

Summary of Rules for Public Office Holders

The [Conflict of Interest Act](#) is divided into five parts. The first part describes conflict of interest rules; the second, compliance measures; the third, post-employment obligations; the fourth, its administration and enforcement; and the fifth, generalities.

This summary is intended as a quick reference. The Conflict of Interest Act itself is the final authority. There are [detailed information notices](#) available on the Office website on specific subjects and you are also encouraged to seek advice from your advisor by contacting the Office at 613-995-0721 or [by email](#).

If you are a reporting public office holder, please refer to the [Summary of Rules for Reporting Public Office Holders](#). If you are a minister or parliamentary secretary, please consult the [Summary of Rules for Ministers, Parliamentary Secretaries](#).

Part 1 – Conflict of Interest Rules

Public office holders are in a conflict of interest when they exercise an official power, duty or function that provides an opportunity to further their private interests or those of their relatives or friends, or to improperly further another person's private interests (section 4).

Compliance with the Act is a condition of your appointment or employment as a public office holder (s. 19).

You have a general duty to arrange your private affairs to prevent conflicts of interest (s. 5).

You are prohibited from:

- making a decision or participating in making a decision relating to the exercise of an official power, duty or function that would place you in a conflict of interest (subsection 6(1));
- providing preferential treatment to any person or organization based on the identity of the person or organization representing them (s. 7);
- using information that is not available to the public to further private interests (s. 8);
- using your position to influence a decision to further private interests (s. 9);
- being influenced in exercising your duties by plans for or offers of outside employment (s. 10);
- accepting any gift or other advantage that might reasonably be seen to have been given to influence you in the exercise of your official duties, with certain exceptions. This prohibition also extends to members of your family (s. 11);

- entering into a contract or employment relationship, in the exercise of your official duties, with a spouse, common-law partner, child, sibling or parent, or permitting the entity for which you work to do so (s. 14);
- personally soliciting funds if it places you in a conflict of interest (s. 16); and
- taking any action aimed at circumventing the Act (s. 18).

For more information, you may wish to consult our information notices on [gifts or other advantages](#), [fundraising](#), and [offers of outside employment](#).

Part 2 – Compliance Measures

- You must recuse yourself from any discussion, decision, debate or vote if you would be in a conflict of interest (s. 21).
- You must take any appropriate measures to comply with the Act, as determined by the Commissioner (ss. 29 and 30).

For more information, you may wish to consult our information notice on [recusal obligations](#).

Part 3 – Post-Employment

You are prohibited, indefinitely, from:

- acting in a manner that takes improper advantage of your previous office (s. 33);
- acting for or on behalf of any person or organization in connection with any specific proceeding, transaction, negotiation or case where the Crown is a party and where you had acted for, or provided advice to, the Crown while in public office (subs. 34(1));
- providing advice to clients, business associates or employers using information that was acquired in the course of your official duties and that is not available to the public (subs. 34(2)).

Part 4 – Administration and Enforcement

- The Commissioner may conduct an examination:
 - on the written request of a Senator or Member of the House of Commons who has reasonable grounds to believe that a public office holder or former public office holder has contravened the Act (s. 44), or
 - on the Commissioner's own initiative if the Commissioner has reason to believe that a public office holder or former public office holder has contravened the Act (s. 45).

For more information, you may wish to consult our information notice on [investigations under the Act](#).