

CODE OF ETHICS
ROADS & HIGHWAYS DEPARTMENT

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ROADS AND HIGHWAYS DEPARTMENT

CODE OF ETHICS

1. PREAMBLE

1.01. Roads and Highways Department of Bangladesh herein after called 'RHD' adopted for its members this Code of Ethics as guidelines of conduct reflecting moral standards and ethical values that would ensure a credible environment of professionalism.

1.02. RHD encourages all staff to regard themselves as professionals in the sense that they aspire to adopt high standards in the fulfillment of their duties and take pride in accomplishing their job. RHD expects this high moral and ethical attitude to prevail among all Engineers, officers and staff members working under Roads and Highways Department herein after called the 'RHD members'.

1.03. This Code of Ethics for RHD members should be viewed as a necessary complement, reinforcing the Government working Standards and specific Job Manuals in the performing of duties.

1.04. Failure to abide by the provisions of the Code may cause embarrassment to RHD and may call for necessary action.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 Background

The People's Republic of Bangladesh considers it essential to achieve good governance, and particularly essential to eradicate corruption and achieve greater integrity by improving the effectiveness of its long-term development plan, 'Vision 2021', and its mid-term development plan, the 'Seventh Five-Year Plan (2016-2020)'. In October 2012, the Cabinet Division, Government of Bangladesh approved the National Integrity Strategy (NIS), and its vision is 'A happy, prosperous and socially just Bangladesh – the *Golden Bengal*'. Ethics Committees for are assigned with the responsibilities of implementing the recommendations and action-plans of the NIS and thereby promote integrity and good governance in their respective ministry/division and institutions. The Five member Ethics committee formed by the Chief Engineer, RHD following the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) has prepared an Action Plan according to the NIS guidelines. The SOP explains necessary activities to be undertaken by the Ethics Committee at each stage of Plan-Do-Check-Action Cycle" for NIS.

The members of the Roads and Highways Department recognize that their work has a direct and vital impact on the quality of life for all people. As a result, the service provided by the various professionals, industries and businesses requires honesty, impartiality, fairness and equity, and must be dedicated to the protection of public health, safety and welfare. RHD members should be aware of the mission statement, understand its impact to their profession and use it in their daily conduct of work.



2.2. Concept

2.2.1. A code of Ethics is a comprehensive statement of the values and principles, which should guide the daily work of RHD members. The independence, powers and responsibilities of the RHD members employs or engages for improvement and maintenance of highway network of Bangladesh demand high ethical values. This Code of Ethics covers the ethical requirements of RHD Engineers, including their professional obligations in particular.

2.3. Scope

2.3.1. This Code applies to RHD members that are under the authority of the Chief Engineer of Roads and Highways Department. In the body of the Code, terms such as employees, staff and supervisors should be taken to include all those who perform work for RHD. Therefore, everyone who works for the Chief Engineer of Roads and Highways Department, including consultants, temporary help and public servants alike is considered to be a member of his staff.

2.3.2. While this Code is intended to provide a clear definition of responsibilities, it cannot address all the possible challenges, which the RHD members and other employees may face in performing their responsibilities. This Code places clear responsibility on individual RHD members and other staffs for their own conduct and behavior.

3. Members General Principles/Obligations

3.1 Dedication for better service to people

3.1.1 The quality of life, safety, health and welfare of the public will be held prominent in the conduct of work by RHD members. RHD members shall perform their work recognizing the importance of a quality and well maintained highway network that will protect the safety, health, property and welfare of the public.

3.2.2 Members of RHD shall at times strive to serve the public interest and put best effort to provide quality service to the people.

3.2. Integrity

3.2.1. Integrity is the core value of a Code of Ethics. Integrity generally means behavioral excellence influenced by ethics, morality and honesty. It also implies adherence to time-tested norms, values, customs and principles of a society. At the individual level, it means being duty-bound and honest. RHD members shall be guided in their provision of service by the highest stands of integrity. RHD members have a duty to adhere to high standards of behavior (e.g. honesty, fairness, candidness, and truthfulness) in the course of their work and in their relationship with the general people including bidders, contractors, consultants, suppliers and members of other public and private organizations. In order to sustain public confidence, the conduct of RHD members should be above suspicion and reproach.

3.2.2. Integrity can be measured in terms of what is right and what is just. Integrity requires RHD members to observe both the form and spirit of work (including civil works) and ethical standards.

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3.2.3. Integrity also requires RHD members to maintain irreproachable standards of professional conduct, make decisions with the public interest in mind, and apply absolute honesty in carrying out their work and in handling the assets & resources of RHD.

