



Canadian Bar Association, Saskatchewan Branch Principles of Conduct Policy

Purpose:

The Saskatchewan Branch of the Canadian Bar Association (the "Branch") is committed to the principles of fairness, honesty and integrity. This Principles of Conduct Policy (the "Policy") applies specifically to volunteer activities and supplements the governing principles for members of the legal profession.

The Branch recognizes the historical role of codification of rights, freedoms and responsibilities in breaking down unseen barriers to participation. It seeks the participation of new members and volunteers from every sector of the legal profession.

The Policy will promote confidence and credibility in the Branch among members, volunteers, staff, and the public. The Policy is also intended to ensure volunteers and staff are welcomed, and treated as valuable and integral members of the Branch's governance, management, and operations.

Scope:

The Policy applies to all volunteers acting in any capacity on the Branch's behalf. To the extent that it does not conflict with the Branch office manual, which governs employed staff, staff members are also expected to follow the Policy.

General Principles of Conduct:

1. to act with integrity, honesty, transparency, and in good faith in the Branch's best interests;
2. to comply with the Saskatchewan Human Rights Code;
3. to seek consensus through open discussion and debate, with appropriate consideration and respect for legitimate dissent;
4. to participate in Branch activities constructively, in co-operation with other volunteers and Branch staff;
5. to respect the fundamental premise that all volunteers give generously of their time and talents;
6. to refrain from making inappropriate, undue, and unwarranted demands on the Branch's resources, including the time of other volunteers and staff, financial and information technology resources, and physical plant and facilities;
7. when possible, to promote new talent, gender balance and diversity, in support of the achievement of the Branch's mission statement and strategic plan; and
8. to treat staff and other volunteers, members, and guests with courtesy, respect, and dignity.

Reporting of Conflicts:

The Branch will enable volunteers and staff to confidentially bring to the attention of the Vice-President, allegations and evidence of misconduct on the part of any Branch volunteers or staff. The Vice-President will refer allegations concerning staff conduct to the Executive Director for action. If the allegations concern conduct of a volunteer, the Vice-President shall conduct such investigation as he or she believes is appropriate in the circumstances, but, in all cases, must be informed by both sides of a dispute in the course of that investigation.

The Vice-President or Executive Director, as the case may be, shall attempt to resolve the dispute quickly and informally to the satisfaction of both parties and in a manner consistent with the principles underlying the Policy. If the complainant has requested that his or her identity not be revealed, that request shall be honoured, although that request may hinder effective investigation. Any investigation will respect the following principles:

1. confidentiality;
2. the underlying principles and goals of the Policy, including the maintenance of a safe and respectful workplace;
3. privacy entitlements of any of the parties;
4. the value of an apology;
5. recognition of the serious implications for reputation due to unsubstantiated complaints; and
6. proportionality with respect to the alleged misconduct; harm done in the workplace, to Branch's work, and to the individuals involved; and the risk of future adverse outcomes if the misconduct is not discouraged or stopped.

If the dispute cannot be resolved quickly and informally, the complainant may request that the matter be brought before a meeting of the Branch's Executive Committee (the "Executive") at its next scheduled meeting, or at an *ad hoc* meeting if urgency requires. The Vice-President or Executive Director, as the case may be, must prepare the reference in writing, describing the incident and the results of the informal investigation, including each party's position. The Executive may determine any appropriate steps that should be part of the procedure at its meeting and that should be taken to protect the confidentiality of the investigation. The parties are entitled to attend the Executive meeting at which the matter is to be discussed. The names of the parties directly involved shall not be recorded in any Executive minutes unless the parties request their names to be recorded.

If a dispute or complaint is not resolved by the Executive, the Vice-President shall report in writing to Branch Council. The Council meeting at which such a report is considered shall be held in camera with only voting members of Council and the parties to the matter present. The report shall not refer to the parties in any identifiable manner. Council may then direct the Executive to take any further action Council deems necessary.

Confidentiality of Information:

In the course of day-to-day business, volunteers and staff may receive sensitive information relating to, among other things, Branch plans, practices, programs, methodology, pricing, finances, customers, volunteers, members and staff. This information must be kept confidential.

No one shall seek access to private information of members without due compliance with Branch privacy policies. No one shall seek access to private information of staff without a clear and relevant purpose pertaining to Branch business. All such requests shall be directed first to the Executive Director.

Display of this Policy

Copies of the Policy shall be displayed in prominent locations in the public reception area of the Branch Office. A further copy shall be available to members on the Branch website.