

**Ethics and Duties of the Board of Directors
Caring for First Nations Children Society
Adopted May 25, 1999**

Board members of the Caring for First Nations Children Society have the following duties and obligations:

1. Board members have a general duty to be faithful and loyal to the Caring for First Nations Children Society (CFNCS) and to have as their paramount consideration the safety and well being of First Nations children and their families.
2. All Board members are required to complete a criminal record check upon being appointed to the Board and every two years thereafter. A record of a criminal offence involving violence or the maltreatment of children will lead to disqualification of a nominee to the board or removal of an existing board member. A record of other criminal offences, can at the discretion of the Board, lead to the removal of the Board Member or disqualification of a nominee to the Board of the CFNCS.
3. Board members should not place themselves in situations where they are obligated to any person who might benefit from or seek to gain special consideration or favor. The honesty and impartiality of Board Members must be above suspicion.
4. Board members have a responsibility to conduct themselves in a manner that does not compromise the ability of the Society to accomplish its mandate or undermine the public's confidence in the Board Member's ability to discharge their responsibilities in a full and proper manner.
5. Board members shall conduct their private affairs in such a manner as to not create any conflicts of interest or perceived conflicts of interest as per the conflict of interest guidelines of the Society.
6. Board members shall not, while performing their official duties, give preferential treatment to relatives or friends or to any organization in which they or their relatives or friends have a personal or financial interest.

Conflict of Interest Guidelines

Definitions

A conflict of interest is present when there is political interference in the operation of the Society. The perception of political interference, or in circumstances in which people may reasonably believe that there may be political interference even though there is none. Political interference happens when a Board member uses his or her position, authority or influence, to interfere with or alter the policies, standards, procedures, services or decisions of the Society in order to gain personal or financial benefits for himself or herself, his or her family or friends.

Family, within First Nations, has a broad and flexible definition. In some situations it will include parents and children and brothers and sisters even though there has been no legal adoption. People who have lived together in these circumstances are, in this community, considered to be family. Family may include grandparents, grandchildren, and spouses even though there may be no formal legal relationship. Spouses are people who live together forming a family.

Purpose

The purpose of these guidelines is to help members of the Board of Directors to avoid conflicts of interest or the perception of conflicts of interest. These guidelines must be applied with common sense to each situation. The spirit of these guidelines, however, is clearly that the reputation of the Society must be protected in order to permit it to operate effectively. The guidelines rely upon all members of the Board to act with honesty and integrity in identifying and responding to situations in which there is a potential conflict of interest.

Guidelines

1. Where a Board member has a possible conflict of interest in any matter and is present at a meeting when that matter is being discussed, he or she must advise the other members of the Board of the full nature and extent of the possible conflict.

(A) The Board member may identify this as a conflict of interest and remove himself or herself from the discussions

(B) Otherwise, the Board member must leave the room while the remaining members of the Board discuss the nature of the conflict and the circumstances of the case. The Board will then decide, by majority, whether the other Board member may take part in the decision making process.

(C) The Board member may not vote on the matter unless a majority of the Board members present, by motion, consent to the member voting and participating in the discussion.

(D) The Board member shall not attempt to influence the vote of the other Board members , before, during or after the meeting either on the issue of whether or not there is a conflict of interest or potential conflict of interest or on the main issue being discussed.

(E) If as a result of a number of members being ineligible to participate in a matter under discussion because of potential conflicts the remaining members will constitute a quorum, provided it is not less than two.

2. Board members are not permitted to release any confidential information regarding the Society unless clearly permitted to do so by the Board.

3. The by laws of the Society provide that when a member of the Board of Directors is under investigation by an appropriate authority, including a Family and Child Services Program or Agency or law enforcement agency with respect to offences involving children or with respect to circumstances which place a child in need of protective services, that Board member is considered to be in a conflict of interest, and upon motion of the Board of Directors, may be suspended from service on the Board pending resolution of the investigation.