

Senior Officials for Values and Ethics

GUIDE TO ACTION



Canada

- ◆ Do colleagues and employees see your conduct as embodying public service values and ethics? How do you know? What assessment procedures or techniques do you use?
- ◆ Has your organization assessed the values and ethics risks across the organization and in the various business lines? Have steps been taken to address key risks?

Are you aware of the information sources and tools that exist to help you in these responsibilities?

Values and ethics support tools

Numerous tools are available to further ethical conduct and values-based decision-making in organizations. Several are offered by the Office of Public Service Values and Ethics.

Office of Public Service Values and Ethics Web site
www.hrma-agrh.gc.ca/veo-bve

The Code at Work applied learning video

Contains 4 (four) short vignettes depicting ethical dilemmas and shows how the Code can be used to facilitate values-based decision-making

Facilitation guide for The Code at Work

Aids in the successful delivery of *The Code at Work Workshop*, an interactive exercise designed to build awareness and understanding of the Code

The Code Speaks information video

Depicts a seasoned public service manager discussing the Code with a new employee; designed to familiarize new public service employees with the Code

Values and ethics cards

Summarize three key values and ethics policies (the *Values and Ethics Code for the Public Service*; the *Policy on the Internal Disclosure of Information Concerning Wrongdoing in the Workplace*; and the *Policy on the Prevention and Resolution of Harassment in the Workplace*) and are a handy reference tool for employees

Values and ethics page-ups

Three-dimensional document holder featuring the Office of Public Service Values and Ethics Web site; assists in calling to mind the Code and related information

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[www.hrma-agrh.gc.ca/
veo-bve/Shopping_Cart/ProductCatalog_e.asp](http://www.hrma-agrh.gc.ca/veo-bve/Shopping_Cart/ProductCatalog_e.asp)

How Can I Get More Information on The Office of Public Service Values and Ethics?

Information is available on the Internet or at the Office of Public Service Values and Ethics
L'Esplanade Laurier, 300 Laurier Avenue
Ottawa, ON K1A 0R3

Phone: (613) 957-2458

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www.hrma-agrh.gc.ca/veo-bve



Public Service Human Resources
Management Agency of Canada

Agence de gestion des ressources humaines
de la fonction publique du Canada

"...it is through leadership, above all,
that values are transmitted, nourished
and reinforced..."

*A Strong Foundation: Report of the Task Force
on Public Service Values and Ethics*

What is the role of the Deputy Head with respect to Public Service Values and Ethics?

- ◆ Deputy Heads are accountable for ensuring that the Values and Ethics Code for the Public Service is fully upheld and advanced within their organizations;
- ◆ Deputy Heads have a particular responsibility to exemplify public service values in their actions and behaviours;
- ◆ Deputy Heads are responsible for designating a Senior Official within their organizations to assist them in upholding and advancing the Values and Ethics Code for the Public Service.

Who are the Senior Officials in the context of Public Service Values and Ethics?

The Senior Officials:

- ◆ have an exemplary record with respect to the principles inherent in the Values and Ethics Code for the Public Service;
- ◆ have credibility and influence with the senior management team, notably the deputy head, and through this relationship exercise leadership to promote values-based decision-making at all levels; and
- ◆ are trusted and respected by the broader employee community and are accessible to them.

What is the Senior Officials' role?

- ◆ To support the deputy head in ensuring that the organization exemplifies public service values at all levels;
- ◆ To promote awareness, understanding, and help develop the capacity to apply the Code amongst employees;
- ◆ To help the deputy head ensure management practices are in place to support a strong culture of public service values and ethics;
- ◆ To support employees, and inform and advise them about their professional conduct pursuant to the Code;
- ◆ To encourage employees to raise issues;
- ◆ To help resolve disputes or dilemmas related to the Code.

How do Senior Officials fulfill their role?

Senior Officials promote the Code by:

- ◆ ensuring that employees are aware that the Code is a **condition of employment**;
- ◆ working with senior managers to prepare an organizational values and ethics **action plan** and **progress report** for the achievement of public service values and ethics objectives and results;
- ◆ flagging challenges to senior management in a timely manner with **recommendations for action**, concerning both **management practices** and **improvement strategies** necessary to achieve and measure values and ethics outcomes;
- ◆ actively contributing to the creation and delivery of learning and communications **initiatives**;
- ◆ promoting the distribution and use of values and ethics communications and learning **tools**;
- ◆ helping the deputy head ensure values and ethics considerations are incorporated into **decisions** affecting promotions, assignments, and performance reviews; and
- ◆ encouraging the inclusion of exemplary conduct in the organization's **rewards and recognition** program.

Senior Officials' Network

The Office of Public Service Values and Ethics meets regularly with the Senior Officials' Network to promote consistent application of public service values and ethics, share best practices, and provide mutual support. Meetings are held quarterly.

The Code serves to strengthen respect for, and appreciation of, the role of the Public Service within Canadian democracy.

Partnering with others

The duties of the Senior Official complement the responsibilities of others in the organization responsible for other values and ethics-related policies. Networking lists have been developed to facilitate interdepartmental communication and to help Senior Officials share best practices. These lists are accessible electronically at www.hrma-agrh.gc.ca/veo-bve/networks_e.asp

- ◆ Senior officers for internal disclosure receive, investigate, and make recommendations to deputy heads on allegations of wrongdoing in the workplace.
- ◆ Delegated Managers and Departmental Coordinators for the prevention and resolution of harassment in the workplace promote harassment prevention, and receive and manage the investigation of harassment complaints.
- ◆ Departmental officers for conflict of interest and post-employment measures. In some organizations, specialists have been identified to advise employees on the conflict of interest and post-employment measures in the Code.
- ◆ Departmental public service values and ethics practitioners are staff in various organizations who work in support of public service values and ethics.

Other organizational support mechanisms

- ◆ Ombudsperson
- ◆ Chief Financial Officer
- ◆ Chief Human Resources Officer

Where to start?

Senior Officials should consider the following questions:

- ◆ Are all employees in the organization aware of the existence of the Code and related policies?
- ◆ What mechanisms are in place and what additional measures could be taken to increase familiarity with and understanding of these policies among employees?
- ◆ Is the Code integrated into all orientation materials, procedures, and events for new employees? What orientation, learning, and other tools are in place?
- ◆ Do employees know that the Code is a condition of employment? What assessment procedures or techniques are used to determine whether employees know this?
- ◆ Are all managers in the organization familiar with the Code, including its objectives, and ready to help others better understand and apply its principles in their daily work?
- ◆ Does the organization have in place sound advisory and recourse mechanisms where employees can receive advice on ethical dilemmas? Do employees know what mechanisms exist and whom to approach when they are faced with an ethical dilemma?
- ◆ Are employees comfortable raising ethical dilemmas or making disclosures within the organization? What measures are in place to assess staff awareness and comfort?
- ◆ Does the organization need to supplement the Code with a customized organizational code or guidelines reflecting the specific challenges and dilemmas of the workplace?
- ◆ Does the organization have a values and ethics action plan? Are employees familiar with it?
- ◆ Does the values and ethics action plan fit in with the organizational plan? Does the values and ethics action plan include a series of goal levels, planned follow-up, and mechanisms to measure actual results in values and ethics, including from the point of view of stakeholders and employees?
- ◆ Has the organization established mechanisms to obtain staff and client/stakeholder feedback on organizational performance against public service values and ethics? What initiatives could be undertaken to assess awareness and perceptions of values and ethics in the workplace?