



# **CODE OF CONDUCT**

**FOR THE**

# **GHANA CIVIL SERVICE**

**NOVEMBER, 2022**

**RCU, OHCS**

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## **1.0. INTRODUCTION**

The Ghana Civil Service is an integral part of the Public Administration System (PAS) of Ghana. Its core mandate as stated in the Civil Service Act, 1993 (PNDCL 327) is to assist the Government to formulate and implement policies to promote good governance and socio-economic development for Ghanaians. This calls for a diligent, customer sensitive and responsive Civil Service.

For these aspirations to be firmly established in the Service's culture/psyche, a Code of Conduct for Civil Service staff should conform to appropriate norms and standards of behaviour and attitudes governing normal interactions between the Civil Service Staff and his employer on one hand, and his clients/public on the other.

The standards and norms of behaviour prescribed provide a framework for promoting good governance, projecting the good image of the Civil Service, and sustaining its self-esteem in both local and international circles.

For these rules to be pragmatic or realistic, they have been formulated to reflect the human rights of the worker, local and international labour regulations, as well as the culture of the people of Ghana and the working environment of the staff.

The Code of Conduct should be viewed primarily as a guide to Civil Service staff in their normal relationships and dealings with their principal stakeholders, viz, the Government, Civil Service Organisations, the business community and the general public. Nevertheless, provision has been made for appropriate administrative sanctions to be applied where the conduct of Civil Service staff is found to be inconsistent with the Code of Conduct.

This undertaking is made in the conviction that employment in the Civil Service of Ghana places the Civil Servant under a moral obligation to work conscientiously to earn his or her living and to look upon his or her work as a contribution to making the economy of Ghana strong and healthy.

## **2.0. APPLICATION, SCOPE AND PURPOSE**

1. In pursuance of Section 92 (3) and (4) (a), of the Civil Service Law, 1993 (PNDC Law 327), the Head of Civil Service in consultation with the Civil Service Council hereby, issue as part of the Administrative Instructions, the Code of Conduct of the Civil Service.

2. This Code is applicable to the following personnel:

- i. Officers holding a Civil Service post;
- ii. A Civil Service staff, either on contract or secondment to an approved employment or on leave with/without pay, annual leave, or, on course of training.
- iii. Consultants and Technical Advisors and other person working in the Civil Service or undertaking a Civil Service assignment.

### **3.0. GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF THE CODE**

The Code of Conduct for the Civil Service has been drawn up, incorporating the following general principles:

**Principle 1** – Abiding by the Constitution and Laws of Ghana with dignity, integrity and professionalism;

**Principle 2** – Adhering to appropriate standards with honesty and efficiency;

**Principle 3** – Refraining from bringing the Civil Service into disrepute;

**Principle 4** – Avoiding conflict of interest;

**Principle 5** – Maintaining political neutrality in the performance of one’s official duties; and

**Principle 6** – Adhering to the guiding principles of public life: Selflessness, Integrity, Justice and Fairness, Accountability, Transparency, and Leadership.

## **3.1. PRINCIPLE 1 – ABIDING BY THE CONSTITUTION AND LAWS OF GHANA WITH DIGNITY, INTEGRITY AND PROFESSIONALISM**

### **3.1.1. Constitutional Responsibilities**

A Civil Service staff shall serve the duly constituted Government, in accordance with the principles set out in this Code and recognizing: -

- a) The accountability of Civil Service Staff to the President and Parliament through Ministers of State, as well as to the Public;
- b) The duty of all Civil Service staff to discharge public functions reasonably and in accordance with the law;
- c) As may apply and if a professional, shall be bound by and observe the professional code of conduct and ethics he might be required to subscribe to. The professional requirements and ethical standards of the said body shall not contravene with the Constitution, this code or any other laws governing the Civil Service;
- d) The duty to comply with the law, including international law, best practice and treaty obligations, and to uphold the administration of justice;
- e) The Civil Service Staff shall serve the Civil Service and the State with honesty, transparency, accountability, fairness, professionalism, integrity, neutrality and impartiality;
- e) The Civil Service staff shall ensure that their personal interests or activities do not interfere with or appear to interfere with the obligations to serve the Ghana Civil Service, the State, and the citizenry; and
- f) The need to observe the Ghana Public Service work ethic.

### **3.1.2. Performance Management Culture**

A Civil Service staff shall ensure that the fully complies with the performance management culture of the Civil Service by periodically completing the annual Performance Appraisal Instrument as may apply to the grade to promote productivity and professionalism in the Civil Service;

### **3.1.3. Affirmative Action**

A Civil Service staff shall fully support and implement effectively Government's policies/programmes aimed at protecting vulnerable groups in society, including women, the disabled, children etc. from undue discriminatory practices that may tend to hinder their socio-economic advancement.

#### **3.1.4. Accountability to Government and obligation to Society**

A Civil Service staff shall always remain faithful to the policies/programmes/plans of the Government and should seek to implement Government policies/programmes/plans impartially, transparently and efficiently at all times.

