

# **Code of Conduct for Associates**

Reviewed September 2007

# Code of Conduct for Associates

## Introduction

This document sets out a Code of Conduct for all associates of Safety Net Associates Limited. It is applicable to all associates and agency or contract associates engaged in a similar capacity as Safety Net Associates Limited associates.

## Duties and responsibilities

Associates of Safety Net Associates Limited should familiarise themselves with the contents of the Code and should act in accordance with the principles set out in it.

Associates of Safety Net Associates Limited have a duty:

- to discharge public functions reasonably and according to the law, and
- to recognise ethical standards governing particular professions.

The Chief Executive Officer, as accounting officer for Safety Net Associates Limited is responsible overall for propriety including conduct and discipline, working under the Managing Director of the Company.

Breaches of the code may be subject to disciplinary procedure.

## Accountability

Associates of Safety Net Associates Limited should be aware:

- of their accountability to the Managing Director of Safety Net Associates Limited
- that the CEO responsible for Safety Net Associates Limited is ultimately accountable to its Directors for its independence, effectiveness and efficiency.

The Managing Director of Safety Net Associates Limited has responsibilities as an employer.

Associates of Safety Net Associates Limited should conduct themselves with integrity, impartiality and honesty. They should not deceive or knowingly mislead the Managing Director, customers or the public.

## **Conflicts of interest**

Associates should abide by the terms and conditions of service of Safety Net Associates Limited in relation to private interest and possible conflict with public duty; the disclosure of official information; and political activities. They should not misuse their official position or information acquired in their official duties to further their private interests or those of others. Key associates, such as the Chief Executive, Directors, managers of large contracts, and associates working on contracts, should ensure that any possible conflicts of interest are identified at an early stage and that appropriate action is taken to resolve them.

## **Integrity**

Associates of Safety Net Associates Limited should not use their official position to receive, agree to accept or attempt to obtain any payment or other consideration for doing, or not doing, anything or showing favour, or disfavour, to any person. They should not receive benefits of any kind from a third party which might reasonably be seen to compromise their personal judgement and integrity. Under the Prevention of Corruption Act 1916, associates of Safety Net Associates Limited (as for associates of other public bodies) may be required to prove that the receipt of payment or other consideration from someone seeking to obtain a contract is not corrupt.

## **Personal interest**

1. The integrity of Safety Net Associates Limited associates must be beyond suspicion. Accordingly, if any employee has to deal in an official capacity with any matter in which he/she has a private interest, however slight and of whatever character, it is the employee's duty to disclose all the facts to his/her manager.

2. An employee having a direct or indirect financial interest in any item of business of Safety Net Associates Limited shall disclose the fact to his/her manager and shall not take part in any item of business in which he/she has a financial interest.
3. An employee will not, by reason of (2) above, be disqualified from conducting an item of business in which the financial interest is so remote or insignificant that it cannot be reasonably regarded as likely to influence the employee. Also the tenure by an employee of a lease, tenancy or other interest in a dwelling may be disregarded, except in regard to a matter relating exclusively to that dwelling.

### **Relations with the public**

Associates of Safety Net Associates Limited who deal with the affairs of the public should do so sympathetically, efficiently, promptly and without bias or maladministration. Associates of Safety Net Associates Limited should offer the public the highest standards of conduct and service.

### **Use of resources and fraud**

Associates of Safety Net Associates Limited should endeavour to ensure the proper, economical, effective and efficient use of resources. Responsibilities of associates in respect of the prevention of fraud and the procedures to be followed where fraud is detected or suspected are set out in Safety Net Associates Limited Fraud Policy Statement.

### **Corporate gifts and hospitality**

The rules governing associates accepting or receiving gifts and/or corporate hospitality and those governing what gifts or hospitality Safety Net Associates Limited can give are with the permission of the CEO only.

## **Staff behaviour**

Staff behaviour should be above reproach or criticism and harassment at work will not be permitted. Management and Staff Side have agreed guidelines for dealing with workplace harassment and these are set out in the Harassment Policy and Procedure.

## **Official information**

Associates of Safety Net Associates Limited owe a general duty of confidentiality to their employer at common law. They are therefore required to protect official information held in confidence. Nothing in the Code of Conduct should be taken as overriding existing statutory or common law obligations to keep confidential, or in appropriate cases to disclose, certain information.

## **Employee concerns about improper conduct**

If associates of Safety Net Associates Limited believe they are being required to act in a way which:

- is illegal, improper, or unethical;
- is in breach of a professional code;
- may involve possible maladministration, fraud or misuse of public funds or;
- is otherwise inconsistent with this Code;

they should either raise the matter through their line manager or Director or else approach in confidence Safety Net Associates Limited nominated official, the CEO, who is entrusted with the duty of investigating employee concerns about illegal, improper or unethical behaviour. Associates should also draw attention to cases where:

- there is evidence of criminal or unlawful activity by others and may also report cases where they believe there is evidence of irregular or improper behaviour elsewhere in the organisation, but where they have not been personally involved,

or if they are required to act in a way which, for them, raises a fundamental issue of conscience.

## **After leaving employment**

Associates of Safety Net Associates Limited should continue to observe their duty of confidentiality after they have left the employment of Safety Net Associates Limited.