

<b>Title: CODE OF ETHICS POLICY</b> Replicated from Schedule "H" of Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)	<b>Policy Number:</b> HR-0001.09r.1
	<b>Policy Area:</b> HUMAN RESOURCES
<b>Policy Approved By:</b> BOARD CHAIR	<b>Effective Date:</b> June 1, 2015

## Introduction

The Retirement Homes Regulatory Authority (the "RHRA") regulates retirement homes in Ontario. We believe that high standards of ethical conduct are essential to our role as a regulator. Our integrity and commitment to these standards are crucial to building and maintaining a strong relationship with the seniors we protect and the people who support them, the retirement home sector, the government, other regulators and the public. This Code of Conduct (the "Code") describes the principles and values that guide our behavior, and the rules and practices we have put in place to make sure we continue to meet them.

## Complying with the Code

*To whom does the Code apply?*

The Code applies to the following people:

1. All full or part-time employees of the RHRA, including contract, temporary and seconded staff members;
2. Members of the RHRA Board of Directors;
3. RHRA statutory officers; and
4. People who the RHRA retains and appoints.

Everyone to whom this Code applies must comply with it and is responsible for being familiar with its contents.

## Compliance

Complying with the Code is a condition of employment, or an appointment or retainer. When joining or beginning work with the RHRA, a person must affirm that he or she has read the Code and agrees to comply with it.

The RHRA takes regular action to encourage and ensure compliance with the Code. The RHRA educates its staff, board members and others about the Code, including providing orientation and regular training. The RHRA also includes a requirement to comply with the Code in its employment (and other) contracts where appropriate.

Breaching the Code is serious and may result in discipline, including suspension or termination of employment or appointment. The RHRA encourages those who breach the Code to report it, with a view to resolving the breach.

### *Where to go for help*

Making the right decision in an ethical context is not always easy. In some cases, these decisions will have serious consequences for the person making them and for the RHRA. Employees and others at the RHRA should ask questions and seek guidance about the Code if they are facing a difficult situation or decision.

Employees and those on retainer with the RHRA can seek help from their supervisor or a member of senior management. Officers and board members can seek help from the Chair, Registrar & CEO or General Counsel.

### **Compliance with Applicable Law and RHRA Bylaws and Policies**

Everyone at the RHRA must perform their duties in accordance with applicable law and comply with RHRA bylaws. They must also comply with all RHRA policies that apply to them. The following policies or sets of policies have particular relevance to the Code:

1. The RHRA's Privacy Code, and policies for protecting confidential information, responding to privacy breaches, and acceptable use of the internet and email;
2. Policy and procedures to provide access to persons with a disability;
3. Human resources policy, including policies for a respectful workplace, and policies relating to health and safety;
4. RHRA policies relating to expenses, procurement and signing authority;
5. Governance and Board of Directors policy, including policies relating to education, and to roles and responsibilities; and,
6. RHRA policies relating to the proper management and retention of records.

### **RHRA Values**

The RHRA has a mission and mandate, vision and values. The RHRA's values guide everything that it does. Everyone at the RHRA must adhere to the letter and spirit of these values in their day-to-day work. For the purposes of this Code, a summary of the RHRA values is as follows:

1. Excellence: we set and attain high standards and act with integrity;
2. Fairness: we treat people's perspectives fairly and equitably, and favour the interest of consumer protection;
3. Accountability: we take responsibility for our actions and are transparent in our activities;
4. Collaboration: we work together with our colleagues and partners to protect residents of retirement homes; and,
5. Efficiency and effectiveness: we use resources optimally and follow a risk-based approach to make informed decisions and achieve our goals.

### **Preserving Confidentiality**

The RHRA collects, stores and uses sensitive information. This information could relate to the health care of an individual. It could also be the proprietary information of a licensee. The disclosure of this information could harm the RHRA, a resident, a licensee or the government. Consumers, licensees and others expect us to safeguard the confidentiality of certain information.

Confidential information is any information that a person obtains through working at the RHRA and that is not available to the public. RHRA employees and others at the RHRA must not disclose confidential information outside the RHRA unless they have approval or they must do so by law. No one at the RHRA may use confidential information to benefit themselves or anyone else, or for a purpose that does not relate to their work at the RHRA.

The RHRA has a Privacy Code and other policies that protect and regulate the use of confidential information. Everyone at the RHRA must comply with these policies.

### **Communicating Outside of the RHRA**

The RHRA's Board of Directors designates who may act as a spokesperson for the RHRA. RHRA employees must not speak to the media unless they have the approval of the board or the Registrar & CEO. Employees who receive an inquiry from the media should refer the inquiry to the appropriate staff director or designate, or directly to the Registrar & CEO.

RHRA employees must have approval of their supervisor or authorization from the Registrar & CEO to teach, present or speak at a public forum, or write about the RHRA.

Board members must comply with the policies and rules in place with respect to public and media statements that concern the RHRA.

