

Values, Ethics, & Conduct

A Code for Nova Scotia's Public Servants




NOVA SCOTIA



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VALUES, ETHICS, AND CONDUCT

We are Nova Scotia's public servants.

We are guided by values.

We manage and deliver public services in Nova Scotia.

We value democratic processes and recognize that our elected officials set policy.

We look to this code for direction.

We are the Public Service of Nova Scotia.

VALUES, ETHICS, AND CONDUCT

We proudly serve the public needs of Nova Scotians. We support the efforts of our elected government to develop and implement public policy. We are answerable through due process to Ministers of the Crown who in turn are accountable to the public.

We value the trust and confidence of our elected officials and the citizens we serve. We strive to meet the highest expectations of Nova Scotians and know that tasks we undertake are important and often essential.

We value respect, integrity, diversity, accountability, and the public good. We stand by these values, and we believe that they are in the best interest of all Nova Scotians. We are a cornerstone of our province's society.

OUR VALUES AT WORK

Respect

Integrity

Diversity

Accountability

Public Good

Respect

Admiration, Civility, and Tolerance

We respect our citizens and our colleagues.¹ We respect our predecessors who laid the foundations upon which we build. We respect those who inherit the outcome of our efforts.

As public servants we

- recognize good in our colleagues and the citizens we serve
- are caring and professional
- work to earn trust and respect
- expect respect

¹ Employee Recognition Policy

OUR VALUES AT WORK

Respect

Integrity

Diversity

Accountability

Public Good

Integrity

Non-partisan and Honest

We value and provide service that is honest, open, impartial, and non-partisan.² We are committed to standards of behaviour, safety, and expertise befitting our respective duties and responsibilities.

As public servants we

- answer to our managers
- know that our responsibility to the public is an essential concern
- ensure confidentiality when required and always expect honesty
- will not be compromised with gifts, hospitality, or other benefits
- lead by example

² Civil Service Act, Ch. 70, Revised Statutes, 1989

OUR VALUES AT WORK

Respect

Integrity

Diversity

Accountability

Public Good

Diversity

Serving All Nova Scotians

We strive to be a welcoming and culturally competent public service, free of discrimination and representative of Nova Scotia society. We serve all Nova Scotians regardless of race, culture, gender, age, spiritual belief, sexual orientation, mental or physical ability, or any other personal characteristic.³ We encourage new ideas and work to bring these ideas to life.

As public servants we

- support diversity and inclusion in the workplace
- are creating an environment where differences are valued and respected⁴
- believe that diversity fuels ideas and that ideas fuel progress

³ Employment Equity Policy

⁴ Respectful Workplace Policy

OUR VALUES AT WORK

Respect

Integrity

Diversity

Accountability

Public Good

Accountability

Responsible and Transparent

We are answerable for our decisions and actions and take responsibility for our successes and failures. We are objective, fair, and transparent.⁵ We are guided by and act according to democratically established laws and policies.

As public servants we

- rely on the law and policy for guidance
- use and encourage the use of transparent and fair processes
- use public resources efficiently and effectively
- answer by explaining our decisions and actions
- correct errors as soon as possible

⁵ Public Interest Disclosure of Wrongdoing Act, 2010, ch.42

OUR VALUES AT WORK

Respect

Integrity

Diversity

Accountability

Public Good

Public Good

Democratic Process, Law, and Policy

We know that our elected officials create the laws and policies that advance the public good. We recognize that the implementation, management, and delivery of these laws and policies is how the public good is best served and the essence of our work as public servants.

As public servants we

- are impartial and non-partisan
- deliver on government's commitments
- expect that government policy advances the public good
- are concerned about public safety and the safety of our colleagues⁶
- work to earn the public's confidence



Our Code in Practice

OUR CODE IN PRACTICE

We are an evolving professional public service intent on serving the public interests of all Nova Scotians. We are public servants as defined in Nova Scotia's Public Service Act. R.S., c. 376, s. 17.

We are hired under a fair hiring policy that emphasizes fair and competitive processes and meritorious considerations.⁷ We are dedicated and skilled, and seek to attain our highest level of competency. We are front-line staff, administrators, managers, tradespeople, artisans, experts, and professionals. We are committed to a healthy, safe, and supportive workplace and to the enhancement of employee health and job satisfaction.⁸ We see promise in diversity and opportunity in new ideas. We take pride in ethical behaviour.

Our values are reflected in our recommendations, decisions, and actions. We know that these in turn reflect upon our government. And we recognize that this code provides ethical guidance for our every action and decision.

⁷ Fair Hiring Policy

⁸ Healthy Workplace Policy

OUR CODE IN PRACTICE

We are determined to provide services of a consistently high quality to the best of our capability, emphasizing safety, well-being, and efficiency. We are engaged with and gain satisfaction from serving our public.

Good decisions require good judgment.

Our five values guide us when making every decision, especially when our decisions are most difficult. If we find ourselves in a situation and in doubt, we ask these questions:

- Who can I ask for objective advice?
- Can I feel good about my decision?
- Would colleagues support my decision?
- Is this decision lawful and within government policy?

When our concern is of an ethical nature, we can discuss it with colleagues or managers. If our situation concerns a conflict between work and personal interests, we refer to the Policy on Conflict of Interest.⁹



Administering Our Code

ADMINISTERING OUR CODE

Our Deputy Heads¹⁰ oversee the administration of this code, ensuring that all employees receive a copy. As well, Deputy Heads may augment the code with procedures and guidance respecting unique responsibilities or requirements contained in statutes affecting their specific department. We rely upon Treasury and Policy Board to administer this code with respect to Deputy Heads.

We recognize that we are to adhere to those policies referenced in this code and itemized in the footnotes.

Our code of conduct offers conventions to guide and govern our behaviour as public servants working for the people and Province of Nova Scotia. When in the workplace, we adopt these values and strive to attain the implied standards. We are Nova Scotia's public servants.

Visit: <http://novascotia.ca/psc/about/overview/publicationsPolicies/codeofconduct/>

¹⁰ The Deputy of the Member of the Executive Council presiding over a department and others designated by the Governor in Council as Deputy Head.

For complete details regarding all government of
Nova Scotia human resource policies visit:

<http://www.gov.ns.ca/treasuryboard/manuals/500HRMgmt.htm>

For information regarding the Nova Scotia Public Service
Commission and our human resource programs visit:

<http://novascotia.ca/psc/>

For related training opportunities visit:

<http://novascotia.ca/psc/employeeCentre/training/>



Respect • Integrity • Diversity • Accountability • Public Good


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