



Code of Ethics and Conduct for SIFB Officers and Employees

Introduction

The Code of Ethics and Conduct for SIFB Officers and Employees is aimed at promoting ethical values and good governance and ultimately enhancing the image of the institution through effective service delivery. The Code of Ethics and Conduct represents a framework of ethical standards that requires SIFB Officers and Employees to comply with predefined codes of conduct and demonstrate the highest standards of integrity and professionalism. As such, SIFB Officers and Employees have the obligation to provide timely, quality and cost effective services to the stakeholders to whom they are accountable. To achieve this, SIFB Officers and Employees have to be loyal, committed, results-oriented, customer-centric, and above all, they have to adhere to a high standard of public service values and principles.

The Code of Ethics and Conduct also provides general guidance to SIFB Officers and Employees in their relationships and dealings with their insureds and other stakeholders. SIFB Officers and Employees are thus required to perform their duties with a high degree of discipline, uphold supremacy and maintain integrity in service by acting with fairness and impartiality.

Stressing on the need for confidentiality while holding office, the rules make SIFB Officers and Employees liable to maintain confidentiality in the performance of their duties as required by the laws, particularly where the disclosure of information may prejudicially affect the strategic, scientific or economic interests of the Fund, or lead to incitement of an offence or illegal or unlawful gains to any person or body.

SIFB Officers and Employees have thus the responsibility to always conduct and behave in a professional manner and demonstrate respect for all persons, whether colleagues, clients or members of the public.

Ethical leadership is also critical for the promotion of a value-based service. Leaders in the public service should therefore continue to lead by example in matters of propriety and ethics and be excellent role models of integrity. They should also ensure that ethical behaviour cascades down the line such that it becomes a constant issue of concern and practice within the organisation.

1. Purpose of the Code

This Code of Ethics and Conduct sets out the standards of correct conduct expected of SIFB Officers and Employees. It emphasizes the importance of a responsible, responsive and caring institution and is intended to promote effective administration and responsible behaviour.

The Code of Ethics and Conduct complements existing legislation and rules and its guiding principles are designed to maintain and enhance values that inspire trust and confidence in the integrity of SIFB Officers and Employees.

The Code provides the direction - a self-imposed vigilance is required to achieve the highest standards of ethical conduct. Each outlet may develop further specific standards of conduct which address its own special circumstances. However, such standards must be consistent with, and not derogate from, those listed in this Code of Ethics.

This Code applies to all **SIFB Officers and Employees** - permanent, part-time, casual, temporary and contractual employees of the Fund irrespective of gender, grade and rank.

SIFB Officers and Employees are also required to comply with the relevant legislation and procedures in force in the Service.

2. Values and Principles

The three guiding **principles** of the Code are as follows:-

- (1) SIFB Officers and Employees shall fulfill their lawful obligations to stakeholders with professionalism, integrity and loyalty;
- (2) SIFB Officers and Employees shall perform their official duties honestly, faithfully and efficiently while respecting the rights of the insureds and their colleagues; and
- (3) SIFB Officers and Employees shall not bring the institution into disrepute through their private activities.

Moreover, to inspire public confidence and trust, this code rests upon a number of **core values**, which require that SIFB Officers and Employees behave with:

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| <i>Integrity</i> | - | Putting the obligations of the institution above one's own personal interests. |
| <i>Selflessness</i> | - | Avoid seeking personal gain or financial or other material benefits for one's family or friends through one's official position. |
| <i>Impartiality</i> | - | Acting solely according to the merits of a case and serving the stakeholders, irrespective of one's own political affinity or preference. |
| <i>Objectivity</i> | - | Favouring meritocracy and basing one's advice and decisions on rigorous analysis of evidence. |



Code of Ethics and Conduct for SIFB Officers and Employees

- Accountability** – Being responsible and accountable for one’s decisions and actions.
- Openness** – Being as open as possible in one’s decisions and providing justification for one’s actions whenever required.
- Honesty** – Acting in good faith and being truthful.
- Justice** – Adhering to the principles of natural justice.



3. Personal and Professional Behaviour

SIFB Officers and Employees, in the performance of their duties, shall demonstrate a high degree of professionalism and carry out their roles with dedication and commitment to the institution and its core values. They shall comply with and uphold the law, and project a good, right and positive image of the SIFB. They shall deal with the insureds fairly, efficiently, promptly, effectively and to the best of their abilities.

In the performance of their duties, SIFB Officers and Employees shall not act arbitrarily or to the detriment of any person, group or body and shall have due regard for the rights, duties and relevant interests of others. They are, in addition, required to respect the privacy of individuals when dealing with personal information.

SIFB Officers and Employees have the duty to always conduct themselves in such a way that confidence and trust of the insureds in the integrity, impartiality and effectiveness of the SIFB are preserved and enhanced.