#### **3.1.5. Promotion of Good Governance**

A Civil Service staff shall seek to actively promote and facilitate the processes of developing and implementing governmental functions consistent with economic growth and development and the rule of law; and for the wellbeing of the society/the citizenry, as a whole.

## **3.2.PRINCIPLE 2 – ADHERING TO APPROPRIATE STANDARDS WITH HONESTY AND EFFICIENCY.**

### **3.2.1. Standards and Work Ethics**

Civil Service staff shall accept personal responsibility for developing and exhibiting a strong work ethic and affirm their commitment to combating negative work habits in the Civil Service. To this end, any person working in the Civil Service of Ghana is committed to the following work ethics:

(a) **Reporting for duty punctually and in good time before work begins.** He or she will not engage in, nor encourage the practice of:

- i. Habitual lateness to work and meetings using weather, poor transportation and domestic problems and other excuses.
- ii. Taking more than the approved leave period.
- iii. Irregular attendance.

Unless otherwise stated, the official working hours in the Civil Service are:-

**Monday – Friday: 8.30 a.m. – 12.30 p.m.**

**1.30 p.m. – 5.00 p.m.**

(b) **Devoting, during working hours, his or her full time, attention and competence to the business of his organization.** He or she will not engage in, nor encourage the practice of:

- i. Being at work but doing no work;
- ii. Being deliberately and unduly slow in carrying out an activity or assignment (go–slow; work-to-rule);
- iii. Using or exaggerating sickness to avoid duty or work;
- iv. Trading, selling or transacting private financial business on the premises of organizations;
- v. Receiving and entertaining social visits;
- vi. Managing babies and children outside designated areas;
- vii. Performing unofficial duties or activities during office hours;
- viii. Drunkenness on the job and/or being under the influence of narcotic drugs; and
- ix. Eating outside of organisation’s designated areas.

(c) **Guarding against absenting himself or herself from work without permission or reasonable excuse.** He or she will not engage in, nor encourage the practice of:

- i. Persistently leaving work early;
- ii. Not returning promptly to work after meal breaks and approved leave;
- iii. Being absent from duty without official permission;
- iv. Vacating post and failing to inform competent authority when leaving station; and
- v. Non-opening of service counters in time and leaving counters unattended.

(d) **Following and obeying lawful, legitimate or reasonable definite instructions, and complying with laid-down procedures relating to one's work.** He or she will not engage in, nor encourage the practice of:

- i. Sabotaging efforts of colleagues, organizations and Government as employer;
- ii. Talking about the stress level of daily work and using this as an excuse for not working.

(e) **Taking pride and joy in doing more than is required by duty.** He or she will not engage in, nor encourage the practice of:

- i. Setting personal limits beyond which one's commitment will not extend;
- ii. Not wanting to do overtime;
- iii. Providing poor quality service and not striving for excellence in the service of fellow-men.

(f) **Responding to legitimate requests and demands of members of the public with urgency, promptness and timeliness.** He or she will not engage in, nor encourage the practice of:

- i. Demanding or accepting gifts of any kind to influence the delivery of a service;
- ii. Disregarding deadlines, action steps and target dates;
- iii. Being unfriendly, rude and discourteous to staff, clients and the public; and
- iv. Not returning phone calls and emails promptly.

(g) **Seeing a task through and having a sense or pride in accomplishing assignments every time.** He or she will not engage in nor encourage the practice of:

- i. Putting off to tomorrow what can be done today and now; and
- ii. Conducting business and delivering services poorly and ineffectively.

(h) **Undertaking tasks in ways that contribute effectively to achieving the goals of his or her organization.** He or she will not engage in, nor encourage the practice of:

- i. Being lackadaisical with in performance of duty;
- ii. Refusing to rise to the occasion;
- iii. Gaining the reputation of one who cannot be "counted on" by the organization;
- iv. Intentionally neglecting one's duty;
- v. Not maintaining accurate and transparent records relating to his duties; and
- vi. Falsifying any records



### **3.2.2. Customer/Client Orientation**

- i. A Civil Service staff shall be courteous and prepared to help a customer/visitor who seeks for Their services. If they are not in a position to assist, the Officer may refer the visitor to another officer to deal with the client. In all circumstances, A Civil Service Staff must not snub a customer but shall be accommodating to him or her.
- ii. A Civil Service staff shall respond to legitimate requests and demands of members of the public and business community with urgency, promptness and fairness.

### **3.2.3. Transactions with Public/Clients (Local and Foreign)**

- i. A Civil Service staff shall at all times have the public interest in mind, and shall serve the public in an unbiased and impartial manner.
- ii. In all their dealings with clients, Civil Service staff should not use their authority or office for personal gain but always seek to enhance the image and uphold the self-esteem of the Service and Ghana by:
  - a) Maintaining an unimpeachable standard of integrity consistent with the provisions of the Code of Conduct for the Ghana Civil Service;
  - b) Complying both with the letter and spirit of any contractual obligations;
  - c) Being approachable, discreet and polite in all interactions with the client;
  - d) Inhibiting arrogant conduct and self-centredness;
  - e) Avoiding the use of intemperate language; and
  - f) Partnering and promoting the development of the private sector.
- iii. A Civil Service staff shall not be an agent of, or further the interests of a foreign government, organisation or individual in a manner that may be detrimental to the interests of the Service or the Nation.

