



Government
of Canada

Gouvernement
du Canada

VALUES and ETHICS CODE

for the OFFICE of the PRIVACY COMMISSIONER
of CANADA

Effective May 2, 2012

Canada

Table of Contents

Preamble.....3
Respect for democracy4
Respect for people4
Integrity5
Stewardship.....5
Excellence.....6
In conclusion8

Preamble

*The mission of the Office of the Privacy Commissioner,
pursuant to its enabling legislation,
is to protect and promote the privacy rights of individuals.
To this end, the conduct of all persons employed by the Office must be consistent
with the ethical requirements established by the Government of Canada.*

*Aware of the specific nature of the Office of the Privacy Commissioner's mission,
all persons employed by the Office place special importance
on the value of integrity, in order to serve
the Parliament of Canada and all Canadians
with a spirit of neutrality, impartiality and objectivity.
In so doing, the Office's leadership in the realm of privacy
will achieve national and international recognition and respect.*

Respect for democracy

Democratic values are what place the public interest at the centre of government action. All those employed by the Office of the Privacy Commissioner (OPC) understand that respect for, and the promotion of these values, are driven by the fact that they are at the service of both the Parliament of Canada and Canadians.

Consequently, putting democratic values to use, in keeping with the specific nature of the Office's mission, involves the following:

- a. **Informing** the Parliament of Canada in an impartial and objective manner, relaying all of the necessary and relevant information so that its members may make fully informed decisions.
- b. **Promoting and protecting** the privacy of individuals with a spirit of impartiality and objectivity, independently of particular interests, and with consideration for the advancement of the common good.
- c. **Ensuring** equal access to the services provided by the Office.
- d. **Serving** the organizations and individuals who contact the Office with diligence, transparency and courtesy.

Respect for people

This value calls for the active and unconditional recognition of human dignity. Persons employed by the Office recognize that the protection of privacy is an important dimension of human dignity. This value must also be reflected in the relationships employees forge with each other.

Consequently, reflecting the value associated with respect for people, in keeping with the specific nature of the Office's mission, involves the following:

- a. **Giving** each request for service the attention and objectivity it deserves.
- b. **Recognizing** the value and benefit of diversity and differences.

- c. **Experiencing** the dynamics of interpersonal relationships at work with a spirit of openness, understanding, and flexibility, and as a result contribute to the creation of an environment that is free of harassment or discrimination.
- d. **Supporting** the development within the Office of an environment where people can reflect on ways to better recognize and promote human dignity.

Integrity

The value of integrity is essential to upholding and increasing the confidence of Canadians in their federal government and its related institutions, departments and agencies.

As an Agent of the Parliament of Canada, the Office enjoys a great deal of latitude in its actions. This immense privilege demands that its employees conduct themselves with integrity beyond reproach, exceeding the usual standards expected of public servants.

Consequently, upholding the value of integrity, in keeping with the specific nature of the Office's mission, involves the following:

- a. **Demonstrating** exemplary integrity in performing duties to maintain, develop and enhance the bond of trust that the Office must foster with both the Parliament of Canada and all Canadians.
- b. **Informing** the appropriate authorities about any acts, actions, decisions or behaviours of a person employed by the Office that, by their nature, could tarnish its reputation.

Stewardship

Stewardship means making optimal use of all resources available to the Office to fulfil its mission. The sound use of these resources for their intended purpose will

enable the Office to maintain its credibility and to diligently serve the Parliament of Canada, individuals and organizations that require its services.

Consequently, assuring stewardship, in keeping with the specific nature of the Office's mission, involves the following:

- a. ***Making*** optimal use of the resources allotted by the Parliament of Canada for the purposes set out in law.
- b. ***Safeguarding*** the reputation of the Office to maintain the necessary bond of trust with the Parliament of Canada and all Canadians.
- c. ***Disseminating and sharing*** expertise in a manner that protects and promotes the privacy of individuals.

Excellence

Excellence calls for full adherence to the other ethical values set out in this Code. Excellence presupposes the inclusion of democratic values, respect for people, and the fulfilment of the Office's mission in a spirit of integrity and effective stewardship of resources.

Consequently, achieving excellence, in keeping with the specific nature of the Office's mission, involves the following:

- a. ***Acquiring and integrating*** the knowledge required to provide – in both official languages – the best services, information, advice and guidance free of bias or particular interest, to serve the common good.
- b. ***Participating*** in the Office's national and international outreach efforts in order to meet the objectives of its mandate.
- c. ***Ensuring*** that one's individual conduct in public and in private promotes a positive image of the Office among Canadians.

- d. ***Developing*** a spirit of creativity, flexibility and openness to optimize the actions of the Office and to use the resources allotted by the Parliament of Canada in an effective manner.

In conclusion

The Office of the Privacy Commissioner of Canada's ethical ideals are founded on the essential core of its mission, namely, to protect and promote the privacy rights of individuals.

To this end, the Office gives priority to, and places special attention on the day-to-day management of the personal information entrusted to it, ensuring protection and confidentiality in an effective manner.

Accordingly, by respecting the highest standards for privacy protection, the Office strives to be an example of an organization that embodies its mission and defining values, and therefore a source of inspiration for all Canadians and their institutions.