3.2.4. Implicit in the notion of the integrity of the RHD office and the RHD members are the concepts of independence and objectivity. RHD members must maintain and manifest independence and objectivity. If these characteristics are lacking, they will be unable to fulfill the mandate of the Office.

3.3. Independence

3.3.1. Independence from the stakeholders of highway industry and other interest groups is indispensable for RHD members. This means that RHD Engineers should behave in a way that enhances and in no way diminishes their independence.

3.3.2. While dealing with procurement and carrying out services, the independence of RHD Engineers should not be impaired by personal or external interests. Independence may be impaired, for example, by external and internal pressure or influence on RHD members; prejudices held by RHD members about individuals, other stakeholders, projects or programmes; previous employment of RHD members with the stakeholder related entity or personal or financial dealings which might cause conflicts of loyalties or of interests. RHD members have a responsibility to refrain from being involved in all matters in which they have a vested interest.

3.4 Objectivity and Impartiality

3.4.1. RHD members should try not only to be independent of related entities and other interest groups, but also to be objective and impartial in dealing with the issues and topics related to highway operation and maintenance.

3.4.2. RHD members should be objective and impartial not only in fact but also in appearance.

3.4.3. There is a need for objectivity and impartiality in all work conducted by RHD members, particularly about the planning, preparing reports, making design, estimating cost. Conclusions and opinions in the above should be based on evidence obtained and assembled in accordance with Government set Standards and orders issued from time to time.

3.5. Competence

3.5.1. RHD members have a duty to conduct themselves in a competent and professional manner at all times and to apply high professional standards in carrying out their work with competence and impartiality. They have to devote themselves to the improvement of quality and capability through programs of continuing professional education and personal development.

3.5.2. RHD members must not undertake work they are not competent to perform. They shall not affix their signature to any plans or documents dealing with subject matter in which they lack competence nor to any plan or document not prepared under their direction and control.



3.5.3. RHD members should know and follow applicable design, construction, maintenance accounting, and financial management standards, policies, procedures and practices. They must also possess a good understanding of the constitutional, legal and institutional principles and standards governing the operations of the highway.

3.5.4. RHD members should exercise due professional care in conducting and supervising the design and construction activities. The members should ensure that his work is reliable, timely, useful, convincing and candid.

3.5.5. RHD members have a professional obligation to update and improve the skills required for the discharge of their professional responsibilities.

3.5.6. RHD members should use methods and practices of the highest possible quality in conducting construction related work. In the conduct of plan design, procurement, estimation and construction related works, RHD members have a duty to adhere to basic postulates of Government set Standards.

3.5.7. The performance of the RHD members should appropriately be evaluated vis-à-vis.

- a) the training that he has received so far;
- b) the experience that he has acquired
- c) the support that he has received both from the RHD office and ministries.

3.6 Cooperation and coordination with other related Public/Private Entities

3.6.1 Members of RHD shall be totally truthful in their efforts to gain employment or advancement and shall not criticize other members of the highway industry.

3.6.2 Members of RHD shall not attempt to injure, maliciously or falsely, directly or indirectly, the reputation, prospects, practice or employment of other members of the highway industry.

3.6.3 Members of RHD shall cooperate with one another in extending the effectiveness of the highway industry by the exchange of information and experience with other members of RHD and will provide opportunity for the advancement and development of other members of the highway industry.

3.7. Economy, Efficiency and Effectiveness in Improvement, Repair, Rehabilitation and Maintenance Activities on RHD Roads

3.7.1. RHD Members have a responsibility to try earnestly to achieve cost reduction and ensure the efficiency and effectiveness of the construction work and thus maximize Value for Money for RHD.

3.7.2. Like any other department of the government RHD operations are also funded by the taxpayers. Since the aim of RHD is to ensure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the development and maintenance activities of Government Assets and lifeline of the country, it has an even bigger obligation to follow these principles. In this regard, RHD Members have a responsibility to stand as a model for the rest of the Engineering Department members of the Country.

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3.8. Political Neutrality

3.8.1. It is important to maintain both the actual and perceived political neutrality of all the entities under RHD. Therefore, it is important that RHD Members maintain their independence from political influence in order to discharge their duties and responsibilities in an impartial way.

3.9. Constructiveness

3.9.1. The main thrust of RHD is to ensure improvements in mobility of the Passengers and Freight vehicles. Keeping that in mind, RHD Members should perform a constructive and positive role, which should be reflected in high quality improvement, repair, rehabilitations and maintenance of Highways.

3.9.2. RHD Members should always try to ensure that they:

- a) do not certify any documents, exhibits, statements, schedules or other documents which have not been verified entirely by themselves;
- b) do not fail to disclose a material fact known to them;
- c) do not fail to obtain sufficient information to support the expression of an opinion.

3.9.3. RHD Members should set a high standard of relationship with all the stakeholders.

3.10. Professional Secrecy

3.10.1. It is the RHD members duty to maintain the secrecy of information. Unauthorized disclosure of any official information either orally or in writing or its use for personal reasons is prohibited.

3.10.2. Disclosure of official information shall only be done through proper authorization by competent authorities for the purpose of fulfilling the mission of RHD, Statutory or other identifiable responsibilities. RHD Members must ensure the security and confidentiality of all documents in every RHD office and entity.

3.10.3. Bidders have an interest and often want to know evaluation report findings and conclusions. It is imperative for the RHD members and RHD offices to keep all procurement documents and decisions confidential until these findings and decisions can be completely substantiated, processed through the authorized procedure after discussion with the competent and approval for release by the competent authority. Due care should be taken by the RHD Members not to disclose evaluation findings and conclusions in an improper and premature way that can harm the procurement and embarrass RHD.

3.11. Perseverance

3.11.1. RHD Members should be polite but tenacious in carrying out services. Although always open minded, they should not be deflected from collecting and analyzing the evidence needed to produce worthwhile findings and conclusions.

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3.12. Substantiation

3.12.1. RHD Members must be prepared to defend fully against any challenge regarding all the procurement decisions, technical decisions, quality of construction and maintenance works done by them.

3.12.2. Just as the RHD applies criteria by which to assess the design and construction activities by related entities, it applies a high standard of proof in evaluating the evidence used to substantiate on technical decisions, findings and conclusions as well.

3.12.3. RHD Members should ensure that the supporting evidence of any kind of report is sufficient, reliable and relevant, so that the conclusions or judgments' reached can be convincingly substantiated.

3.12.4. RHD Members should present only those findings that are soundly based on clear and current facts and those that can stand up to strenuous scrutiny. At times, it may become necessary to present findings and conclusions that involve interpretation, but such interpretation must be based on fact and must be logically consistent and reasonable. RHD Members ought to maintain an objective, factual perspective.

3.13 Mandate

3.13.1. RHD members should keep all of their activities within the RHD's mandate set in Rules of Business and Allocation of Business.

3.14. Conduct in relation to public communication

3.14.1 All public communications (e.g., speeches, press releases, speaking at conferences, etc.) by any employee of RHD can only be made after the individual has received the appropriate authorization from the competent authority.

4. RESPONSIBILITY TO RHD

4.1. Personal Conduct

4.1.1. All RHD members and staff members working for RHD shall observe the conditions of employment and other legislation like Government Servants Conduct Rules, 1979 and Government Servants (Discipline and Appeal) Rules, 1985, The Public Employees Discipline (Punctual Attendance) Ordinance, 1982, The Evidence Act, 1872, The Official Secrecy Act, 1923 etc.

4.1.2. Adherence to policies formulated by the RHD and Ministry of Road Transport and Bridges including this Code of Ethics is binding upon all staff members under the control of RHD.

4.1.3. All the RHD members and other staff members must observe the confidentiality of internal documentation and communications.

4.1.4. RHD members should not use their official position to gain unfair advantage, whether pecuniary or non-pecuniary.

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4.1.5. The members should not undertake, or consider undertaking, political activities while remaining under the control of the RHD, not only because this type of activities are prohibited by Government Servants Conduct Rules, 1979, but also because, such involvement might have or be seen to have a negative impact on their ability to discharge their professional duties impartially.

4.1.6. All the staff members should ensure that they do not discriminate on the grounds of gender, religion, disability or illness.

4.1.7. All staff members have a responsibility for their behaviour regarding all sorts of harassment. Harassment is vexatious, worrying or persistently annoying conduct. Harassment may take many forms. It can range from extreme forms such as sexual, religious violence and bullying to less obvious actions such as ignoring someone in the workplace. It may occur in the Office or when work takes staff away from home, outside normal working hours. Whatever form it takes and whenever it arises, it puts great strains on the individuals personal and family life.

4.1.8. All the staff members have a personal responsibility, so far as is reasonably practicable, to ensure that they do not put the health and safety of others at risk by their actions.

4.1.9. RHD members should ensure that they use public resources efficiently and effectively and do not use them for private purposes. This applies to the use of all office equipment including telephones, fax, computers (including e-mail and the Internet) and photocopiers, office premises and official transport etc of RHD.

4.2. Conflicts of Interest

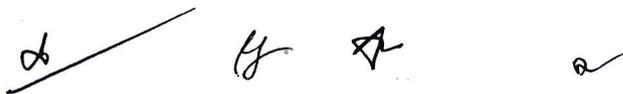
4.2.1. In order to keep honesty and impartiality of the RHD members beyond reproach, they should not place themselves in a position where they are under any obligation to any person who might benefit from special consideration or favour on their part or seek in any way to gain special treatment from them. RHD members should not have any interest that could conflict in any manner in discharging their official duties.

4.2.2. RHD is particularly vulnerable to allegations of conflict of interest because they call into question the office's objectivity and competence to pass impartial procurement decision. These are the essential attributes for the success of the RHD's objective. Since the RHD's reputation depends upon public's perception of the RHD's activities, an appearance of a conflict of interest on the part of an employee can be just as damaging as an actual conflict of interest.

4.2.3. RHD members who believe that there is a possibility of a conflict-of-interest situation, they should disclose the matter to their supervisor, who shall then determine, in consultation with superior authority, what steps should be appropriate to address the situation.

4.2.4. Conflict-of-interest situations may fall into the following categories:

- a) financial arrangements
- b) exclusivity of service
- c) past work experience
- d) acceptance of gift
- e) seeking new employment

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a) FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS

- i) RHD members should not have any financial interest that could conflict in any way in discharging their responsibilities, call into question their motive regarding the matter in question or cause the Office embarrassment or loss of credibility.
- ii) A significant financial interest in a related entity or any organization that has major or important dealings directly or indirectly with the related entity might be considered as a conflict of interest. A RHD member in such a situation must report to his or her Supervisor or higher authority if appropriate. It is the responsibility of the RHD member to make full and frank disclosure of situations where he or she suspects that a conflict of interest may exist. The office is then obliged to determine whether a conflict of interest does exist and, if so, what appropriate steps should be taken.

b) Exclusivity of Service

- i) RHD member's primary professional duty is to the RHD. This duty takes precedence over any other working relationships. Any secondary employment relating to government activities, either directly or on behalf of an external third party, presents a prima facie conflict of interest and is therefore not allowed. RHD members are obliged to disclose to their respective office head, any secondary employment of this nature that they may have.
- ii) The responsibility lies with the individual employee to inform the office of such situation. Any unauthorized outside work during office hours by any employee is considered as improper and constitutes grounds for disciplinary action. The employee should not use any official information in any outside work.

c) Past Work experience

- i) RHD members must inform the RHD office of any situation where a former position might bring the propriety of the Office's work into question.
- ii) If a member has previously worked for an related entity, he should bring this to the attention of the supervisor or appropriate higher authority.

d) Acceptance of Gift

- i) RHD members should protect their integrity and prevent the appearance of a conflict of interest by refusing the offer of gifts and other benefits like free travel, hospitality, accommodation or entertainment. In such matters they ought to follow Government Servants Conduct Rules, 1979. Persistent offers of gifts should be reported to the supervisor in charge or to a higher level if appropriate.
- ii) Gifts from related entities present an obvious situation where a conflict of interest might easily be seen to exist. RHD members should avoid even the suspicion of a conflict of interest. They must not give the impression that they have been or may be influenced by any gift, hospitality or other consideration to show favor or disfavor to any person or entities being RHD office while acting in an official capacity. The policy of the Office is that RHD office should not accept any gift at all.

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- iii) An exception to this rule is the case of gifts to the Chief Engineer or representatives of the Office of RHD by foreign dignitaries or colleagues. Such gifts may be accepted in accordance with the provisions of the Government Servants Conduct Rules, 1979. If the value of the gift is more than the value prescribed in the provision of that rule, they automatically become the property of the Republic. Gifts of lesser value may be held privately by the individual concerned.

e) Seeking New Employment

Employees of the department are permitted to seek or negotiate other employment with other Government entity or an International Organization but first must notify his/her respective Head of the office or if appropriate the Office.

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নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলী, সওজ
জনস্বাস্থ্য বিভাগ, সড়ক ভবন
তেজগাঁও, ঢাকা।

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রোশনি-এ-ফাতিমা
তত্ত্বাবধায়ক প্রকৌশলী, (সওজ) অঃ দাঃ
এমআইএস এন্ড এষ্টেটস মার্কেল
সড়ক ভবন, তেজগাঁও, ঢাকা

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এরিনা মান্নান
নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলী, (চঃদাঃ) সওজ
সওজ প্রশিক্ষণ কেন্দ্র
শিরপুর, ঢাকা।

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অতিরিক্ত প্রধান প্রকৌশলী (চঃদাঃ), সওজ
ম্যানুসক্রিপ্ট সার্ভিসেস উইং
সড়ক ভবন, তেজগাঁও, ঢাকা-১২০৬