### **3.2.4. Financial Responsibility**

Civil Service staff should ensure the proper, effective and efficient use of public money within their control.

### **3.2.5. Avoidance of waste**

Civil Service staff should avoid waste in the use of human, financial and material resources as well as time. At all material moments, the Civil Service staff must avoid the misuse of any public office;

### **3.2.6. Use of Government Property/Material**

A Civil Service Staff shall use the property and assets of the organisation **for official purposes only**, and shall exercise reasonable care when using such property and assets. They must not engage in any activity that amounts to abuse of office.

### **3.2.7. Use of Government Labour**

- i. A Civil Service Staff shall not employ for private purposes, the services of Government employees at times during which the services of the latter are at the disposal of Government.
- ii. These provisions do not apply when arrangements have been authorized by a Chief Director/Head of Department whereby services, which may involve the use of Government property, may be rendered by Government employees within official working hours for the benefit of members of the public, including Government officers, in return for a charge to be paid into the Consolidated Fund.

### **3.2.8. Public Appearance, Press, Broadcast etc**

- i. A Civil Service staff shall not without the express permission of the Head of the Civil Service, act as the editor of any newspaper, or take part directly or indirectly in the management thereof, nor publish in any manner anything which may reasonably be regarded as of political nature or relating to the administration of the country. This provision does not affect any Civil Service staff who is required as part of his official duties to edit any paper or subscribe articles thereto.

They may, however, publish in their own name matters relating to subjects of general interest.

### **3.2.9. Public Lectures/Statements**

- i. Where a Civil Service Staff who is invited to give a public lecture which relates to the work of the Ministry or Department in which they work, or, any other official business, the Chief Director of the Ministry concerned shall be consulted about any policy or political implications and their prior approval obtained; and in the case of the Chief Director or Head of a Ministry, this should be sought from the Head of the Civil Service.
- ii. A Civil Service staff, in making any public statement, must ensure that it is accurate, and not misleading, and not one that is likely to cause public resentment or outrage.
- iii. Similarly, A Civil Service Staff should not engage in indiscreet conversations and unguarded statements.

### **3.2.10. Anonymous Articles**

- i. A Civil Service staff should avoid writing or circulating anonymous or vexatious letters or statements on any social media platform with malicious intent.
- ii. A Civil Service staff would be deemed acting contrary to the tenets of the Code of Conduct if the authorship of such anonymous articles or publications in which he/she discusses any political subject should be established against him.

### **3.2.11. Communication of Confidential Information**

- i. A Civil Service staff shall protect non-public, confidential and /or classified information at all times;
- ii. A Civil Service staff, unless specially authorized, shall not communicate either directly or indirectly to the press, social media or to any person such information obtained by virtue of his office, which is not available to the public, the disclosure of which may damage the security or other interests of his organisation or the State.
- iii. A Civil Service staff shall not seek to frustrate the policies, decisions, or actions, of Government by the unauthorized, improper, or premature disclosure of any information to which he has had access as a Civil Service staff.
- iv. A Civil Service staff shall not without authority, disclose to a private person, or public official, for his own personal advantage, information which has been communicated in confidence to him or has come to his knowledge as a Civil Service staff.
- v. A Civil Service staff shall not copy information relating to his work for personal gain.
- vi. A Civil Service staff shall not disclose his work related password to anybody. Officers who act contrary to this, will be held responsible for all system activity that occurs using their ID and password.
- vii. A Civil Service staff who has the responsibility for managing computerized personnel and related data in the Civil Service shall not disclose or use such information for any purpose without the approval of the relevant authority, and the use of such data must not contravene national or international legislation.
- viii. A Civil Service staff shall take all reasonable steps to ensure that confidential or secret information or documents entrusted to his or her care are adequately protected from improper or inadvertent disclosure.
- ix. A Civil Service staff shall ensure that all relevant legislations of Data Protection and any citizens rights to information per the Data Protection Act, 2012 (Act 843), the Rights to Information Act, 2019 (Act 989) and other related legislations are complied with.

### **3.3. PRINCIPLE 3 – REFRAINING FROM BRINGING THE CIVIL SERVICE INTO DISREPUTE**

#### **3.3.1. Courtesy in Communication**

- i. A Civil Service staff must show courtesy and decency in his communication about any person or matter that is under consideration or forms the subject of comment or response.
- ii. A Civil Service staff shall refrain from the use of insulting or intimidating words against Authority, a fellow Civil Servant, or, customer, or, from showing disrespect to any of them.

