



Fact sheet

Overview of the *Conflict of Interest Code for Members of the House of Commons*

The [Conflict of Interest Code for Members of the House of Commons](#) (Members' Code), administered by the Conflict of Interest and Ethics Commissioner, seeks to prevent conflicts between private interests and the public duties of all 343 Members of the House of Commons. It is appended to the [Standing Orders of the House of Commons](#), the rules under which the House regulates its proceedings.

Members of the House of Commons who are ministers or parliamentary secretaries are also subject to the [Conflict of Interest Act](#).

When performing parliamentary duties and functions, a Member shall not act in any way to further his or her private interests or those of a member of the Member's family, or to improperly further another person's or entity's private interests. (section 8)

Rules of Conduct

This general rule set out in the Members' Code is complemented by rules that prohibit Members from using their public office to influence a decision and taking advantage of insider information, in order to further their private interests or those of a family member, or to improperly further another person's or entity's private interests.

Members and their families cannot accept any gift or other benefit that might reasonably be seen to have been given to influence the Member in the exercise of a duty or function of his or her office. Gifts and benefits include meal and event invitations, gifts and benefits related to attendance at charitable or political events, and those received from an all-party caucus established in relation to a particular subject or interest. There is an exception to this rule for gifts and benefits received as a normal expression of courtesy or protocol, or that are within the customary standards of hospitality that normally accompany a Member's position.

Private Interests

The concept of “private interest” is the heart of the Members’ Code.

The Members’ Code does not define “private interest”. Instead, it sets out the circumstances where a private interest is considered to be furthered, and those where it is not.

For example, furthering a private interest would include cases where a Member’s actions result, directly or indirectly, in outcomes such as an increase in a person’s assets or obtaining a business position. A private interest would not be considered to be furthered when the matter in question is of general application or affects the Member or the other person as one of a broad class of the public.

Disclosure Requirements

- Initial Compliance: Within 60 days after notice of their election is published in the Canada Gazette, Members must file with the Commissioner a confidential [Disclosure Statement](#) describing their assets, liabilities, sources of income and activities outside of Parliament. They must make reasonable efforts to disclose the same information for their spouses or common-law partners and dependent children. The Office of the Conflict of Interest and Ethics Commissioner prepares a disclosure summary based on this information and sends it to the Member, who then has 60 days to review, sign and submit it to the Office. Signed disclosure summaries are placed in the [public registry](#) maintained by the Office.

Members must also meet a number of ongoing disclosure requirements throughout their term of office.

- Material Changes: Any change to the information required in the Disclosure Statement must be disclosed to the Commissioner within 60 days.
- Gifts and Benefits: Members must disclose to the Commissioner any gift or benefit with a value of \$200 or more, within 60 days of its acceptance.
- Sponsored Travel: Members may accept, for themselves and guests, sponsored travel that arises from or relates to their position. If travel costs exceed \$200 and are not wholly paid from the Consolidated Revenue Fund or by Members personally, their political party or any parliamentary association recognized by the House of Commons, Members must advise the Commissioner of the sponsored travel, within 60 days after the end of the trip.

The Commissioner is required to submit to the Speaker of the House of Commons, by March 31 each year, a list of sponsored travel by Members during the previous calendar year. The list is made public.

- **Recusals**: Members are required to disclose the general nature of any private interest that they have that could be affected by a matter that is before the House or a committee to which they belong, and refrain from participating in any debate or vote on the issue. Recusals are included in the public registry under the Members' Code.
- **Annual Review**: Members must participate in an annual review of the information required in the Disclosure Statement.

Public Registry

The public registry of publicly declarable information under the Members' Code contains current Members' Disclosure Summaries and public statements relating to gifts or other benefits, sponsored travel and material changes.

The registry can be consulted on the Office's website and in printed form at the Office. Documents may be viewed during normal business hours at 66 Slater Street, 22nd floor, in Ottawa, and are also available to the public on request, by mail or fax.

Role of Commissioner

The Conflict of Interest and Ethics Commissioner provides confidential advice to Members on their obligations under the Members' Code, receives their confidential disclosures and reviews the information to ensure that it is complete and accurate, and maintains a public registry of the information that Members must publicly declare.

The Commissioner can also investigate possible contraventions of the Members' Code [at the request of a Member](#), by a resolution of the House of Commons or on the Commissioner's own initiative when there are reasonable grounds to believe that a contravention has occurred. Reports on the Commissioner's inquiries under the Members' Code are made public.

For more information, please see the separate [fact sheet](#) on the Role and Mandate of the Conflict of Interest and Ethics Commissioner.