



Ethics in the Office

1. In accordance with the provisions of the Constitution of the International Labour Organization and the United Nations Charter, service with the International Labour Office is subject to the highest standards of conduct and integrity. These standards are elaborated in Chapter I of the ILO Staff Regulations,² in the Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service adopted in 2001 by the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC)³ and in the Rules governing outside activities contained in Circular, Series 6, No. 346 of 20 December 1985.⁴
2. In order to foster a culture of integrity and high ethical standards, I have decided to introduce the following measures:
 - A copy of the Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service will be issued to each official with a request to sign a statement confirming that they have read and agree to observe these standards.
 - An Ethics Officer function will be established to ensure support and compliance with ethical standards and to reinforce the possibility for all officials to report cases of disregard for these standards without fear of retaliation.
 - A requirement for the periodic disclosure of interests by all officials.

Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service

3. The Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service⁵ were revised and updated by the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) in 2001 in consultation with participating organizations and staff representatives. These standards complement the provisions of Chapter I of the ILO Staff Regulations and guide ILO officials both in carrying out their duties and in the activities they undertake outside the framework of such duties.
4. I attach great importance to these standards and expect all ILO officials to respect and comply with them. Strict observance of these standards is essential for the reputation of the Office as well as for the respect and trust that the ILO should enjoy on the part of its member States, Workers' and Employers' organizations and the public at large.

¹ To each official. Broadcast by email.

² <http://www.ilo.org/intranet/english/bureau/pers/staffreg/chap1.htm>

³ The Standards of Conduct are available on the HRD website and on the ICSC website

<http://icsc.un.org/resources/pdfs/general/standardse.pdf>

⁴ <http://www.ilo.org/iloroot/intranet/english/bureau/program/mas/circulars/6/n346rac/index.htm>

⁵ Prepared in 1954 by the International Civil Service Advisory Board, precursor of the International Civil Service Commission.

5. I have requested that a copy of the revised Standards of Conduct be issued to each official. Each official will be requested to sign a statement (see Annex A) confirming that she/he has read the document and undertakes to observe the standards contained therein. The Standards of Conduct and the statement will be distributed through the Sectors to each department/unit and to the field through the Field Office secretariats. These documents can also be downloaded from the Human Resources Development Department (HRD) intranet site. The signed statements will be collected by the respective secretariats and returned to HRD and placed on the personal file of each official.

Ethics Officer

6. The Ethics Office function is entrusted to the Deputy Legal Adviser, Mr. Guido Raimondi, with the following responsibilities:
 - (a) To provide guidance to HRD to ensure that ILO policies, procedures and practices reinforce and promote the ethical standards called for under the Staff Regulations and the Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service, and that the ethical standards pertaining to ILO officials are clearly understood.
 - (b) On request, to counsel managers and staff members on questions of ethics and those governing outside activities.
 - (c) To assist, in collaboration with HRD, in designing and promoting programmes to inform and educate staff with a view to increasing awareness on ethical issues.
 - (d) To receive complaints of retaliation or threats of retaliation from individual officials who believe that action has been taken against them because they have reported misconduct or cooperated with an audit or investigation.
 - (e) To keep a confidential record of all complaints received.
 - (f) To conduct a preliminary review of the complaint to determine: (i) if the complainant engaged in a protected activity; and (ii) if there is a prima facie case that the protected activity was a contributing factor in causing the alleged retaliation or threat of retaliation.
 - (g) To refer the matter to HRD, where appropriate, for consideration of possible disciplinary action.
7. In exercising these duties, the Ethics Officer will be independent of any official, department or other organizational entity of the ILO and will report directly to the Director-General, to whom she/he will present a periodic report.
8. All offices and officials shall cooperate with the Ethics Officer and provide access to any records and documents requested by the Ethics Officer, except for medical records that are not available without the express consent of the official concerned and other records that are subject to confidentiality requirements.
9. Officials who wish to address the Ethics Officer should forward all information and documentation available to them in support of their request, in person, by regular mail, e-mail or fax marked "confidential" to:

