
TITLE: EMPLOYEE CODE OF CONDUCT

POLICY STATEMENT:

As a publicly-funded institution, Red Deer College (RDC) expects its employees to conduct themselves in an ethical manner, upholding high standards of conduct and care in all aspects of their employment with the College.

RDC expects its employees to conduct themselves with personal integrity, honesty, and diligence in performing their duties on behalf of the College. Employees have a fundamental obligation to act in the best interests of the College and not let personal interests or relationships interfere with, or appear to interfere with, the interests of the College.

RDC encourages employees' involvement in the community and in outside professional activities compatible with the College's mission, vision, and values as long as those activities do not conflict or interfere with their obligations to the College.

An employee is expected to fully disclose Apparent or actual Conflicts of Interest in a timely manner so that the College can assess if a conflict exists and, if so, how it may be eliminated or managed.

Reports and complaints regarding misconduct in research and scholarship are addressed and managed under RDC's Integrity in Research and Scholarship Policy.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is to communicate RDC's commitment to the College Values and to articulate its expectations with respect to the behaviour of its employees. This policy provides a framework to guide the conduct of RDC employees in a way that upholds the integrity and reputation of the College as well as the interests of the public it serves.

This policy defines Conflict of Interest and outlines the process for ensuring that such conflicts are adequately reported and addressed. RDC is a publicly-funded institution and must ensure that it engages its mission with integrity and to a high ethical standard. Apparent or actual Conflicts of Interest have the potential to negatively affect the reputation and integrity of the employees involved and, potentially, the College as a whole. It is the responsibility of RDC and its employees to guard against Conflicts of Interest that might interfere with the fulfilment of their obligations to the College.

SCOPE:

This policy applies to all employees of RDC.

This policy applies to any activities on or off campus that could reasonably be associated with the learning environment or workplace, or in connection with or representation of RDC and its professional reputation and/or brand.

- **On campus:** On RDC land and premises, either rented or owned, or using College-owned or run property or equipment including, but not limited to, telephones, computers, computer networks, and other technology.

- **Off campus:** An outside activity or event associated with RDC or where an employee is reasonably associated with or representing RDC. Examples of this may include: a RDC course or organized class activity, a College event (including athletics or performing arts), a College business activity that has been defined as such, or social media used in connection with RDC and its professional reputation and/or brand.

PRINCIPLES:

1. Policies at RDC:
 - 1.1. Treat all persons fairly and respectfully.
 - 1.2. Are non-discriminatory and non-intrusive.
 - 1.3. Incorporate open, honest, and timely communication.
 - 1.4. Are made in a timely manner.
 - 1.5. Provide appropriate confidentiality and privacy.
 - 1.6. Provide appropriate access to the College and education.
 - 1.7. Ensure that all persons have access to informed support regarding policies, procedures, rights, and responsibilities.
 - 1.8. Operate with clear written expectations for conduct and handling of complaints.
 - 1.9. Meet all regulatory standards.
 - 1.10. Maintain and clearly state a high standard of instruction and administration in all areas of educational programs and services.
 - 1.11. Are communicated in alternate forms to those who require such accommodation.
2. The following principles apply specifically to this policy:
 - 2.1. As a publicly funded institution RDC recognizes that the people of Alberta have a right to service which is conducted with impartiality and integrity. It is this special obligation to Albertans that demands that there not be, nor seem to be, any conflict between the private interests of employees and their duty to the public. At the same time, it is recognized that employees should enjoy the same rights in their private dealings as any other citizens, unless it can be demonstrated that a restriction is essential to the public interest.
 - 2.2. RDC is responsible for the advancement and dissemination of knowledge. It encourages RDC employees, in alignment with their role(s), to seek out and participate in approved research, to consult widely as appropriate in their paid employment and, where desired, to engage in non-college activities so long as such activities do not interfere with their obligations to the College.
 - 2.2.1. RDC recognizes that these activities may benefit the participants, the College, and the public at large.
 - 2.2.2. Many beneficial and productive developments and initiatives may, however, lead to an increase in Apparent or actual Conflicts of Interest.
 - 2.2.3. The College is committed to ensuring that these activities are conducted in a manner consistent with RDC's interests and mission and in a manner that maintains the community's trust and confidence.