#### **3.3.2. Libel or Slander**

Any Civil Servant who libels or slanders another may be investigated and the appropriate disciplinary action may be taken against him. Such disciplinary action will be without prejudice to any action that the aggrieved person may decide to take.

#### **3.3.3. Tax Evasion**

Where a Civil Service Staff is permitted to engage in any other job, or finds himself a job approved by appropriate authority, he should ensure that he fulfils all his tax obligations.

#### **3.3.4. Assaults**

A Civil Service staff shall not engage in verbal assault or be involved in scuffle or physical assault except in self-defence, on any Government premises, or in any public place to the embarrassment of the Civil Service.

#### **3.3.5. Malpractice at Public Examinations**

- i. A Civil Service staff, whether as examiner, invigilator/supervisor or candidate shall not indulge in any form of examination malpractice.
- ii. A Civil Service staff shall not leak public examination questions to any candidates.
- iii. All examination malpractices shall constitute misconduct.

#### **3.3.6. Consumption of Alcoholic Beverages/Narcotic Drugs**

- i. A Civil Service Staff should avoid smoking, g or drinking alcoholic beverage, during official working hours, and should not be found drunk to the embarrassment of his fellow Civil Service staff and the Civil Service.

- ii. Habitual drunkenness or addiction to drugs shall be viewed as damaging the interest and image of the Civil Service.
- iii. Civil Service staff should avoid the use of narcotic drugs and should not be found engaging in an form of narcotic drugs or plants related issues

### **3.3.7. Sexual Harassment/other Malpractices**

- i. A Civil Service staff shall not exploit his relationship with another officer/person to gain advantage of him/her, sexually, or confer undue favours on him, for sexual and other purposes.
- ii. A Civil Service staff shall refrain from engaging in sexual affairs in Government offices, or in any criminal sexual acts or malpractices anywhere.
- iii. Sexual harassment by a Civil Service staff of his opposite or same sex may take such forms as:
  - threatening punitive action,
  - giving favours to cause the opposite or same sex to yield to one's sexual desires,
  - making a request or exerting subtle pressure for sexual activity or favours,
  - making intentional or careless physical contact that is sexual in nature,
  - making gestures, noises, jokes or comments including innuendos regarding another person's sexuality,
  - Sending of sexually suggestive texts, pictures or videos.

### **3.3.8. Disruption of Office Work**

A Civil Service staff should not, during working hours, engage in behaviour or conduct that disrupts or interferes with work of other officers by such means as: congregating in offices, or outside their offices and engaging in gossip.

### **3.3.9. Trading Activities in Offices**

A Civil Service staff shall not engage in unofficial commercial activities on office premises nor shall he encourage peddlers to sell to him, during working hours.

### **3.3.10. Destructive Criticism of another Civil Servant**

A Civil Service staff shall not maliciously/destructively criticize or or make an oral or written communication of a false statement of another Civil Service staff work or conduct that unjustly harms their reputation.

### **3.3.11. Culture of Confidentiality**

Civil Service staff should continue to maintain the ethic/culture of confidentiality even after they have left office. In other words, they should not release confidential information they have come by during their tenure of office to unauthorized people, when they are out of office. To do so, they might render themselves liable under the State Secrets Act, 1962 (Act 101) or any other related regulation.

### **3.3.12. Public Demonstrations**

All public demonstrations by Civil Service staff should be decorous and peaceful.

### **3.3.13. Sale/Purchase of Personal Property**

- i. Except with the prior sanction of the Head of the Civil Service, no official may sell or hire his own or another official's private property to Government, nor may he purchase any private property for Government nor furnish supplies on payment without permission.
- ii. A Civil Service staff shall not use his or her office to wrongfully or unlawfully acquire or influence the acquisition of property.

### **3.3.14. Loan**

A Civil Service staff may not give any loan whatsoever to another at interest nor shall he act as agent for a money lender nor take part in collecting debt on behalf of money lenders.

### **3.3.15. Pecuniary Embarrassment**

- i. Pecuniary embarrassment from whatever cause will be regarded as a circumstance which necessarily has the effect of impairing the efficiency of a Civil Service staff. Such embarrassment, if occasioned by imprudence or other reprehensible cause or, by recklessly standing as security for another person will be deemed to affect the respectability of the Service and the trustworthiness of the individual.
- ii. A Civil Service staff should avoid subscribing to a transaction of any value such as giving his name on a promissory note, or bond or like document, whether as a principal or surety or endorsing any instrument whether for his own purposes or another which is likely to result in financial embarrassment.

### **3.3.16. Bankruptcy**

- i. A Civil Service staff found to be bankrupt, or entering into arrangement with his creditors under any existing legislation on Bankruptcy, would be considered an embarrassment to the Civil Service.
- ii. Any Civil Service staff, on being indicted for debt or against whom bankruptcy proceedings are taken, must immediately inform his Chief Director or Head of Department of the fact.