SIFB Officers and Employees also have a duty to treat insureds and their colleagues with courtesy and respect. They shall therefore:-

- not cause embarrassment to colleagues or members of the public by their dress, speech or behaviour;



Code of Ethics and Conduct for SIFB Officers and Employees

- not consume any alcoholic drink, not use and/or abuse illicit drugs or controlled substances; consuming alcoholic drinks in a public place, which also includes the workplace, is an offence liable to a fine not exceeding Rs 10,000 and imprisonment for a term not exceeding 2 months under the Public Health Act;
- not smoke any tobacco product while on duty or in any
- public place or any other indoor area which is open to the public or where the public is permitted to have access; smoking in a public place is an offence liable to fine and to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 12 months and a third or subsequent conviction.
- not engage in gambling by any means at the workplace;
- not cause distress to their colleagues, or otherwise contribute to disruption of the working atmosphere in the workplace;
- not discriminate against any person on ground of sex, marital status, colour, race, ethnic or national origin, age, disability, political opinion, occupation, status, sexual orientation, religious or ethical beliefs;
- not harass, bully or otherwise intimidate members of the public or colleagues;
- respect the privacy of individuals; and
- have due regard for the safety of the public and colleagues at the workplace.

4. Adopting a Green Behaviour

SIFB Officers and Employees, as responsible citizens, have a key role to play to ensure the sustainable development of Mauritius. A ‘Green Government’ requires the effort of one and all so as to achieve the ‘Maurice Ile Durable’ goal.

Both policies and day to day activities should be in line with best environmental and sustainable development practices. This implies making judicious use of limited resources to meet current development imperatives without jeopardizing the availability of these same scarce resources for future generations.

SIFB Officers and Employees should encourage ‘green behaviour’ at work and lead by example by developing a ‘green mindedness’ demonstrated by the following concrete measures, amongst others:

▶ Policy

- by taking into account the environmental aspect and sustainable development practices when adopting policies; and
- by mainstreaming environmental considerations whilst adopting policies;

▶ Saving Paper

- by reducing paper used;
- by re-utilizing used envelopes;
- by using both sides of a sheet;
- by limiting the number of photocopies;



Code of Ethics and Conduct for SIFB Officers and Employees

- by thinking twice before pushing the ‘print’ command; by always asking “is the copy/print really required? Is the whole document needed or only a few pages?”;
- by sharing documents;
- by capitalizing on the use of IT – send more documents, especially bulky ones, by e-mail; and
- by using misprints as notepaper;

▶ Saving Energy

- by optimizing the energy settings for computers and other electrical devices;
- by switching off office lights in unutilized spaces and electrical appliances such as air conditioners, fans and computers when not in office and at the end of the working day;
- using natural lighting and ventilation as far as possible;
- by using air conditioners carefully as per set norms;
- by plugging in scanners and other devices that are used periodically only when in use
- by cutting down on the use of the lift – using the stairs is so much better for the health!
- by walking short distances instead of using the car; and
- by promoting the use of renewable energy;

▶ Saving water

- by using water in a responsible way;
- by turning off taps when not in use;
- by ensuring proper maintenance of waterworks to avoid leakages; and
- by using water efficient devices, e.g. installing taps which shut off automatically after use;

▶ Recycling

- by sorting paper from other wastes; and
- by recycling paper and disposing of wastes in a responsible way;

▶ Sustainable Choices

- by always making sustainable choices;
- by purchasing products and services that are environmentally friendly; and
- by respecting ecosystems and the natural environment.

5. Good practices during a Pre-Election period

SIFB Officers and Employees should avoid becoming possibly the subject of complaints for having been used to further or foster partisan purposes. They should, in particular:



Code of Ethics and Conduct for SIFB Officers and Employees

- not use the Fund's resources or their positions to support particular issues or parties during the election campaign; not become caught up in party political activities or be used for logistical support for political functions;
- not wear political badges or display political matter.

6. Political Impartiality

Whatever be their own political beliefs, SIFB Officers and Employees owe loyalty to the Government of the day. SIFB Officers and Employees should observe political neutrality in their day-to-day functions. They should not, therefore, act in a way that is determined by party political considerations or use official resources for party purposes.

7. Responsibility towards the stakeholders

SIFB Officers and Employees shall in all circumstances be polite, courteous and respectful towards the stakeholders.

SIFB Officers and Employees shall address the needs of any insured regardless of the status, religion or sex of the person.

SIFB Officers and Employees shall understand that, while discharging their duties, they are doing no favour to anyone. They shall diligently, fairly and sympathetically attend to inquiries from insureds.

It is the duty of SIFB Officers and Employees to give to the insureds any advice and to provide reasonable assistance.

When SIFB Officers and Employees exercise discretionary powers, they shall ensure that they take all facts relevant to the case into consideration.

SIFB Officers and Employees shall also respect the confidential nature of certain information disclosed to them by insureds for procedural purposes.

8. Conflict of Interest

A conflict of interest may be defined as a situation where the private interests of an SIFB Officer or Employee compete or conflict with the interests of the Fund or the Officer's duties in such a manner as to influence the objective exercise of his official duties.

Conflicts of interest include pecuniary interests (*i.e. financial interests or other material benefits or costs*) or non-pecuniary interests (*i.e. favouritism, cronyism, nepotism, political, religious, family or other interests*). They can involve the interests of the SIFB Officer and Employee, members of his immediate family or relatives (*where these interests are known*), business partners or associates, or his friends.

SIFB Officers and Employees shall avoid situations in which their private interests conflict, or might reasonably be perceived to conflict, with the impartial fulfillment of their official duties and the public interest. Thus, they shall avoid having any financial or other interests or embark on any undertaking that could directly or indirectly compromise the performance of their duties.

In many circumstances, the conflict, or potential conflict, is known only to the SIFB Officer or Employee. Therefore, in case a conflict of interest arises, the onus is on the SIFB Officer or

Employee to disclose promptly, fully and appropriately any actual or potential conflict of interest, he may have in a matter that is the subject of a consideration.

Any SIFB Officer or Employee who fails to disclose his direct or indirect interest in a company, partnership or other undertaking with which the Fund proposes to deal, shall commit an offence under the Prevention of Corruption Act 2002.

9. Outside Employment

An SIFB Officer or Employee is engaged in outside employment when he works for one organisation and also does paid part-time or casual work for another organisation. It includes operating a business, maintaining a professional practice or providing consultancy services to another person or organisation.

Outside employment:-

- ▶ has the potential for creating conflict of interest situations; may lead to misuse of the Fund's resources and information; and
- ▶ may result in use of the Fund's assets for non-official purposes.

SIFB Officers and Employees shall not engage in any outside employment, for remuneration or otherwise, unless prior approval has been obtained from the CEO. SIFB Officers and Employees shall not accept employment or engage in activities which may conflict or interfere with the performance of their official duties as this may cast doubt on their own integrity and may adversely affect the image of the institution for which they work.

10. Disclosure of Information

In the course of their official duties, it is common for SIFB Officers and Employees to have access to confidential information. SIFB Officers and Employees shall not, in any case whatsoever, misuse such information for their private interests or for the interests of others who may be their close relatives or friends. SIFB Officers and Employees shall ensure that confidential information to which they may have access is kept secret and is not prematurely disclosed.

The SIFB Officer and Employee shall disclose such information only if required to do so by law or upon obtaining proper authority and approval concerning the nature and extent of information to be disclosed. In these cases, the information disclosed shall be factual and shall not be altered in any way that would cause prejudice to the institution.

SIFB Officers and Employees reporting information shall not make any public comment or give their opinion on the information disclosed or on any official policy or practice. '*Public comment*' includes taking part in public speaking engagements, making comments on radio and television and expressing views in letters to the newspapers or in books, journals or notices or where it might be expected that the publication or circulation of the comment will spread to the community at large.

SIFB Officers and Employees shall be bound by, and shall continue to observe, their duties of confidentiality after they leave the service.

11. Use of the Fund's Resources

SIFB Officers and Employees shall play a leading role in ensuring security over the Fund's assets. Thus, as direct users, SIFB Officers and Employees shall ensure that assets and other facilities (*such as transport, stationery, telephones or secretarial services*) provided to them for official duties or functions, are used strictly for those duties and for no other purpose.



Code of Ethics and Conduct for SIFB Officers and Employees

SIFB Officers and Employees shall be scrupulous in their use of the Fund's property and services and shall not permit their misuse by any other person or body. They shall manage the Fund's assets and resources effectively and efficiently. They shall strive to obtain value for money and to avoid waste or extravagance in the use of resources.

SIFB Officers and Employees shall exercise care over the Fund's equipment, vehicles or records in their possession or for which they are responsible. They shall avoid creating situations where it is perceived that the Fund's assets are improperly used for their own or any other person's or body's private benefit.

12. Acceptance of Gifts and Other Benefits

SIFB Officers and Employees shall not abuse their official position for personal gain. They shall not solicit or accept gifts, rewards or benefits, which might compromise their integrity and that of the institution. Gifts or benefits include, but are not restricted to, free or less than market value accommodation, entertainment, hospitality and travel.

An SIFB Officer or Employee shall not demand or accept gifts, favours, hospitality or any other benefit for himself or his family, close relatives and friends, or persons or organisations with whom he has or has had business or other relations, which may influence or appear to influence the impartiality with which he carries out his duties or may be or appear to be a reward relating to his duties.

An SIFB Officer or Employee shall not offer or give any advantage in any way connected with his position, unless lawfully authorised to do so. An SIFB Officer or Employee shall not seek to influence for private purposes any person or body, including other SIFB Officers or Employees, by misusing his official position or by offering personal advantages.

An SIFB Officer or Employee shall not allow himself to be put, or appear to be put, in a position of obligation to return a favour to any person or body, nor should his conduct in his official capacity or in his private life make him susceptible to the improper influence of others.

13. Good Governance and Integrity Reporting

An SIFB Officer or Employee shall have the duty to report on the basis of reasonable grounds any person suspected of acquiring unexplained wealth.

13 September 2022