- 2.3. The existence of an Apparent or actual Conflict of Interest does not necessarily imply misconduct or wrongdoing on anyone's part. Conflicts can exist regardless of a person's character, intentions, and motivations and can arise through no fault of those involved.

DEFINITIONS:

Apparent Conflict of Interest: an apparent conflict of interest exists if there is a reasonable perception, which a reasonably well-informed person could properly have, that the employee's ability to exercise their duties may have been affected by their private interest or activities.

College Resources: the tangible and intangible assets of the College.

College Values: the six key values that reflect both the reality and the aspirations of the organization. These values are:

- **Accountability:** The College's programs and services meet learners' needs. We are responsive to the needs of our learning communities and business partners. We regularly evaluate our effectiveness and efficiency.
- **Community:** A sense of community is fostered within the College. We offer rich social, cultural, intellectual, and recreational environments. We collaborate effectively with partners and we involve ourselves in our local, regional, and global communities.
- **Excellence:** The College offers high quality learning experiences. Our staff demonstrate subject area expertise. We work to improve our processes, services, and learning opportunities. We celebrate achievement.
- **Exploration:** The College is open to new ways of doing, being and thinking. We foster a spirit of adventure and inquiry. We honour our past while focusing on our future and encouraging innovation and risk-taking.
- **Inclusiveness:** The College creates welcoming environments, making our programs and services accessible to diverse learners. We offer a range of choices in what and how people can learn. Our curricula, processes, and people honour diversity.
- **Integrity:** Communication at the College is honest, open, and timely. We follow fair and equitable processes. We treat people with respect and encourage individuals to take personal responsibility.

Conflict of Interest: an Apparent or actual Conflict of Interest occurs when an employee is placed in a situation in which their personal or financial interests, or the interests of their immediate family or persons with whom the employee has a personal or business relationship, conflict or appear to conflict with their duties and responsibilities to the College.

Employee: any individual who works under a contract of employment with RDC; includes the President and all members of Senior Administration.

Misconduct: unacceptable, improper, or unprofessional behaviour. Non-compliance with this Employee Code of Conduct Policy constitutes Misconduct.

Private Interest: does not include an interest:

- in a matter that is of general application,
- that affects a person as one of a broad class of the public,
- that affects the compensation or benefits of the employee, or

- that is trivial.

GUIDELINES:

1. Compliance with Laws and Standards.

- 1.1.** Employees fulfill their College responsibilities in compliance with applicable laws, RDC policies, procedures, and practices and in accordance with contractual commitments.
- 1.2.** Employees conduct themselves in compliance with any and all applicable codes and standards that govern their specific profession or academic discipline.

2. Confidentiality.

- 2.1.** Employees protect information which is confidential, proprietary, or personal, using it only for the course of carrying out their College responsibilities and in compliance with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* and other legislation or College policy that guides the collection, access, use, disclosure, and protection of the information.
- 2.2.** Employees are responsible for protecting this information even after leaving the employment of the College.

3. Impartiality. Employees will perform their duties and make decisions impartially, honestly, fairly and in good faith.

4. Furthering Private Interests.

- 4.1.** Employees must not take part in a decision in the course of carrying out their duties, knowing that the decision might further a private interest of the employee, a person directly associated with the employee, or the employee's minor or adult child.
- 4.2.** Employees must not use their public role to influence or seek to influence a decision to be made by or on behalf of RDC which could further a private interest of the employee or to improperly further any other person's private interest.
- 4.3.** Employees must not use or communicate information not available to the general public that was gained by the employee in the course of carrying out their duties, to further or seek to further a private interest of the employee or to improperly further any other person's private interest.

5. Conflict of Interest.

- 5.1.** Employees have a fundamental obligation to act in the best interests of the College and not let outside activities interfere with that obligation. All employees of RDC are required to make their duties and responsibilities at the College their prime obligation to the extent stated in their employment letter and to conduct any outside activity without encroachment upon or conflict with those responsibilities.
- 5.2.** The College supports employees in using their skills and expertise to benefit the community at large, but recognizes that this may lead to opportunities for Apparent or actual Conflicts of Interest.
- 5.3.** A power imbalance exists when one of the parties to a relationship has direct input or decision-making power over the other party's academic progress, or over the work performance, promotion, classification, or compensation of the other party to a relationship. Where consensual and intimate relationships, including those sexual in nature, with persons who are, or may become, associated with RDC (including

employees and students) are entered into, exist, or previously existed, the employee must disclose the relationship or past relationship in accordance with this Policy. Steps must be taken to ensure the employee has no direct input or decision-making power over the student's academic progress or subordinate employee's work performance, promotion, classification, or compensation.