### **3.3.17. Collection of Contributions**

The collection of contributions in cash or in kind from members of staff or the public to defray the cost of presentations to any other officer (or officers) without the consent of the staff in general, must not be encouraged. However, should donations be found necessary, the issue must be discussed at a Staff Durbar and the prior support of the staff obtained.

### **3.4. PRINCIPLE 4 – AVOIDING CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

#### **3.4.1. Private Gain**

A Civil Service staff shall not use public office directly or indirectly for private gain

#### **3.4.2. Nepotism and Award of Contract**

A Civil Service staff shall not put himself, family or friends in a position where his or their interest conflicts with the functions of his office.

#### **3.4.3. Use of previous office**

A Civil Service staff shall not, on termination of employment, take improper advantage of his previous office.

#### **3.4.4. Use of state property**

A Civil Service staff shall not use or permit the use of state property for activities not associated with the performance of his official duties.

#### **3.4.5. Influence peddling**

A Civil Service staff shall not use his office to seek to influence a decision to be made by another person to further his interest.

#### **3.4.6. Self-dealing**

A Civil Service staff shall not take an action in an official capacity which involves dealing with him/herself in a private capacity and which confers a benefit to himself/herself.

#### **3.4.7. Gifts, Remuneration and Favours**

1. A Civil Service staff is prohibited from receiving valuable gifts whether in the shape of money, goods, hospitality or other personal benefits, if he has reason to believe that the gifts received are intended to influence his judgement or action on a case he is dealing with or will handle in the future. It is equally reprehensible for a Civil Service Staff to give a gift to influence the judgement or action of another person in his favour.



2. In circumstances where a Civil Service Staff is presented with a gift of any character, he should exercise his own judgement as to whether he should decline the offer, otherwise he should consult with his superior officer.
3. At any rate, the value of a gift will be determined by the circumstances of the transaction between the giver and the recipient.

#### **3.4.8. Bribe**

A Civil Service staff shall not demand, receive or give any bribe, nor be an agent for any person who intends to influence a Civil Service staff with a bribe.

#### **3.4.9. Accepting Money from a Member of the Public**

- i. An officer may not in his personal or official capacity, receive any payment from government funds on behalf of, or, as agent for any member of the public.
- ii. All moneys paid to an Officer must either be due to him personally, or, paid to him in his official capacity, in which case, they must be properly brought to account.
- iii. Failure to comply with this provision will render both the paying and receiving Officers liable and responsible for any loss of Government money which may occur.

#### **3.4.10 General Provisions on Conflict of Interest**

- i. A Civil Service staff shall use the best efforts to avoid being in a situation where that officer's personal interests conflict with or appear to conflict with the officer's official duties.
- ii. Without limiting the generality of sub-paragraph (1), a staff shall not hold shares or have any other interest in a company, partnership or other body, directly or through another person, if the holding of those shares or having that interest would result in a conflict with his or her official duties.
- iii. A Civil Service staff whose personal interests are or may be in conflict with his or her official duties shall declare those personal interests to the Chief Director or Head of Department for the necessary action to be taken.
- iv. A staff of the Civil Service shall not award or influence the award of a contract to
  - a) himself or herself,
  - b) his or her spouse or child; or
  - c) a business associate or agent.
- v. In this paragraph, a "conflict of interest" includes the interest of a spouse, a child, a business associate or an agent, or any other matter in which the public officer has a direct or indirect pecuniary or non-pecuniary interest.
- vi. Where a Civil Service staff is present at a meeting where an issue that is likely to result in a conflict of interest is to be discussed, he or she shall declare the interest at the beginning of the meeting or before the issue is deliberated upon.

- vii. A declaration of a conflict of interest shall be recorded in the minutes of that meeting.
- viii. All Civil Service Organisations shall maintain a register of conflicts of interest as specified under this Code (Schedule One) in which an affected officer shall register the particulars of registrable interests, stating the nature and extent of the conflict.
- ix. The Civil Service Organisation shall keep the register of conflicts of interests for five (5) years after the last entry in each volume of the register.
- x. A Civil Service staff shall amend the record of his or her registrable interest in the register maintained under sub-paragraph (ix) whenever there is a change in those registrable interest and such an amendment shall be made within thirty days of the change in the conflict of interest.

### **3.5. PRINCIPLE 5 – MAINTAINING POLITICAL NEUTRALITY IN THE PERFORMANCE OF ONE’S OFFICIAL DUTIES.**

#### **3.5.1. Relationship with Political Parties/Association**

- i. The Constitution of Ghana confers rights on all citizens of Ghana, including Civil Service staff to join any political party or association of their choice. However, by virtue of the traditional role of the Civil Service to serve the Government of the day loyally, and to maintain the confidence of any future administration, A Civil Service staff shall not:
  - a) Accept any office paid or unpaid, permanent or temporary, in any political party or organization;
  - b) Declare himself openly as a registered member of a political party or association;
  - c) Indicate publicly his support for any party, candidate or policy;
  - d) Make speeches or join in demonstrations in favour of any political person, party, or, propaganda;
  - e) Engage in activities which are likely to involve him in political controversy;
  - f) Act in a way that is determined by party political considerations;
  - g) Use official resources for party political purposes;
  - h) Allow his personal political views to determine his policy advice or actions; Contest for elections for political party office or hold political party office.
- ii. A Civil Service staff shall remain politically neutral during his or her term of employment.
- iii. Notwithstanding, A Civil Service staff is entitled to his views in political matters, and, if so qualified, may vote at elections.

