

AUSTRALIAN RED CROSS SOCIETY

POLICY STATEMENT ON CONFLICTS OF INTEREST - STAFF

Date of Commencement: September 2018

The Red Cross Ethical Framework requires that a Red Cross Person must avoid conflicts of interest – whether they are a member of Red Cross, a volunteer or a member of staff.

This Policy Statement on Conflicts of Interest provides details for you as a member of staff. In particular, this Statement:

- defines conflicts of interest;
- outlines how I can identify, avoid and manage conflicts of interest; and
- provides a process for me to ensure I comply with my obligations under this part of the Ethical Framework.

Policy Intent

As a member of Red Cross staff, I understand that I must protect the integrity of Red Cross by identifying, disclosing, registering, managing and reporting any actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest.

Scope

This Policy applies to all members of Red Cross staff - when they are undertaking any duties or activities in connection with Red Cross, except:

- staff engaged in the operations of the Blood Service (as the Blood Service has its own conflict of interest policy);
- members of the Board, of Committees of the Board or of Divisional Advisory Boards (and their advisory committees) as these persons are covered by Board Policy Statement No.16 – Conflict of Interest Policy and not this Policy.

Policy Elements

What is a Conflict of Interest?

A conflict of interest refers to a situation where my personal interest conflicts with my duties as a member of Red Cross staff to act in the interests of Red Cross.

Conflicts of interest can involve my financial or non-financial interests and the interests of a business partner or associate, family member, friend or person in a close personal relationship with me.

These situations present the risk that I will make a decision based on, or affected by, these influences, rather than in the best interests of Red Cross and must be managed accordingly.

Three Types of Conflict of Interest

I understand that conflicts of interest may be actual, perceived or potential:

- **Actual:** Where a direct conflict exists that interferes with my personal interests and my duties to Red Cross.
- **Perceived:** Where it could be reasonably perceived that my personal interests may improperly influence the performance of my duties to Red Cross – whether or not this has actually occurred.
- **Potential:** Where I have personal interests that could, in the future, conflict with my duties to Red Cross.

Examples of conflicts of interest

- Hiring an unqualified relative to provide services Red Cross needs.
- Failing to disclose that I'm related to a job candidate Red Cross is considering hiring.
- Making arrangements to work for a vendor or client in the future, while I am continuing to do business with them as a representative of Red Cross
- Offering paid services, during my time off from Red Cross, to a Red Cross client or supplier.
- Giving or receiving gifts, hospitality or sponsored travel to suppliers, funders or others (refer to ***Gifts and Hospitality Policy***)
- Failing to investigate my co-worker's wrongdoing because they are a friend.
- Dating or having a romantic relationship with someone who reports to me.
- Owning or managing a part of a business that sells goods or services to Red Cross.
- Supervising or accessing information of a client who is also a close friend or family member.
- Sharing information in a job interview about Red Cross' confidential activities or plans.
- Using Red Cross intellectual property (e.g., program materials) for outside purposes without permission.

Managing a Conflict of Interest - the Six Steps

I must remain independent, impartial and unbiased when performing my duties.

I must ensure that conflicts of interest are disclosed in a timely way and reasonable action is taken to resolve any conflict.

I. Inform

I am aware of and accept the obligations under this Policy. I understand that it is not a breach of this policy if I have a conflict of interest, if I identify the conflict, follow the procedure and comply with the management strategy for the situation (see the following steps).

II. Identify

Conflicts of interest are not always clear and easy to identify.

I must clarify any situation that I think might constitute a potential, perceived or actual conflict of interest immediately upon becoming aware of it.

If there is doubt as to whether the matter is a potential conflict, I must declare it and seek clarification from the Legal & Policy Unit on nature and extent of my conflict.

III. Declare

I must declare a conflict of interest that may impact on my role and duties using the Conflict of Interest Notification Form (see Attachment A) as soon as possible after I have identified it.

I have an ongoing responsibility to declare any new conflicts that arise.

Declaring shares exception

I understand that I do not need to declare shareholdings where the activity I undertake as a part of my duties will have no effect on the share price (for example, if I hold shares in Westfarmers Ltd and Coles Online is a potential supplier).

If I have any doubt about whether my activity will have an effect on the value of the shares, I must declare the interest.

IV. Register

After discussion with me, my manager will determine a management strategy to deal with the conflict.

My manager and I must arrange for the declaration and management strategy for my conflicts of interest to be recorded in the Conflicts of Interest Register held by the Legal & Policy Unit.

I or my manager may ask the Legal & Policy Unit to advise in relation to an appropriate management strategy for my conflict.

I understand that for some conflicts the details may also be recorded on my personnel file in HR.

Determining the management strategy:

In determining the management strategy, my manager may consider relevant factors, including:

- whether the conflict needs to be avoided or simply documented
- whether the conflict will realistically impair my capacity to impartially participate in decision-making
- alternative options to avoid the conflict
- the objects and resources of Red Cross, and
- the possibility of creating an appearance of improper conduct that might impair confidence in, or the reputation of, Red Cross.

V. Manage

I understand that I, my manager and relevant senior managers must implement and abide by the management strategy set out in the Conflicts of Interest Notification form.

VI. Report

I must report suspected breaches of this Policy without delay. Breaches of this policy may have a significant negative impact on the credibility and reputation of Red Cross.

If I have reasonable cause to believe another member of staff of Red Cross has failed to:

- identify or disclose a conflict of interest,
- identify or disclose a relevant change in circumstance relating to a registered conflict of interest, or
- comply with a management strategy,

I must immediately inform the relevant senior manager. The senior manager must take an appropriate action, including notifying the Head of Legal.

Confidentiality

I recognise that Red Cross encourages disclosure and will treat my disclosure confidentially unless it is impractical to do so.

Example:

It may be impractical to treat my disclosure confidentially where the management strategy requires me to absent myself from deliberations and/or participating in a decision of a committee.

I am aware that Red Cross may have an obligation to disclose the circumstances of my conflict of interest or management strategy to a third party (for example a funding body).

Breach of this Policy

I am aware that if I fail to disclose, register, manage or report a conflict of interest I may be subject to disciplinary action in line with Red Cross Disciplinary Action Policy, irrespective of whether I or anyone else benefited from the conflict of interest.

Review:

Monitoring application of the policy is the responsibility of the CEO

Version	Author	Approved by the CEO	Planned Review
1.0	General Counsel	September 2018	September 2020

Your comments and suggestions are welcome:

Please direct any feedback to: teaton@redcross.org.au

Attachment A: Conflict of Interest Notification

Information regarding the Conflict of Interest			
Details of Conflict of Interest situation (type, date, context)			
Management strategy			
Person reporting		Date	
Position		Department	
Signature			
Senior manager		Date	
Position		Department	
Signature			
Legal & Policy Unit endorsement (where required)		Date	