

ONTARIO SENIORS' FORUM
CC~001
**CODE OF CONDUCT AND
ETHICAL STANDARDS POLICY**

Integrity • Respect • Responsibility • Service

Policy Number	CC-001
Classification	OSF Governance Policy
Version	1.0
Effective Date	_____, 2026
Approved By	Provincial Board of Directors
Bylaw Authority	Articles 14 and 15 and related provisions
Policy Owner	Provincial Board
Administrative Responsibility	Executive Director / Secretary
Review	At least every three years or as required

This Policy establishes the minimum standards of conduct expected when a person acts for, represents, governs, volunteers with or participates in the Ontario Seniors' Forum.

1. PURPOSE

The Ontario Seniors' Forum (OSF) is committed to ethical, respectful and responsible conduct in all aspects of its governance, administration, programs and community activities. This Policy establishes the standards expected of persons acting for or representing OSF and provides a common ethical framework for the Provincial organization and Regional Chapters.

The Policy is intended to protect OSF's mission, members, participants, volunteers, resources and reputation while supporting a culture of service, dignity, accountability and mutual respect.

2. AUTHORITY AND RELATIONSHIP TO GOVERNING DOCUMENTS

This Policy is adopted by the Provincial Board as an OSF Governance Policy and implements the conduct and ethical responsibilities established by the Bylaws and related governing documents.

Where this Policy conflicts with applicable law, the Articles, Constitution or Bylaws, the superior authority prevails. This Policy shall be read together with COI-001, CD-001, FP-001, RMP-001 and other applicable OSF policies and procedures.

3. SCOPE

This Policy applies, as appropriate, to:

- Provincial Directors and Officers;
- Regional Chapter Directors and Officers;
- members of committees, working groups and advisory bodies;
- employees, contractors and volunteers acting for OSF;
- members and Provisional Members when participating in OSF activities or representing OSF; and
- other persons formally authorized to act on behalf of OSF.

The nature of a person's responsibilities may affect the standard applicable in a particular situation. Directors and Officers remain subject to their additional statutory and fiduciary duties.

PART I — CORE ETHICAL STANDARDS

4. INTEGRITY AND GOOD FAITH

Every person acting for OSF shall act honestly, in good faith and for legitimate organizational purposes. No person shall knowingly mislead the Board, a Chapter, members, funders, partners, regulators or the public in connection with OSF business.

5. RESPECT AND DIGNITY

OSF representatives shall treat members, participants, volunteers, colleagues, community partners and members of the public with courtesy, dignity and respect, including during disagreement.

Intimidation, threats, bullying, humiliating conduct, abusive language, deliberate disruption and other conduct inconsistent with a respectful environment are prohibited.

6. INCLUSION AND NON-DISCRIMINATION

OSF is committed to inclusive participation and shall not tolerate discrimination or harassment contrary to applicable law or approved OSF standards. Reasonable accommodation should be supported where required and practicable.

7. DUTY OF CARE AND RESPONSIBLE JUDGMENT

Persons exercising governance, financial, administrative or program authority shall use reasonable care, diligence and judgment appropriate to their responsibilities and shall seek advice where a matter exceeds their knowledge or authority.

8. LOYALTY TO OSF AND ORGANIZATIONAL INTERESTS

When acting in an OSF capacity, Directors, Officers and other decision-makers shall place the legitimate interests of OSF ahead of personal, factional, Chapter-specific, business or other competing interests, subject to applicable law and their defined role.

Regional Chapter representatives may advocate for local needs but must do so consistently with OSF's provincial governance framework and without undermining duly authorized organizational decisions.

9. COMPLIANCE WITH GOVERNING DOCUMENTS

Persons acting for OSF shall comply with applicable law, the Articles, Constitution, Bylaws, Governance Policies, approved manuals, Board resolutions and authorized procedures relevant to their role.

A disagreement with a decision does not authorize a person to disregard a valid governing requirement. Concerns should be raised through the appropriate governance or complaint process.

PART II — CONDUCT IN GOVERNANCE AND ORGANIZATIONAL ROLES

10. BOARD AND COMMITTEE CONDUCT

Directors, Officers and committee members shall prepare reasonably for meetings, participate constructively, respect the authority of the Chair, avoid unnecessary disruption and support accurate recording of decisions.

Once a decision has been validly made, members of the governing body should respect the decision as an organizational decision even where they voted against it, without preventing lawful reconsideration or respectful expression of personal views.

11. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Actual, potential and perceived conflicts of interest shall be disclosed and managed in accordance with COI-001 — Conflict of Interest Policy. A person shall not use an OSF position to secure improper advantage for themselves, a related person or another organization.

12. CONFIDENTIALITY

Confidential information obtained through an OSF role shall be protected and used only for authorized purposes. Confidential Board, personnel, complaint, membership, financial, legal and personal information shall not be disclosed merely because an individual has access to it.

The duty of confidentiality continues after a person leaves office, employment, volunteer service or membership to the extent the information remains confidential.

