



## **Conflict of Interest Policy**

### **Scope**

This policy applies to all individuals involved with Row Ontario, including but not limited to, members of the Board of Directors, staff, volunteers, and athletes.

### **Definition**

A conflict of interest is any situation in which the personal interests of a Board or Committee member, employee, volunteer, or their immediate families, arise simultaneously and appear to conflict with the best interests of the organization. It is inevitable that conflicts of interest occur. The issue is not the integrity of the individual concerned, but the management of any potential for an individual to benefit from a person's position with the organization, or for that individual to be influenced by conflicting loyalties. Even the appearance of a conflict of interest can damage the organizations reputation, so conflicts need to be diligently managed.

A conflict of interest may occur when a direct or indirect gain, benefit, advantage, or privilege is given to or received by a Board or Committee member, employee, volunteer, or their immediate families. A perceived conflict of interest exists when an informed person, having thought the situation through, thinks it possible that a party might be influenced in the performance of his or her duties for Row Ontario by his or her other interests.

### **Potential Sources of Conflicts:**

- Financial gain or benefit to the Board or Committee member, employee, or volunteer (such as payment for services provided to the organization, or the award of a contract to a business from which a personal financial benefit will be made, or the engagement by the organization of a relative or friend, where their finances are interdependent, or utilizing the organization's equipment, services, or materials for an external business); or
- Non-financial gain or benefit to the Board or Committee member, employee, or volunteer (such as networking, or the use of information concerning the business of the organization or any of its clients, funders, or partners for the benefit of family, friends, associations and/or other organizations); or
- Conflict of loyalties by the Board or Committee member, employee, or volunteer

### **Policy**

Board or Committee members, employees and volunteers have a fiduciary or trust relationship with Row Ontario, and accordingly must act in a manner that is above scrutiny.

Individuals in a position of trust must disclose and take reasonable steps to avoid any actual, perceived, or foreseeable, conflict of interest in connection with Row Ontario. Individuals have a responsibility to

both prevent and manage any potential conflict of interest situations. Key to this responsibility is the recognition and communication, especially disclosure, regarding potential conflicts and perceived conflicts.

Any real or perceived conflict, whether pecuniary or non-pecuniary, between an individual's personal interest and the interests of Row Ontario, shall always be resolved in favour of the organization.

*Board approved last: November 08, 2023*

*To be reviewed by: November 2026*

## Operational Procedures

1. At the beginning of each Board, Committee, or Staff meeting, and certainly at least before any discussion of any affected agenda item itself, every Board member, employee, or volunteer should declare any conflict of interest which he or she has in any item to be discussed.
2. This declaration should be recorded in the Meeting Minutes.
3. The Board or Committee member, employee or volunteer may then be required to withdraw from the meeting and/or discussion regarding that item.
4. The Board or Committee member, employee or volunteer is not permitted to be present during or involved in the discussion or in making of any decision around the issue where the conflict of interest lies.

If a conflict exists because a Board or Committee member, employee or volunteer is receiving a material benefit, disclosure to and written authorization by the Board of Directors is required.

Individuals shall not:

- Engage in any business or transaction, or have a financial or other personal interest, that is incompatible with their official duties with Row Ontario, unless such business, transaction, or other interest is properly disclosed to the Association and approved by the Association.
- Knowingly place themselves in a position where they are under obligation to any person who might benefit from special consideration or who might seek preferential treatment from them or the organization.
- In the performance of their official duties, give preferential treatment to family members, friends, colleagues, or organizations in which their family members, friends, or colleagues have an interest, financial or otherwise.
- Derive personal benefit from information that they have acquired during fulfilling their official duties with the organization if such information is confidential or not generally available to the public.
- Engage in any outside work, activity, business, or professional undertaking that conflicts or appears to conflict with their official duties as a representative of Row Ontario, or in which they have an advantage or appear to have an advantage based on their involvement with the organization.
- Accept any gift or favour that could be construed as being given in anticipation of, or in recognition for, any special consideration granted by virtue of being a representative of the organization.

*Last reviewed: October 30<sup>th</sup>, 2023*