

MD 201 CODE OF CONDUCT FOR LIONS MEMBERS

Please note that this has been approved by the Council of Governors in April 2009 as a guideline only. It should not take the place of your District or Club constitutions or codes of conduct already in place.

1. INTRODUCTION

Lions Clubs members have committed themselves to the achievement of high ethical standards for all members.

This identifies core values that are held to be central to good conduct. The Code of Conduct encourages Lions Members to expose fraud, corruption, misconduct and maladministration of which they are aware.

2. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This code is intended to be used by members of Lions Clubs in determining what is right and proper in their actions.

- **This code outlines the "Standards of Conduct" that apply to all members of Lions Clubs International. This code of conduct is to be read in conjunction with the Lions International Ethics and Purposes.**

All members of Lions Clubs are "Volunteers" and are involved with Volunteer work for the benefit of the community. In the provision of these services, the public are entitled to expect that all members of Lions Clubs will:

- conduct themselves and discharge their responsibilities with professionalism and integrity;
- observe fairness and equity in their dealings with the public and other members;
- comply with, and be seen to act within the spirit and letter of the law; and
- act in the public interest and give priority to duties and obligations.

It is essential that members of Lions Clubs have a clear understanding of their role as "Volunteers" and of the standards expected of them whilst dealing with members of the community.

This code seeks to:

- inform all members of Lions Clubs of the standards of conduct expected of them,
- ensure that embarrassment is not brought upon Lions Clubs or its membership because of a lack of understanding of Lions Clubs standards of conduct; and
- promote a positive image of Lions Clubs and members.
- At all times under the provisions of this code members are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that does not discredit:
 - the individual member, having regard to their official position held within the Lions Clubs; or
 - the reputation of Lions Clubs.

3. Breaches of Standards of Conduct

All members are to familiarise themselves with this code and ensure that its provisions are observed. Members should be aware that failure to comply with standards of conduct outlined in the code, without valid reason, will be addressed by the Executive of their individual club or if a satisfactory resolution is not achieved by the District Governor, Constitutional By Laws Chairman of their District or an appointed committee.

4. AN EXPLANATION OF ETHICS

Ethics are the rules or standards of conduct any society imposes in respect of the rights and interests of its members recognising the fundamental moral principles that underpin every decision and action a member of that society may make.

5. DETERMINATION OF CONDUCT

Determining whether a member's conduct, is right and proper in terms of this code requires examination of:

- the nature of the conduct exhibited; and
- the context in which the conduct takes place.

6. ETHICS PRINCIPLES

This code of conduct is based on:

- Respect for the law and the system of government;
- Respect for persons;
- Integrity;
- Diligence; and
- Economy and efficiency.

7. ETHICS OBLIGATIONS

This section outlines the ethics obligations expected by Lions Clubs;

7.1 Obligation: Respect for the Law and System of Government

A member should uphold the laws of the State and the Commonwealth and carry out policies faithfully and impartially.

7.2 Obligation: Respect for Persons

A member should treat members of the public honestly and fairly, and with proper regard for their rights and obligations.

A member is to act responsibly in performing any volunteer duties.

7.3 Obligation: Integrity

In recognition that Lions Clubs involve a public trust, a member should seek to maintain and enhance public confidence in the integrity of Lions Clubs and advance the common good of the community the volunteer serves. Having regard to that obligation,

- should not improperly use his or her official powers or position.
- should ensure that any conflict that may arise between the official's personal interests and official duties is resolved in favour of the public interest; and
- should disclose fraud, corruption, misconduct and maladministration of which the official becomes aware.

7.4 Obligation: Diligence

In the performance of duties, volunteers should exercise proper diligence, care and attention. Volunteers should seek to achieve high standards of public administration.

7.5 Obligation: Economy and Efficiency

In performing their duties, volunteers should ensure that public resources are not wasted, abused, or used improperly or extravagantly.

8. STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

The following standards are derived from the ethics principles and obligations as outlined in section 7 of this code.

8.1 Responsibility to Community, Government and the Law

Members are to act in good faith, in accordance with both the spirit and the letter of the law and in the best interests of the community.

All members of Lions Clubs have responsibilities towards the government of the day and are to:

- (i) ensure political neutrality in all decisions regardless of which political party or parties are in office;

8.2 Public Comment

Lions Clubs acknowledge that members have a right to make public comment and enter into public debate on political, community and social issues in a private capacity.

