

Purpose

This policy is based on the Medair Code of Ethics, which requires all persons acting on behalf of Medair to perform their duties with integrity and good judgment, and to avoid even the appearance of a conflict of interest. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that any conflicts of interest that do arise are promptly disclosed and properly managed.

Who we are

Medair is a Swiss-based international humanitarian organization dedicated to relieving human suffering in some of the world's most remote and devastated places. We reach people in underserved communities that have been damaged by natural disasters, conflicts and other crises. In doing so, we help people recover with dignity and develop skills to build a better future.

Who must follow this policy

This policy applies to all Medair employees, trustees, board members, consultants, contractors, volunteers, interns, individuals or organisations under short or long term contractual obligations such as third parties, suppliers, agents, and implementing partners, and any other persons acting on behalf of Medair ("representatives"). Representatives are expected to read, understand and comply with all aspects of this policy.

What is the policy

Medair is committed to serving its beneficiaries and other stakeholders with integrity. Medair representatives must:

- avoid all conflicts between their own interests and the interests of Medair and the populations we serve;
- avoid situations that may give rise to a conflict of interest;
- avoid even the appearance of a conflict of interest;
- promptly disclose any real or potential conflicts, whether financial, legal, or ethical; and
- when appropriate, remove themselves from any decision-making authority related to the conflict.

What is a conflict of interest?

A conflict of interest arises when an individual's interests interfere with – or have the potential to interfere with – his or her judgment or ability to act in another's best interests. Those interests may be personal, professional, or business-related.

Below are several common types of conflicts of interest, along with examples of how each might occur:

Self-dealing: taking advantage of one's position in an organisation, or knowledge of a particular transaction, to further one's own interests or gain a personal advantage.

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- An employee at a Medair field office tells the procurement manager to hire Company A to deliver goods. The employee owns part of Company A.
- A Medair employee is involved in a project that is about to be launched in a new area. The employee uses his inside knowledge of the details of the project to start a side business that will profit off of it.
- An employee occasionally uses Medair vehicles on the weekends for family trips, without authorisation.

Nepotism and favouritism: *favouring friends or family members in recruitment, procurement, aid delivery, or other situations.*

- A Medair employee hires a friend to fill a position instead of a more qualified candidate. Or, the employee recommends his sister for a job in a different office without disclosing the family relationship.
- A Medair field office rents office space from an employee's family member, without following appropriate procurement guidelines.
- An employee in a Medair field office who is involved in a shelter project puts herself or family members forward as candidates to receive aid ahead of other beneficiaries.

Accepting benefits: *receiving substantial gifts, entertainment, or bribes from suppliers or partners, in return for an understanding of favourable treatment.*

- An employee involved in a water tank distribution project accepts a gift from a neighbour. In return, the neighbour's family is given priority over other families who are in greater need.

Outside employment or activities: *Engaging in or accepting outside employment, or participating in outside activities, when the employment or activities are adverse to and incompatible with the proper discharge of the employee's duties.*

- An employee works as a driver for Medair. He also drives a taxi at night, often leaving him too tired to drive safely – or at all – for Medair during the day.
- A Medair employee has a side job with a local supplier. The supplier pressures him to use his position to obtain favourable treatment from Medair.
- A Medair employee, without notifying his supervisor, becomes involved in local politics and starts actively campaigning for a political party.

Another Medair employee attends a political demonstration after work, while still wearing her Medair branded clothes.

The political activities of either employee can damage Medair's reputation for impartiality and neutrality, negatively affecting Medair's ability to serve populations in need and creating security risks.

- An independent contractor bidding on a contract to support a Medair project is also employed by a government agency that provided a significant grant to fund that project. Although the independent contractor is engaged in self-dealing which could financially harm his government employer rather than Medair, engaging in a contractual relationship with Medair leaves an appearance of corruption that would negatively affect Medair's reputation with the community.

Duty to Disclose Conflicts of Interest

Medair representatives have a duty to promptly disclose any real or potential conflicts of interest, so that they can be effectively managed. Any conflicts of interest must be disclosed at the commencement of the representative's relationship with Medair. If a conflict of interest arises later, the representative must promptly inform his or her manager or Medair point of contact. Conflicts may be disclosed using the Medair Code of Ethics Acknowledgement and Conflict of Interest Disclosure Statement.

In any situation that could potentially pose a conflict of interest, ask yourself:

- Could my personal interest in this situation interfere with my ability to act in Medair's best interests?
- Might it appear to other people, either inside or outside of Medair, that my personal interest might cause me to not act in Medair's best interests?

If you are unsure, or have questions about whether a particular situation should be disclosed, seek guidance from your manager or human resources representative. You may also contact the Legal Director at GSO-Legal-Dir@medair.org.

Failure to disclose conflicts of interest, or to notify Medair regarding a situation where a conflict of interest could arise, may lead to disciplinary action up to and including termination of the representative's relationship with Medair.

Managing conflicts of interest

The existence of a conflict of interest does not, by itself, automatically imply any fraudulent or corrupt practices. This policy does not prohibit all situations in which there may be a conflict of interest. Rather, its purpose is to ensure that such situations are disclosed and managed appropriately.

When a conflict of interest has been disclosed, the representative's manager or point of contact must assess the situation and decide the appropriate measures to be taken. These may include ensuring that the representative is not directly involved in decisions made regarding that matter.

If it is not possible to separate the representative from the relevant matter, the manager should consult with his or her manager, or contact the GSO Legal Director at GSO-Legal-Dir@medair.org.

Duty to Report

All representatives have a duty to report suspected violations of this policy. If you suspect a violation, report it to your manager or Medair point of contact. If you do not feel comfortable speaking to your manager, report your concerns to another or more senior manager at your location. You may also send a confidential report to the Global Support Office online at <https://www.medair.org/reporting-misconduct> or via e-mail to notify@medair.org.