a close, personal relationship.

This policy recognizes the close personal relationships as a reality and a strength of SJA and clarifies what to do when circumstances of actual or potential conflict arise.

### Definitions

The following information provides a definition of conflict of interest with respect to volunteer, instructor and employee activity with SJA. To further define the context and parameters of conflict of interest, situations in which volunteers, instructors and employees may be at risk of conflict of interest are also defined.



*Conflict of interest*—is any situation in which an individual’s private interest or the interest of someone with whom they have a close personal relationship may or may appear to influence his/her duties and obligations to SJA.

An individual is at *arms length* when s/he does not have any direct or indirect interest related to a person with which s/he has a close personal relationship.

**Examples of Conflict of Interest Situations to be Avoided**

While there is no finite list of the conflicts that could be encountered, some of the more common examples include:

- Offering reduced rates or discounts for SJA services and products;
- Hiring, appointment, promotion and compensation adjustments made by a non-arms length individual either alone or with others;
- Awarding business contracts to persons with whom the decision maker has a close personal relationship;
- Preferential treatment;
- Acceptance of gifts or favours greater than \$50 in value, from customers or suppliers or prospective customers or suppliers except when to do otherwise would be culturally insensitive;
- Borrowing or making use of SJA funds, names, property, goodwill or other assets for other than SJA purposes;
- Use of status with SJA to obtain gain, directly or indirectly, from those doing or seeking to do business with SJA;
- Accepting outside positions which deprive SJA of the time, attention and business judgement required to perform their duties;
- Direct competition with SJA.

**Policy Requirements**

1. If a conflict does arise between the private interests and the official duties of an individual, the conflict should be resolved in favour of the public interest.
2. Candidates for any position at SJA are expected to declare a potential conflict of interest as part of their application. Candidates must complete the Conflict of Interest Information Form (see Annex 1).



## **Responsibilities/Accountabilities**

National Office is responsible for:

- acting in an advisory and support role for Provincial/Territorial Councils and Offices including identifying situations where conflict of interest may arise; and,
- addressing any declared conflict of interest.

Provincial/Territorial Councils and Offices are responsible for:

- acting in an advisory and support role for local SJA Offices including identifying situations where conflict of interest may arise; and,
- addressing any declared conflict of interest.

Local SJA Offices are responsible for:

- acting in an advisory and support role for local SJA units including identifying situations where conflict of interest may arise; and,
- addressing any declared conflict of interest.

SJA volunteers, instructors, and employees (individuals) are responsible for:

- ensuring that their private affairs do not present any real, apparent, or potential conflicts of interest with respect to their duties with SJA;
- ensuring that they do not place themselves in a position where they are under an obligation to any person who might benefit from special consideration or favour on their part or seek in any way to gain special treatment from them because of their position with SJA; and,
- ensuring they do not directly or indirectly use, or allow the use of SJA property of any kind for anything other than officially approved activities.

## **Procedures**

### **Declaration**

1. Individuals who suspect or become aware of a conflict of interest are required to immediately complete the Conflict of Interest Information Form (see Page 6 of this policy) and submit it to:
  - their immediate supervisor, or
  - if the supervisor is not at arms length, to the next most senior person who is at arms length.

### **Meetings**

2. At the start of every meeting or series of meetings, the Chair will ask whether any individual has a conflict of interest to declare.



3. When an individual declares a conflict the Chair will:
  - determine whether the individual is to refrain from participating in or influencing the discussion, and voting, and/or leave during the discussion
  - ensure the declaration of conflict of interest and subsequent steps are appropriately recorded in meeting notes or minutes.

### **Consultation**

4. Any individual who requires clarity on the interpretation of this conflict of interest policy should contact any member of their provincial or territorial management team. The same applies to those individuals under the umbrella of the National Office.

### **Response**

5. The arms-length supervisor, in consultation with the next most senior supervisor will review and determine whether a conflict of interest exists.
6. The arms-length supervisor will complete the form indicating whether the conflict exists and provide a copy to the individual.
7. If a conflict of interest does exist, the arms-length supervisor will:
  - reach a written agreement with the individual on the means by which that conflict will be removed, avoided or handled;
  - within 48 hours of confirmation of a conflict of interest, review and decide whether and how to change any decisions which were made related to the conflict.
8. A copy of the completed form and in the case of a conflict of interest, the written agreement, must remain on file with the respective Council Office in accordance with the SJA Records Management Policy.
9. All individuals are subject to disciplinary measures including suspension with or without pay, dismissal as a volunteer, termination of employment for just cause or legal action for:
  - failure to report a potential conflict of interest
  - violation of this conflict of interest policy

### **Appeal**

10. An individual may appeal any decision of the arms-length supervisor by writing to the Provincial/Territorial Management Team within 30 days from the date of written confirmation of the decision. This appeal does not suspend the decision of the arms-length supervisor nor that supervisor's ability to make additional or consequential decisions.



11. The Provincial/Territorial Management Team will:

- Make a decision within 30 days of the receipt of the appeal
- Respond in writing to the individual and the original decision-maker
- Make all the final decisions with respect to the conflict of interest.

**Resources**

SJA Code of Conduct

SJA Records Management Policy

SJA Discipline Policy

**Policy Review**

This policy will be reviewed at a minimum of every three years and as required.