

# THE INSTITUTE OF CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS OF BELIZE CODE OF ETHICS

## **PART C - APPLICABLE TO MEMBERS NOT IN PUBLIC PRACTICE**

### **SECTION 16**

#### ***Conflict of Loyalties***

Members not in public practice owe a duty of loyalty to their employer as well as to their profession and there may be times when the two are in conflict. An employee's normal priority should be to support his or her organization's legitimate and ethical objectives and the rules and procedures drawn up in support of them. However, an employee cannot legitimately be required to:

- (a) break the law;
- (b) breach the rules and standards of their profession;
- (c) lie to or mislead (including misleading by keeping silent) those acting as auditors to the employer, or
- (d) put their name to or otherwise be associated with a statement which materially misrepresents the facts.

### **SECTION 17**

#### ***Support for Professional Colleagues***

A member, particularly one having authority over others, should give due weight for the need for their professional colleagues to develop and hold their own judgement in accounting matters and should deal with differences of opinion in a professional way.

### **SECTION 18**

#### ***Professional Competence***

18.1 A member not in public practice may be asked to undertake significant tasks for which he or she has not had sufficient specific training or experience. When asked to undertake such work the member should not mislead the employer as to the degree of expertise or experience he or she possesses.

- 18.2 Members not in public practice should not accept or perform work which they are not competent to undertake unless they obtain such advice and assistance as will enable them competently to carry out the work.
- 18.3 In agreeing to carry out professional work, members imply that there is a level of competence necessary to perform those services and that their knowledge, skill and experience will be applied with reasonable care and diligence.
- 18.4 There is a continuing duty on members to maintain their professional knowledge and skill at a level required to ensure that an employer receives the advantage of competent professional services based on up-to-date developments in practice, legislation and techniques.

## **SECTION 19**

### ***Presentation of Information***

- 19.1 Members are expected to present financial information fully, honestly and professionally so that it will be understood in its context.
- 19.2 Financial and non-financial information should be maintained in a manner that describes clearly the true nature of business transactions, assets or liabilities and classifies and records entries in a timely and proper manner. Members should do everything that is within their power to ensure that this is the case.
- 19.3 Any report for which members are responsible, whether or not it bears their signature, should be prepared with integrity and objectivity. This means, for example, that while a report prepared by a member may properly present one side of the case and may present that case to its best advantage, the report should be accurate, truthful, and within its scope, both complete and balanced. It should not rely on ambiguities or half-truths but should be objectively justifiable and should not be based on unreasonable assumptions.
- 19.4 When members have sole responsibility for the preparation and approval of information, including management information, which is to be made public or which is to become available on however restricted a basis outside the organization to which it refers, they should ensure that such information complies with applicable Statements of Standard Accounting Practice and if it does not so comply that the reasons for non-compliance are stated truthfully, unambiguously and fairly.

- 19.5 When it is not their sole responsibility, members should use their best endeavors to achieve compliance with the relevant standards or, where the information does not comply with applicable Statements of Standard Accounting Practice, to ensure that the reasons for non-compliance are stated truthfully, unambiguously and fairly.

## **SECTION 20**

### ***Fidelity***

- 20.1 Members not in public practice owe certain legal duties to their employers. Members have a duty of fidelity which requires them to be fully committed to furthering the legitimate interests of their employer. While this duty continues throughout the period of working for an organization it also applies when members wish to change employment.
- 20.2 The duty of fidelity clearly does not prevent an employee from using the skills acquired while working with a former employer in undertaking a new role with a different organization. On the other hand members should neither use nor appear to use special knowledge that could only have been acquired with access to confidential information. For example members should refrain from using knowledge gained about a former employer's likely offer price in the bid for a contract.
- 20.3 Although some judgement is required as to the dividing line which separates experience gained from special knowledge acquired, the overriding principles that should be observed are integrity, and professionalism. In addition the actions of members with regards to the handling of special knowledge gained should not bring discredit to the Institute but should be consistent with the good reputation of the profession.