There are circumstances where public comment or debate by members is not acceptable. These include circumstances where:

- (i) a public comment made in a private capacity may give rise to a public perception that it is in some way an official comment of Lions Clubs,
- (ii) a member is directly involved in advising on or directing the implementation or administration of government policy, and the public comment would compromise the member's ability to do so;
- (iii) a public comment amounts to improper criticism of the Government
- (iv) a public comment amounts to an unwarranted personal attack on the character or integrity of another member or person.

8.3 Political Activity

Members have the same right as any other citizen to freedom of political views and association. However, any political activity by members is to be conducted in a private capacity.

8.4 Lawful Directions

Members are to obey any lawful direction, instruction or order given by any member or person authorised by law to do so.

8.5 Conflict of Interests

Members of Lions Clubs are expected to perform their duties in such a manner that public confidence and trust in the integrity, objectivity and impartiality of Lions Clubs is paramount.

8.6 Personal Conduct

At all times, members are to act and be seen to act properly and in accordance with both the spirit and the letter of the law and the terms of this code of conduct.

8.7 Use of Alcohol and Other Drugs

Members are to ensure that the consumption of alcohol or other drugs does not adversely affect the performance of their volunteer duties.

8.8 Influence to Secure Advantage

Members shall not use the influence of their powers or position, or the influence of any other person to obtain improperly, any appointment, advancement, decision or other advantage, either personally or on behalf of another.

8.9 Performance of Volunteer Duties

In the performance of volunteer duties members are to:

- (i) demonstrate high standards of professional integrity and honesty;
- (ii) apply themselves to the efficient and effective achievement of the functions of Lions Clubs;
- (iii) perform any duties associated with their position diligently and to the best of their ability.
- (iv) set and maintain standards of leadership
- (v) promote and encourage members of Lions Clubs under their supervision to exercise high standards of personal and professional conduct;
- (vi) act with fairness and reasonable compassion;
- (vii) provide conscientious, effective, efficient and courteous service to all those with whom they have dealings. In particular, members are to be sensitive to the special circumstances and needs surrounding young persons;

8.10 Conduct Towards Members and Other Persons

In the course of their functions, and in particular when exercising discretionary powers, members are to:

- (i) treat all persons with respect and dignity and in a reasonable, equitable and fair manner;
- (ii) not intimidate, engage in sexual or other forms of harassment, unlawfully discriminate or otherwise abuse any person;
- (iii) observe merit in selection processes;
- (iv) safeguard privacy and confidentiality of matters of a personal nature relating to other members of Lions Clubs;
- (v) adhere to the principles of natural justice;
- (vi) adhere to management principles and practices which foster the rights, and well being of members and encourage access to volunteer assistance and development schemes;
- (vii) ensure subordinates are set equitable and fair workloads;
- (viii) not inappropriately distract other members of Lions Clubs from carrying out their duties;

- (ix) not allow personal relationships to adversely affect their volunteer performance or that of other members; and
- (x) not induce other members to breach this code.
- (xi) Demonstrate a high degree of individual responsibility.
- (xii) In regard to children;
 - (i) Avoid unaccompanied and unobserved activities with children or young people wherever possible;
 - (ii) Education of the youth about safety measures prior to any abuse ever occurring, through appropriate training sessions associate with each youth programme;
 - (iii) Advice to young people on how to disclose abuse;
 - (iv) Appropriate safeguards to insure the privacy of youth is maintained;
 - (v) Appropriate screening of those working with young people;
 - (vi) Breaking the silence about harassment and sexual abuse;
 - (vii) Implementation of appropriate reporting procedures upon disclosure of abuse;
 - (viii) All Lions, partners, adult family members or other volunteers involved in Lions Club Programs shall:
 - (ix) comply fully with the requirements, of each state with regard to working with children laws.

9. CONCLUSION

This code of conduct has been developed to outline the ethics, principles, associated obligations and standards of conduct that apply to all members of Lions Clubs. For the code to be ultimately viewed by Lions Clubs and the community as an effective document, members need to view and utilise it in line with the following statement:

This code is intended to be used by members of Lions Clubs in determining what is right and proper in their actions.