#### **3.5.2. Relationship with Ministers, Parliament and the Public**

- i. Civil Service staff should conduct themselves in accordance with the standards of integrity, impartiality and honesty in their dealings with Ministers, Parliament and the Public. They should make honest and impartial information relevant to a decision, available to Ministers. They should not deceive or knowingly mislead Ministers, Parliament or the Public.
- ii. A Civil Service staff must conduct himself in such a way as will deserve and retain the confidence and trust of his Minister.
- iii. Civil Service staff as agents of Government, shall limit themselves to the effective dissemination and implementation of Government policies only and not project themselves by indicating their specific contribution to policy development.

## **3.6. PRINCIPLE 6 – ADHERING TO THE GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF PUBLIC LIFE**

### **3.6.1. Selflessness**

Civil Service staff should take decisions solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefit for themselves, their family or their friends.

### **3.6.2. Integrity**

Civil Service staff should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to any individuals or organizations that might influence them in the performance of their official duties, including awarding of contracts etc.

### **3.6.3. Justice and Fairness**

In carrying out public business including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, Civil Service staff should make choices based solely on merit.

### **3.6.4. Accountability**

Civil Service staff shall be responsible to both the Government (employer) and the public (customer) for their decisions and actions, and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

### **3.6.5. Transparency:**

Civil Service staff should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict access to information only when the wider public interest clearly demands that the information should not be released.

### **3.6.6. Leadership**

Civil Service staff should strive to excel in all their endeavours; be an example to others and encourage others to follow their footsteps.

### **3.6.7. Impartiality**

Civil Service staff shall at all times carry out his or her duties with impartiality and neutrality; and not practice favouritism, nepotism, tribalism, cronyism, religious bias or any other kind of bias or discrimination, or engage in corrupt or unethical practices.

### **3.6.8. Professionalism**

Civil Service staff shall carry out his or her duties in a manner that protects the integrity of his office and treat members of the public or clients with courtesy and respect.

## **4.0.MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS**

### **4.1.Endorsement of Fake Documents**

Civil Service staff should refrain from making false declarations or endorsing forged documents. At any rate, A Civil Service Staff should ascertain the authenticity of any document before endorsing it.

### **4.2.Personal Appearance (Attire)**

Civil Service staff shall dress appropriately at all times, in conformity with professional, cultural and international accepted standards and norms of dressing. An attire must not appear too gaudy or shabby so as to draw unfavourable comments from colleagues or the public.

### **4.3.Acts calculated to bring the Civil Service into disrepute**

Any act by a Civil Service staff which is calculated to bring the Civil Service into disrepute must be avoided.

### **4.4.Exposure of Misconduct**

- i. A Civil Service staff will be expected to expose any act of misconduct, the commission of which he knows or ought to have known to be a misconduct.
- ii. A Civil Service staff who believes that he is being required to act in a manner which is illegal, improper, unethical or in breach of the Constitution, and which may involve possible maladministration, or which is otherwise inconsistent with the Civil Service Code of Conduct, or raises a fundamental issue of conscience, shall report the matter in writing, in line with the procedure specified in this Code.

### **4.5.Offenses not in the Code**

Any act of misconduct by a Civil Service staff not expressly mentioned in this Code or in any regulations operating within the Civil Service shall be reported to the Head of the Civil Service, who may, after consultation with the Civil Service Council, issue instructions as to how it should be dealt with, and the case shall be dealt with accordingly.

## **5.0.REPORTING PROCEDURE**

- 5.1.The reporting procedure to be followed in lodging complaints or reports in respect of breaches of the code of conduct/work ethic is set forth in the ensuing paragraphs.
- 5.2. Where there is a breach of this Code of Conduct, a Civil Service staff may report or complain to a superior officer or the appropriate authority.
- 5.3.Hierarchy of Authority for Lodging Complaint

Reports under this Code may be lodged in the following ascending order:

- a) Immediate Supervisor (of officer complained of or complainant)
  - b) Chief Director/Head of Department
  - c) The Head of Civil Service
  - d) The Civil Service Council
  - e) Chairman of the Public Services Commission
  - f) Chief of Staff
  - g) The President/Vice-President
- 5.4.Where the Officer to whom the report should be made, is himself involved in the breach of the Code, the matter should be reported to the next superior officer.
  - 5.5.In all cases, the reports should be copied to the Chief Director with responsibility for the Ministry/Department, in which the officer being complained about belongs, as well as to the Chairman of the Disciplinary Committee of the Ministry/Department.
  - 5.6.The Officer or Authority to whom the report is made shall indicate the action being taken within a period of two weeks from the receipt of the report, failing which the complainant may take up the complaint with the next superior authority.
  - 5.7.Notwithstanding this procedure, any matter which may be considered to be a breach of human rights or a case of fraud may be reported to the Office of the Commissioner of Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ), the Economic and Organised Crime Office (EOCO) and the Office of the Special Prosecutor (OSP) respectively, where it is not feasible or practicable to invoke the procedure in this Code.

## **6.0.DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES/ PENALTIES**

- 6.1.Disciplinary procedures set out in the following paragraphs may be initiated against a staff member who fails to comply with the standards of conduct in this Code.
- 6.2.Where a case is proven, the Civil Service staff may be subjected to appropriate disciplinary or corrective measure.

6.3. Disciplinary procedure for all offences shall be in accordance with the provisions of the Civil Service Regulations/Administrative Instructions.

#### **6.4. Officers to be Warned in Writing**

- i. Heads of Department/Directorates/Units shall cause a warning in writing to be issued to any Officer whose work or conduct is determined to be unsatisfactory. In every case where an Officer has been so warned, the fact should be so recorded by the Head of the Department/Directorate/Unit concerned.
- ii. An Officer should not be allowed to accumulate not more than three (3) warnings and censures for acts of misconduct before disciplinary action is taken against him.
- iii. In cases where the misconduct is comparatively minor, action may nevertheless, be taken as soon as it is clear that the Officer is not likely to respond to the corrections and when sufficient evidence is available to warrant proceedings under the Code.
- iv. The conduct of any Civil Service staff which contravenes any paragraph of this Code shall be investigated for purposes of discipline.

#### **6.5. Disciplinary Committee**

- i. A Disciplinary Committee shall be constituted to investigate acts of misconduct under this Code and recommend appropriate disciplinary or corrective measures.
- ii. A Disciplinary Committee shall be constituted in the following manner:
  - a. A Senior Officer nominated by the Disciplinary Authority as Chairman.
  - b. Representative of a Ministry/Department Local Labour Union and
  - c. The Personnel Officer or an Officer acting in that capacity shall act as the investigating officer.
- iii. Any Civil Service staff appearing before a Disciplinary Committee shall be given every opportunity to defend himself and have a right of appeal not more than two weeks after the decision.
- iv. The Committee's findings and recommendations shall be forwarded to the appropriate Disciplinary Authority

#### **6.6. Offences and Misconduct**

- i. Offence or Misconduct is any act done without reasonable excuse by a Civil Service staff which amounts to a failure to perform in a proper manner any duty imposed on him as such;

or which contravenes any enactment relating to the Civil Service; or which is otherwise prejudicial to the efficient conduct of the Civil Service; or tends to bring the Civil Service into disrepute; constitutes misconduct.”

- ii. For the purposes of this Code, Offences are classified as either, major or minor as defined in paragraphs 6.7 and 6.8 respectively.

### **6.7. Major Offences**

The major Offences shall in general consist of the following:

- (a) To make unauthorised disclosure of classified and unclassified official information or document to a private person or to another public officer.
- (b) To hold any political Office Paid or Unpaid or to Declare openly ones affiliation or membership of a political party Engaging directly or indirectly in partisan political activities
- (c) To Sexually harass a colleague officer in Government Offices or anywhere
- (d) To demand, receive or give bribe, or be an agent for any person who intends to influence a Civil Service Staff with a bribe.
- (e) To engage in forgery of document(s) in the Office
- (f) To slander or libel another person
- (g) To be Convicted for any offence involving fraud, dishonesty or moral turpitude
- (h) Falsification of official document and or signature
- (i) Violation of existing Civil Service law and rules of serious nature
- (j) Refusal to complete Staff Performance Appraisal for two (2) consecutive years

### **6.8. Minor Offences**

- (a) To be absent from duty without leave or reasonable excuse; irregular or late attendance
- (b) To use, without the consent of the prescribed authority, property or facility provided for the purposes of the Service for some purpose not connected with official duties;
- (c) To engage in an activity outside official duties which is likely to lead to the taking of improper advantage of the position in the Service of that civil servant;
- (d) To fail to submit reports or information or both as prescribed under Section 77 of the Civil Service Act;
- (e) To use confidential information obtained as a result of public position, for personal gain
- (f) To assault a colleague officer verbally on any Government premises, or in any public place to the embarrassment of the Civil Service



## **6.9. Penalties**

- i. For the purposes of this Code, penalty is classified as either, major or minor as defined in paragraphs 6.10 and 6.11 respectively.
- ii. Disciplinary awards may involve the imposition of major or minor penalties, depending on the gravity of the offence/misconduct.

## **6.10. Major Penalties**

Major penalties shall in general consist of the following disciplinary awards:

- a. Reduction in rank
- b. Removal from the Civil Service- This includes the termination of appointments, with or without a reduction a reduction in retirement benefits, where applicable.
- c. Dismissal – This includes the termination of appointment with forfeiture of retirements benefits, excluding statutory retirements if any

## **6.11. Minor Penalties**

Minor penalties shall in general consist of the following disciplinary awards:

- a. Warning or reprimand
- b. Suspension of increment
- c. Withholding or deferment of increment
- d. Suspension from duty with loss of pay
- e. Reduction in salary
- f. Surcharge

## **7.0. REWARDS**

An appropriate reward and recognition shall be accorded to A Civil Service Staff who exhibits good ethical conduct. The rewards shall include; but not limited to;-

- i. Word of recognition of good performance
- ii. Open praise
- iii. Letter of commendation

- iv. Presents
- v. Certificate of merit
- vi. Concessionary trips
- vii. Cash bonuses
- viii. Salary increments

## **8.0. RESPONSIBILITY FOR IMPLEMENTATION**

### **8.1. Office of the Head of the Civil Service (OHCS)**

- i. Ensure the Code is widely publicised and implemented in all Civil Service organizations
- ii. Provide mandatory induction courses in ethics and standards of conduct for new employees
- iii. Ensure the Code is up to date and reflects changes in the public administration system of Ghana as well as global trends in public administration.
- iv. Ensure the implementation of sanctions and rewards under the Code
- v. Ensure that service charters of Ministries and Departments and their dealings with clients and the general public are in line with the standards of conduct prescribed in the Code.

### **8.2. Ministries and Departments**

- i. Provide periodic training in ethics and standards of conduct to staff
- ii. Educate staff on their personal responsibilities under the Code
- iii. Establish a committee to implement the Code and handle other related matters
- iv. Educate, monitor and evaluate the performance of the Committee
- v. Provide the necessary support for staff to give effect to the Punctuality Pledge in the Civil Service.

## 9.0.DEFINITION OF KEY CONCEPTS

**Advantage**-Includes gift, loan, reward, commission, employment or contract, service or favour and exercise of right or power.

**Classified Information**- Includes information marked or determined as “top secret”, “secret”, “confidential” and “restricted”, which when disclosed to an unauthorised person may cause harm to the nation or institution. The Right to Information Act, 2019, (ACT 989) provides the implementation of the constitutional **right to information** held by a public institution that are subject to exemptions.

**Conduct** - Conduct in this context, is behaviour, attitudes, and character exhibited, for example, by any one within and outside the working environment. The standards of conduct generally required of any member of the Civil Service would be leadership, selflessness, competence, integrity, impartiality, fairness and honesty in matters affecting work and status in society.

**Conflict of Interest**-Refers to a situation where A Civil Service Staff's personal interest conflicts with or is likely to conflict with the functions of his office.

**Corruption:** Misuse of a public position for direct or indirect personal gain.

**He/His:** Refers to both Male and Female Civil Service Staff

**Gift**- Any present, donation, grant or favour whether monetary or in kind or any other gain of a personal nature given as an appreciation after a service has been rendered.

**Influence Peddling** – The practice of soliciting some form of benefit in exchange for the exercise of one's official authority or influence.

**Non-Public Information**-Information that A Civil Service Staff gains by reason of the servant's employment and which the public officer knows or reasonably ought to know has not been made available to the general public nor has been authorised to be made available to the public on request.

**Professionalism** – High standard (performance) expected from a person well trained in a particular job.

**Self-dealing** – A situation where one takes an action in an official capacity which involves dealing with oneself in a private capacity and which confers or is likely to confer benefit to oneself.

**Misconduct** - Misconduct in this Code as defined in Section 76 of the Civil Service Law 1993 (PNDCL 327) viz:

- (i) “Any act done by A Civil Service Staff without reasonable cause which:
  - (a) Amounts to a failure to perform in a proper manner any duty imposed on him; or
  - (b) Contravenes any enactment relating to the Civil Service; or
  - (c) Otherwise is prejudicial to the efficient conduct of the functions of the Civil Service; or
  - (d) Tends to bring the Civil Service into disrepute; constitutes misconduct.”

(ii) “For the avoidance of doubt, the conviction of A Civil Service Staff for any offence involving fraud, dishonesty or moral turpitude, tends to bring the Civil Service into disrepute.”

Particular types of misconduct will include the following:

- (a) to be absent from duty without leave or reasonable excuse,
- (b) to be insubordinate,
- (c) to be intoxicated during office hours,
- (d) to use, without the consent of the prescribed authority, property or facility provided for the purposes of the Service for some purpose not connected with official duties,
- (e) to engage in a gainful occupation outside the Service without the consent of the prescribed authority,
- (f) to engage in an activity outside official duties which is likely to lead to the taking of improper advantage of the position in the Service of that civil servant,
- (g) to fail to submit reports or information or both as prescribed under this Act,
- (h) to make unauthorised disclosure of classified and unclassified official information or document to a private person or to another public officer.

**Made this 1<sup>st</sup> Day of November, 2022**

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**Nana Kwasi Agyekum-Dwamena**

**Head of the Civil Service**

