



Conflict of Interest Policy

June 2023

Applicable For Members of the WSWO Board of Directors, Officers or Staff

The Board of Directors of Water Ski and Wakeboard Ontario ("WSWO") along with its officers and staff members have been entrusted by the association's members to promote and protect its interests. Those interests include the execution of WSWO's strategic vision:

"To develop and promote organized water skiing, wakeboarding and other towed water sports from beginner to pro."

Inasmuch as WSWO's Values recognize the need to foster an environment that is

Fun and safe, ethical & fair, inclusive & open, member focused and family centred

it is important that directors, officers and staff be seen always to place the interests of the association above their own when engaged in WSWO business. The following points are intended to provide guidance for the WSWO Board and for individual directors, officers or staff in cases where real, apparent, or potential conflicts of interest may arise.

1. Definition

Conflicts of interest include situations:

- a. Where a director, officer or staff member's private affairs or financial interests are in conflict with their duties and responsibilities or result in a perception that a conflict exists;
- b. Where a director, officer or staff member's actions compromise or undermine the trust which the public and association members place in WSWO; and
- c. Which could impair or appear to impair a director, officer or staff member's abilities to act in the best interest of the association.

Conflicts of interest can include both financial and material interests. In addition to actual conflict of interest, there can also be apparent or potential conflict of interest. An apparent conflict of interest occurs when the answer to the following question is "yes": *Would a reasonably informed person perceive that the performance of the director, officer or staff member's duties and responsibilities could be influenced by their financial or material interest?*

A potential conflict of interest is a situation that may develop into a real conflict of interest.

2. Guidelines

The following guidelines direct all actions and decisions regarding potential and actual conflict of interest in activities sponsored or supported by WSWO. These principles apply to both for-profit and not-for-profit activities of WSWO:

- a. All directors, officers and staff members act in the best interests of the members of WSWO;
- b. Directors, officers or staff members may not participate in decisions from which they could benefit financially or materially;
- c. Directors, officers or staff members regard benefits accruing to immediate family as if the director, officer or staff member were to benefit;
- d. Directors, officers or staff members do not use their positions or information obtained therefrom to provide an unfair advantage to themselves, including cases involving grants for funding and other approvals and appointments.

3. Areas of conflict of interest

- a. **Self-dealing:** A director, officer or staff member makes decisions that financially or materially affect the individual as a private citizen or the director, officer or staff member's immediate family.
- b. **Accepting benefits:** A director, officer or staff member accepts substantial gifts, bribes, services, or other significant benefits, in their role with WSWO, that may be perceived to influence the individual receiving the benefit.
- c. **Influence peddling:** A director, officer or staff member accepts benefits in exchange for exerting influence or giving preferential treatment to the giver of the benefit.
- d. **Using WSWO property:** A director, officer or staff member uses WSWO property (e.g. photocopiers, telephones) for non-WSWO business.
- e. **Using confidential information:** A director uses confidential information acquired because of WSWO work for private gain.
- f. **Post-appointment:** Confidential information that has been gained in the director, officer or staff member's role is used for private advantage after leaving WSWO.

4. Examples of potential conflicts of interest

Examples of conflict of interest at WSWO could include, but are not limited to:

- a. A director, officer or staff member who is also a member of a board of directors of a WSWO member;
- b. A director, officer or staff member who also provides coaching or other services to the association's national or development teams;
- c. A director, officer or staff member who have a member of their immediate family named to any Provincial or National Team;
- d. A director, officer or staff member who is also a benefactor of WSWO;
- e. A director, officer or staff member who is also an owner or principal of a member ski/wake school, club or camp.

5. Procedure when a conflict of interest arises

- a. It is the responsibility of each director, officer or staff member to immediately disclose in writing to the President the existence of any conflict of interest. In the case of a potential conflict of the President, such conflict will be immediately disclosed, by the President, to the entire board of directors, in writing.
- b. It is the duty of the board of directors of WSWO to decide whether such individual may participate in any discussions or vote on the issue that has given rise to the conflict.
- c. All directors, officers or staff members must withdraw from participation, in any way, in decisions in which they have a financial or material interest.
- d. When a director, officer or staff member involved in evaluating applications and granting awards for funding on behalf of WSWO:
 - i. Is the applicant, co-applicant, or co-signor; or is a senior official from the same organization as an applicant; then, unless otherwise directed in writing by WSWO, such person shall disclose the fact of the conflict to WSWO and shall not participate in any evaluation of the application or competing proposals.
 - ii. Belongs to the same organization as an applicant; is an applicant's colleague; is a competitor of an applicant or involved in an organization or business that is a competitor of the applicant; or is directly involved in collaborative activities with the applicant; then, unless otherwise directed in writing by WSWO, such person shall disclose the fact of the conflict to WSWO and not be assigned the applications for review.
- e. A director, officer or staff member who is in a conflict of interest shall absent themselves, without comment, prior to any discussion or voting in respect of the application or other issue. However, if such persons must remain in meetings in order to fulfill their administrative responsibilities, they shall not participate in any discussion regarding the application or other issue that has given rise to the conflict of interest.
- f. Any proposal for funding submitted by any director, officer or staff member in which they, their relatives, or their friends have a financial interest must be forwarded to a minimum of two external reviewers for independent evaluation.
- g. Should any director, officer or staff member be found to be in conflict or interest that has not been disclosed to the board as required in 5 a) above, the board of directors of WSWO may:
 - i. Require the director, officer or staff member to provide full disclosure of the nature of the conflict of interest;
 - ii. By special resolution as per WSWO by-laws, or policy, as applicable, remove said director from the board.
 - iii. Terminate the employment of said officer or staff member at WSWO.

A. Applicable for Other WSWO Volunteers

Every WSWO committee, workgroup or task force chairperson and respective committee members (each of such persons being hereinafter referred to as a "volunteer") in exercising his or her powers and discharging his or her duties shall act honestly and in good faith with a view to the best interests of WSWO and exercise the care, diligence and skill that a reasonably prudent person would exercise in comparable circumstances.

The same underlying principles and guidelines as described above shall apply to a volunteer.