Conflict of Interest – for managers

1. Can poor management of an employee's conflict of interest affect me?

Conflict of interest (COI) policies and procedures are designed to protect employees, your team, and your organisation. When polciies are not followed, there can be negative consequences for everyone involved, including you as the manager.

Failure to follow procedures could result in disciplinary action and may negatively affect how you and your team are perceived.

2. What are my responsibilities for informing staff about COI?

As a manager, you are responsible for ensuring that your team understands your organisation's COI policy, procedures, and expectations. You must also demonstrate appropriate behaviour by complying with these requirements in relation to your own interests.

3. What if a disclosure to me does not provide enough information?

If a disclosure lacks sufficient detail, you should seek further informaiton to fully understand the situation. Decisions about how to manage the COI should only be made once all relevant information is avaiable.

4. What should I document?

Your organisation will typically provide a standard form for COI disclosures. You should document all relevant discussions with the employee, particularly where additional information is provided. You must also document the COI management plan and clearly record the reasons for your decisions.

5. What if an employee does not declare a COI?

While it is the employee's responsibility to declare a COI, you are responsible for taking appropriate action if you become aware, or reasonably suspect, that a conflict has not been disclosed.

6. What should I do if I suspect a COI?

You should make reasonable enquiries to clarify the situation. Seeking advice from governance, audit, or human resources colleagues is often helpful. If you believe the lack of disclosure could constitute misconduct, you should report it in line with your organisation's policies.

7. Do employees need to declare non-financial conflicts?

A COI must be declared whenever personal or private interests could influence, or be seen to influence, an employee's work decisions or duties. This includes both financial (pecuniary) and non-financial (non-pecuniary) interests, such as personal relationships or benefits to friends or associates.

8. What if an employee disagrees with my COI management plan?

As the manager, you are responsible for managing COIs in accordance with organisational policies. It is important to be transparent with the employee who holds the conflict, and to document your decision-making. Seeking advice from governance, audit, or human resources personal may assist in resolving concerns.

9. Do I need to monitor compliance with the plan?

Monitoring compliance is part of your role. The level and frequency of monitoring should reflect the level of risk associated with the COI. Managers are generally responsible for ensuring management plans are reviewed, and updated or resubmitted if circumstances change.

10. What should I do if circumstances change?

If circumstances change, you should ask the employee to amend the management plan. You will then need to review and, if necessary, revise it based on the new circumstances.

11. What if an employee's role changes?

A change in role may affect an existing COI. You should assess whether the conflict has changed, been resolved, or requires a revised management plan. You may need to update the existing plan. If the employee has a new supervisor, ensure they are informed of the COI and any management arrangements in place.

The Commission can help

We are available to provide support and assistance with identifying, reporting, investigating, managing and preventing misconduct: contact@integrity.tas.gov.au or 1300 720 289.