13. COLLEGIAL DISAGREEMENT

Different opinions are legitimate and may improve decision-making. Disagreement shall focus on issues rather than personal attacks. Individuals shall not knowingly misrepresent another person's position or use private information to discredit them.

14. AUTHORITY AND DELEGATION

No person shall claim or exercise authority they do not possess. Commitments, contracts, expenditures, public statements and directions to staff or volunteers shall be made only within approved authority.

15. RECORDS AND TRANSPARENCY

Material governance and administrative decisions shall be documented through the appropriate minutes, resolutions, forms, registers or organizational records. Records shall not be falsified, concealed, altered improperly or destroyed contrary to RMP-001.

PART III — FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE ETHICS

16. FINANCIAL INTEGRITY

OSF funds and assets shall be used only for legitimate organizational purposes and in accordance with FP-001 — Financial Management and Signing Authority Policy.

No person shall misappropriate funds, submit a knowingly false claim, approve their own reimbursement where prohibited, manipulate records, split transactions to avoid controls, or circumvent an approval or signing requirement.

17. USE OF OSF PROPERTY AND RESOURCES

OSF funds, facilities, equipment, records, membership lists, communication systems, intellectual property and other resources shall be used responsibly and primarily for authorized OSF purposes.

Incidental personal use of minor resources may be permitted where reasonable, lawful, does not create material cost or risk, and is not otherwise prohibited.

18. GIFTS, HOSPITALITY AND BENEFITS

Cash, kickbacks, personal commissions or benefits offered to influence an OSF decision shall not be accepted. Modest customary hospitality or tokens may be accepted only where they do not create an obligation or reasonable appearance of improper influence.

Questions concerning gifts or benefits shall be addressed under COI-001.

19. FUNDRAISING, DONATIONS AND SPONSORSHIPS

Fundraising and sponsorship activity shall be truthful, transparent and consistent with OSF authority. Donor restrictions and funding conditions shall be respected. No person shall promise tax, legal, procurement or organizational benefits that OSF is not authorized to provide.

20. PERSONAL BENEFIT AND ORGANIZATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

A person shall not exploit confidential information, an OSF relationship, purchasing opportunity, grant opportunity or other organizational opportunity for improper personal benefit.

PART IV — MEMBERS, VOLUNTEERS, PROGRAMS AND COMMUNITY CONDUCT

21. MEMBER AND VOLUNTEER CONDUCT

Members and volunteers participating in OSF activities shall behave in a manner consistent with the safety, dignity and orderly functioning of the organization. They shall follow reasonable event, program and facility instructions and respect other participants.

22. SAFETY AND WELL-BEING

Conduct that creates an unreasonable risk to the safety or well-being of participants, volunteers, staff or the public is prohibited. Safety concerns and incidents shall be reported through the applicable OSF procedure.

23. HARASSMENT, VIOLENCE AND THREATS

Harassment, sexual harassment, violence, credible threats, stalking, coercion and deliberate intimidation are prohibited in OSF activities, communications and organizational settings. Serious concerns may require immediate protective measures or external reporting.

24. ALCOHOL, IMPAIRMENT AND RESPONSIBLE PARTICIPATION

A person shall not perform an OSF governance, financial, driving, supervision or safety-sensitive responsibility while impaired to an extent that compromises judgment or safety. Event-specific requirements shall be followed.

25. ACCESSIBILITY AND RESPECT FOR SENIORS

OSF activities should be administered with particular attention to accessibility, dignity, respectful communication and reasonable support for seniors and other participants who may require assistance.

26. PERSONAL BOUNDARIES

Persons in positions of authority shall maintain appropriate professional and volunteer boundaries and shall not exploit dependence, vulnerability, trust or access arising from an OSF role.

PART V — COMMUNICATIONS, PUBLIC REPRESENTATION AND POLITICAL ACTIVITY

27. AUTHORIZED PUBLIC REPRESENTATION

Only persons authorized by the Bylaws, Board, communications policy or delegated authority may speak on behalf of OSF on official matters. Others may express personal views but shall not present them as OSF positions.

28. ACCURATE COMMUNICATION

Official communications shall be truthful, respectful and reasonably accurate. Material errors should be corrected promptly when discovered.

29. SOCIAL MEDIA AND ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION

The same standards of respect, confidentiality and authorization apply to email, messaging applications, websites and social media. A person shall not disclose confidential OSF information, impersonate OSF authority or use an official platform for unauthorized personal disputes.

30. NON-PARTISAN ORGANIZATIONAL CONDUCT

OSF may engage in lawful public education, advocacy and dialogue concerning issues relevant to seniors and its mission. Organizational resources and official OSF platforms shall not be used to endorse or oppose a political party or candidate unless expressly lawful and authorized under applicable OSF governance requirements.

Individuals remain free to participate personally in civic and political activity, but shall make clear when they are acting in a personal capacity and shall not misuse OSF resources, confidential information or authority.

31. RELATIONSHIPS WITH PARTNERS AND PUBLIC OFFICIALS

Interactions with governments, funders, community partners, sponsors and public officials shall be professional and transparent. No person shall offer an improper benefit or make an unauthorized commitment on behalf of OSF.

PART VI — REPORTING, ACCOUNTABILITY AND ENFORCEMENT

32. DUTY TO RAISE SERIOUS CONCERNS

A person who becomes aware of suspected fraud, serious financial irregularity, violence, significant harassment, misuse of confidential information, serious governance misconduct or another material risk should report the concern through the appropriate OSF channel.

This provision does not require individuals to investigate matters themselves.

33. GOOD-FAITH REPORTING AND NON-RETALIATION

Retaliation against a person for making a good-faith report, seeking advice, disclosing a conflict, providing information or participating in an authorized review is prohibited.

Knowingly false or malicious allegations are not protected and may themselves constitute misconduct.

34. BREACHES OF THIS POLICY

A breach of this Policy may result in education, guidance, corrective action, removal from an assignment or committee where authorized, referral to a Chapter or Provincial Board, or formal discipline under CD-001 and the Bylaws.

The response shall be proportionate to the seriousness of the conduct, authority of the decision-maker, prior relevant conduct, impact and procedural fairness requirements.

35. DIRECTORS AND OFFICERS

Nothing in this Policy limits the authority or procedures established by law or the Bylaws concerning Directors or Officers. Where removal, suspension, vacancy or other governance action is contemplated, the applicable Bylaw procedure shall be followed.

36. MEMBERSHIP DISCIPLINE

Suspension, termination or other material membership discipline shall occur only through the authority and procedures established by the Bylaws, MP-001 and CD-001. A Regional Chapter shall not exercise disciplinary authority reserved to the Provincial Board.

37. INTERIM PROTECTIVE MEASURES

Where reasonably necessary to protect safety, finances, records, participants or the integrity of a review, an authorized body may impose temporary measures consistent with the Bylaws and CD-001. Interim measures are not a finding of misconduct.

38. PROCEDURAL FAIRNESS

A person facing a material adverse decision should receive sufficient notice of the concern and a reasonable opportunity to respond before a final decision is made, except where immediate temporary action is reasonably required.

39. CONFIDENTIALITY OF CONDUCT MATTERS

Conduct concerns, complaints and disciplinary matters shall be handled with appropriate confidentiality. Information shall be shared only with persons who reasonably require it for resolution, safety, legal advice, governance oversight or other authorized purposes.

PART VII — ACKNOWLEDGEMENT, RESPONSIBILITY AND REVIEW

40. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Directors and other designated governance office-holders shall acknowledge the Code of Conduct upon election or appointment for their term. OSF does not require a new acknowledgement every calendar year solely because the year changes.

Members, volunteers, employees or contractors may be required to acknowledge applicable conduct standards where appropriate to their role or activity.

A term-based acknowledgement, together with continuing compliance throughout the term, is the standard OSF approach unless the Provincial Board determines otherwise.

41. RESPONSIBILITY FOR COMPLIANCE

Every person subject to this Policy is responsible for understanding and complying with the standards applicable to their role. Lack of familiarity with the Policy does not excuse serious misconduct.

42. RESPONSIBILITY OF LEADERS

Provincial and Chapter leaders should model respectful and ethical conduct, address concerns promptly, avoid retaliation and ensure that authority is exercised consistently with OSF governing documents.

43. ADVICE AND INTERPRETATION

Questions concerning this Policy may be referred to the President, Executive Director, Secretary or Provincial Board, as appropriate. A person with a material conflict shall not make the final determination concerning their own conduct.

44. EXCEPTIONS

No exception may be granted to a requirement imposed by applicable law, the Articles, Constitution or Bylaws. Any permitted administrative exception must be reasonable, documented and approved by an authority empowered to do so.

45. REVIEW AND AMENDMENT

The Provincial Board shall review this Policy at least every three years and earlier where legislation, the Bylaws, organizational structure or material risk changes. Amendments require Provincial Board approval by resolution.

46. RELATED DOCUMENTS

- OSF Articles of Incorporation;
- OSF Constitution;
- OSF Bylaws;
- GP-001 — Governance Policy Framework and Policy Register;
- COI-001 — Conflict of Interest Policy;
- FP-001 — Financial Management and Signing Authority Policy;
- MP-001 — Membership Policy;
- CD-001 — Complaints, Discipline and Appeals Policy;
- RMP-001 — Records Management, Privacy and Information Security Policy;
- OSF Governance Manual;
- Chapter Operations Manual;
- applicable Code of Conduct Acknowledgement, governance forms and SOPs.

47. POLICY APPROVAL

Approved By	Provincial Board of Directors, Ontario Seniors' Forum
Board Meeting Date	_____
Resolution No.	_____
Effective Date	_____
Next Review	Within three years or earlier as required

REVISION HISTORY

Version	Date	Description	Approved By
1.0	_____ 2026	Initial Policy	Provincial Board