

Cleveland Verses

Conflict of interest policy

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to help board members of Cleveland Verses to effectively identify, disclose and manage any actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest in order to protect the integrity of Cleveland Verses and manage risk.

2. Objective

The Cleveland Verses board of trustees aims to ensure that board members are aware of their obligations to disclose any conflicts of interest that they may have, and to comply with this policy to ensure they effectively manage those conflicts of interest as representatives of Cleveland Verses.

3. Scope

This policy applies to the board members of Cleveland Verses.

4. Definition of Conflicts of Interests

A conflict of interest occurs when a person's personal interests conflict with their responsibility to act in the best interests of the charity. Personal interests include direct interests as well as those of family, friends, or other organizations a person may be involved with or have an interest in. It also includes a conflict between a board member's duty to Cleveland Verses and another duty that the board member has to another organization or corporation. A conflict of interest may be actual, potential or perceived and may be financial or non-financial.

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

5. Policy

This policy has been developed because conflicts of interest commonly arise, and do not need to present a problem to the charity if they are openly and effectively managed. It is the policy of Cleveland Verses as well as a responsibility of the board, that ethical, legal, financial or other conflicts of interest be avoided and that any such conflicts do not conflict with the obligations to Cleveland Verses.

Cleveland Verses will manage conflicts of interest by requiring board members to:

- avoid conflicts of interest where possible
- identify and disclose any conflicts of interest to the board
- carefully manage any conflicts of interest, and
- follow this policy and respond to any breaches.

5.1 Responsibility of the board

The board is responsible for:

- establishing a system for identifying, disclosing and managing conflicts of interest across the charity
- monitoring compliance with this policy, and
- reviewing this policy on an annual basis to ensure that the policy is operating effectively.

5.2 Identification and Disclosure of Conflicts of Interest

Once an actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest is identified, it must be disclosed in writing to all board members. Once the conflict of interest has been appropriately disclosed, the board (excluding the board member disclosing and any other conflicted board member) must decide whether or not those conflicted board members should:

- vote on the matter,
- participate in any debate, or
- be present in the room during the debate and the voting.

In exceptional circumstances, such as where a conflict is very significant or likely to prevent a board member from regularly participating in discussions, it may be appropriate for the person conflicted to resign from the board.

5.3 Action Steps

- In deciding what approach to take, the board will consider whether the conflict needs to be avoided or simply documented
- whether the conflict will realistically impair the disclosing person's capacity to impartially participate in decision-making
- alternative options to avoid the conflict
- the charity's objects and resources, and
- the possibility of creating an appearance of improper conduct that might impair confidence in, or the reputation of Cleveland Verses.

The approval of any action requires the agreement of a simple majority of the board (excluding any conflicted board member/s) who are present in person or by phone, and voting at the next board meeting following the written disclosure. The action and result of the voting will be recorded in the minutes of the meeting and in the register of interests.

6. Compliance with this Policy

If the board has a reason to believe that a person subject to the policy has failed to comply with it, it will investigate the circumstances.

If it is found that this person has failed to disclose a conflict of interest, the board may take action against them. This may include seeking to terminate their relationship with Cleveland Verses.

We, the undersigned, being the Board Members of Cleveland Verses acknowledged this Conflict of Interest Policy on _____, 20_____.

Garrett Komyati, Chair – Cleveland Verses

Elizabeth Whitis, Vice-Chair – Cleveland Verses

Daniel Krancevic, Treasurer – Cleveland Verses

Holden Kovach, Secretary – Cleveland Verses