Mr. Guido Raimondi
Deputy Legal Adviser
International Labour Office, 1211 Geneva 22
Office 8-160
Tel +41 22 799 6521
Fax : +41 22 799 8570
E-mail : ETHICS@ilo.org

Disclosure of interests

10. A potential conflict of interest can arise where an official's personal relationships or position in external entities can compromise or be seen to compromise their objectivity and impartiality in the discharge of official duties for the ILO (e.g. roles, activities or participation in bodies or groups dealing with ILO matters and activities, close ties with constituents or ILO oversight bodies, etc). Financial or pecuniary interests of officials as a result of family and personal relationships, gifts, benefits and hospitality received from outside sources, as well as through other business interests such as partnerships and family businesses are also considered to be one of the main causes of conflict of interest in a public administration.
11. To assist in the prevention of conflicts of interest, each official shall, without prejudice to the obligation to obtain permission to undertake certain outside activities in accordance with circular 6/346 referred to above, complete a Disclosure of Interests Form (see Annex B) and submit it to HRD upon initial appointment and regularly thereafter at intervals announced by the Office.⁶ These forms will be confidential and will therefore be placed in the second part of the Personal file of each official.
12. Officials are reminded that when confronted by a situation that could lead to a perception of a conflict of interest, they must disclose that interest to their immediate supervisor and refrain from any further involvement in that situation.

Whistleblowing

13. Where an official is aware of a situation that appears to him or her to be incompatible with the standards of conduct or established rules and procedures involving a third party, there are a number of mechanisms for reporting such cases with accompanying protection from retaliation.
14. In cases involving financial impropriety, fraud, presumption of fraud or attempted fraud, Financial Rule 13.10⁷ requires officials to report them to the Treasurer and the Chief Internal Auditor. In accordance with Financial Rule 14.30, the Chief Internal Auditor is also available to receive from individual officials complaints or information concerning the possible existence of waste, abuse of authority or other irregular activities. Both the Treasurer and the Chief Internal Auditor are bound by a duty of confidentiality and no official who provides information to them shall be adversely affected unless this information was wilfully provided with the knowledge that it was false or with intent to misinform.
15. Under Circular Series 6, No. 649, concerning informal conflict resolution mechanisms,⁸ the Mediator can receive in confidence information concerning non-compliance with ILO internal rules and procedures (other than Financial Rules), breach of standards of conduct or concealment of such action. Where the Mediator considers that the concern is credible, he or she will report it to the relevant authority for appropriate action.

⁶ The completion of the disclosure of interest form by serving officials will be first required in January 2007.

⁷ The financial rules are available at <http://www.ilo.org/intranet/english/support/finas/doc/rules.htm>

⁸ <http://www.ilo.org/iloroot/intranet/english/bureau/program/mas/circulars/6/n649rac/index.pdf>

- 16.** The responsibilities of the Ethics Officer as regards the protection against retaliation are specified in paragraph 6(e) to (g) above.
- 17.** The present circular will become effective on 1 May 2006.

Juan Somavia
Director-General

Annex A

INTERNATIONAL LABOUR OFFICE

Statement concerning the Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service

I,, acknowledge that I have received and read the *2001 Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service (ICSC, 2002)*, which complement Chapter I of the ILO Staff Regulations. I undertake to observe these Standards of Conduct and to conduct myself at all times in a manner befitting my status as an international civil servant, as provided for under article 1.2 of the ILO Staff Regulations.

Date

Signature

Annex B

Disclosure of interests

Note: This form is issued pursuant to Circular Series 6, No. 662

Name:

Unit:

1. Are you engaged in any activity or occupation external to the Office that could have an impact on your objectivity or independence in the performance of your duties, or could otherwise affect the impact or reputation of the Organization?

Yes _____ No _____

If “yes,” please list any such activity or occupation and specify whether it has been authorized, by whom and when:

2. Have you any links with Government, Worker or Employer representatives or persons engaged in ILO oversight that could have, or could be perceived to have, an impact on your objectivity or independence in the performance of your duties?

Yes _____ No _____

If “yes,” please specify:

There has been no change of situation since the most recently completed form was submitted

I certify that the above statements are true.

Date:

Signature: