

FIRST SCHEDULE

(Section 7)

Code of Conduct for Justices of the Peace

Object of Code.

1. The object of this Code is to reinforce the effective administration of justice by promoting high moral and ethical conduct among Justices of the Peace and the eradication of any tendency to corrupt practice.

Duty to act with integrity, independence and fairness.

2. In carrying out the duties of the Office, a Justice of the Peace shall—

- (a) act professionally, fairly, diligently and expeditiously, and to the best of that Justice's ability;
- (b) be unbiased in the exercise of the functions of the Justice and shall take all necessary steps to avoid conflicts of interest (real or perceived) and to uphold the integrity of the Office, and shall scrupulously preserve his or her independence in the performance of those functions;
- (c) act at all times in the public interest, without fear or favour, and avoiding partisan political influences;
- (d) not use the title of "Justice of the Peace" to secure any personal financial benefit.

General duties.

3.—(1) A Justice of the Peace shall—

- (a) abide by the oath of office of Justice of the Peace;
- (b) avoid impropriety or the appearance of impropriety;
- (c) disclose any interest or relationship likely to lead to a conflict of interest in any matter with which that Justice is concerned in the capacity of Justice of the Peace;
- (d) act in a calm and courteous manner, consistent with the dignity of the Office, and without regard to age, race, colour, religion, culture, social class, language, mental or physical ability, and political opinion, and without regard to whether a person is male or female;
- (e) safeguard the confidentiality of information that comes to that Justice by virtue of his or her functions as a Justice, and shall not disclose that information except as permitted by law.

(2) A Justice shall not participate in any act that is unlawful or that is likely to bring the Office into disrepute.

4.—(1) A Justice shall, in the exercise of the functions of the Office—

Conduct concerning functions.

- (a) exercise good judgement and at all times seek to demonstrate knowledge and competence in the discharge of the functions;
- (b) hear and decide matters without fear or favour and, where there is a risk of bias or conflict of interest, recuse himself or herself from deciding the matter;
- (c) maintain reasonable competence in the law, without being swayed by partisan interest, public clamour or fear of criticism, and shall whenever necessary seek the advice of the Clerk of the Courts for the parish in respect of which the functions are exercised;
- (d) exercise patience and restraint, and act in a dignified and courteous manner toward litigants, attorneys-at-law, witnesses and others with whom the Justice interacts while exercising the functions; and
- (e) convey in plain, ordinary language the decisions made by the Justice and the reasons therefor, where so required by law.

(2) In the absence of the parties to any judicial proceedings adjudicated by a Justice, the Justice shall not initiate, accept or entertain any communication made to that Justice concerning the merits of the proceedings, unless permitted to do so by law.