### **Avoiding Conflicts of Interest**

#### *Definition and examples*

A conflict of interest exists where a reasonable person would conclude that a personal or financial interest might affect a person's judgment or the performance of his or her duties. A conflict of interest may be real or perceived, actual or potential, direct or indirect.

Here are some examples of a conflict:

1. An employee or board member's family member or friend may benefit from a matter that the employee or board member may influence through his or her work at the RHRA;
2. An employee or board member's political activities conflict with his or her duties at the RHRA; or,
3. An employee or board member conceals information that is relevant to a vital aspect of the affairs of the RHRA.

#### *Declining Gifts*

The RHRA values its reputation for integrity and independence. At the same time, the RHRA wants to maintain strong working relationships, including appropriate courtesy and hospitality. RHRA employees, officers and board members should be careful about accepting gifts from a person that the RHRA regulates or does business with. Generally, a RHRA employee, officer or board member should not seek or accept a gift or benefit if a reasonable person would conclude that it would influence or appear to influence his or her duties. Never accept a gift that would embarrass the RHRA if the circumstances of the gift became public.

If an employee, officer or board member must accept a gift out of reasonable courtesy in the course of performing their duties, the gift should not exceed a value of approximately \$30, nor should it create a conflict of interest or an obligation for the RHRA.

RHRA employees, officers and board members must not accept cash gifts from a member of the retirement home sector or from a person with a business relationship with the RHRA. Cash gifts include gift certificates and gift cards.

#### *Resolving conflicts of interest*

RHRA employees must avoid conflicts of interest. All employees are responsible for reporting potential conflicts to their supervisor or to the staff director in charge of human resources. The RHRA will determine whether there is a conflict of interest. If there is a conflict, it is the employee's responsibility to resolve the conflict. The RHRA can assist the employee in developing appropriate measures to resolve the conflict.

RHRA officers and board members must disclose conflicts in accordance with applicable law and RHRA policies and by-laws that relate to conflict of interest. Officers and board members may seek the assistance of the Chair in determining whether a conflict exists. RHRA officers may also have a duty in their appointment agreements to disclose and resolve conflicts.

The RHRA will consider the timely and full disclosure of a potential conflict, including the acceptance of a gift, as intent in good faith to comply with this Code.

#### **Political Activity**

Everyone at the RHRA may engage in political activity on his or her own time and at his or her own expense. No one at the RHRA may do the following:

1. Engage in political activity in the workplace;
2. Use RHRA resources for political activity; and
3. Link political activity to the RHRA or to a role or position with the RHRA.

The RHRA may require a leave of absence if a person wants to run for elected office. The RHRA may also require a leave if a person wants to undertake political activity that may affect his or her duties, RHRA activities, or RHRA's relationship with the government or legislature.

#### **Property and Records**

Everyone at the RHRA must take all reasonable steps to protect RHRA assets and property from loss, theft, damage and misuse. Everyone must use RHRA resources solely for lawful purposes.

Everyone at the RHRA must maintain accurate and reliable records. Employees who are responsible for public or board documents or records must make sure they are clear, complete, accurate, and timely.

**Reporting Wrongdoing or a Breach of the Code**

Everyone at the RHRA must report wrongdoing at or by the RHRA. Wrongdoing means the following:

1. Breaching a law or regulation;
2. An act or failure to act that creates a grave danger to people or to the environment;
3. Flagrant or serious misuse of money, assets or authority;
4. Breach of this Code; and
5. Directing or trying to influence a person to commit wrongdoing.

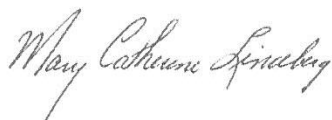
Employees and those on retainer with the RHRA should report to their supervisor or to a member of senior management. If you are unsure whether to make a report, seek advice from your supervisor or other appropriate person. Officers and board members should report to the Chair, Registrar & CEO or General Counsel.

The RHRA encourages employees and others to speak to the Chair or a member of senior management directly if there is concern that the RHRA is not addressing wrongdoing in a timely manner.

Everyone at the RHRA must use good faith in making a report. It is a breach of the Code to make a false report or a report in bad faith. No one should conduct his or her own investigation or act on his or her own to respond to wrongdoing.

The RHRA will not threaten or retaliate against anyone for making a report, seeking help or providing information during an investigation into wrongdoing. The RHRA will protect its employees against reprisal. Threats or reprisal in the context of a report is a breach of this Code. The RHRA will strive to protect privacy in handling a report. However, it might have to disclose information about the report to investigate it and to take action to resolve it.

Mary Catherine Lindberg



\_\_\_\_\_  
**Chair**

June 1, 2015

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

The Honourable Mario Sergio



\_\_\_\_\_  
**Minister Responsible for Seniors Affairs**

June 9/15  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

**AGREEMENT TO COMPLY**

I ACKNOWLEDGE that I have read and understand the RHRA’s Code of Ethics (SCHEDULE “H” of MOU) and agree to conduct myself in accordance with its contents.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Document Control				
Policy #	Approval Date	Review Date	Author(s)	Description of Change(s)
HR-0001.09r.1	June 1, 2015		John Risk	General simplification of language.