- 5.4. Employees who are absent from work due to illness or injury must not engage in outside employment without specific written authorization from a physician and consent from their Senior Administrator in consultation with the Director, Human Resources.
- 5.5. Employees considering a new offer of appointment or employment must be aware of and manage any potential conflicts of interest between their current position and future circumstances and must remove themselves from any decisions affecting their appointment or employment.
- 5.6. Employees must not use information obtained in the performance of their official duties to take unfair advantage of their position in seeking other employment.
- 5.7. In situations where an Apparent or actual Conflict of Interest exists, the employee must disclose and address the conflict in a timely, open, forthright, constructive, and accountable manner.
- 5.8. If in doubt about whether a situation would, from the perspective of a reasonably well-informed, impartial observer, appear to be an Apparent or actual Conflict of Interest, the employee must seek guidance from their Senior Administrator.
- 5.9. The respective Senior Administrator reviews employee conflict of interest disclosures and works with the employee to resolve the conflict. Senior Administrators can obtain guidance on helping their employees avoid Conflicts of Interest or on avoiding their own conflicts, through the office of their respective Vice-Presidents. The College may seek external counsel or legal advice when an Apparent or actual Conflict of Interest exists.
- 5.10. Disclosures of actual or Apparent Conflicts of Interest are held in confidence and are only disclosed to those who are involved in the management of these issues.
- 5.11. Procedures regarding how to disclose and address apparent or actual conflicts comply with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, the *Alberta Human Rights Act*, and any other relevant legislation.

6. Concurrent Employment

- 6.1. Employees may take or hold supplementary employment, including self-employment, unless such employment:
 - 6.1.1. causes an Apparent or actual Conflict of Interest; or
 - 6.1.2. is performed in such a way as to appear to be an official act of RDC, or to represent RDC's opinion or policy; or
 - 6.1.3. interferes through telephone calls, or otherwise, with regular duties; or
 - 6.1.4. involves the use of RDC's premises, equipment, supplies, or assets, unless such use is otherwise authorized by the employee's Senior Administrator.
- 6.2. Prior to accepting or holding any supplementary employment, employees must notify their Senior Administrator about the nature of such supplementary employment. The Senior Administrator then reviews the supplementary employment for Conflicts of

Interest, and if there is a Conflict of Interest, in writing, deny employment, allow employment, or put procedures in place to manage the conflict.

- 6.3. If there is disagreement on this authorization the employee may apply to the President of RDC for a final decision and approval.
- 6.4. Employees do not accept additional compensation for duties which they perform in the course of their duties with RDC.

7. Acceptance of Gifts.

- 7.1. Employees will not accept cash or cash equivalents as gifts.
- 7.2. The value of a single tangible gift received by an Employee will not exceed \$100 and the cumulative limit of tangible gifts received from a single source by an Employee in a calendar year is \$200.
- 7.3. For all Employees except the President and Vice Presidents, the value of a single event invitation will not exceed \$300 and the cumulative limit of event invitations accepted from a single source in a calendar year is \$400.
- 7.4. For the President and Vice Presidents, the value of a single event invitation from donors and friends of the institution will not exceed \$1000, and the cumulative limit of event invitations from a single donor or friend of the institution in a calendar year is \$1,500.
- 7.5. For invitations to conferences where admission and accommodation is paid, a gift of airfare, conference fees, and accommodation may be accepted up to \$1000. An invitation exceeding that amount may be accepted only with the concurrence of the Employee's Senior Administrator.

8. Political Activity

- 8.1. Employees may exercise their rights as citizens to participate in political activities so long as it is clear that they are representing themselves as a private citizen and in no way represent the interests of the College.
- 8.2. Employees must not use their position with the College to seek contributions for a political party or activity from current or future clients or entities doing business with the College.
- 8.3. Employees who run as candidates in a federal, provincial, or urban municipal council election must take a leave of absence without pay on the day after the writ for the election is issued or on the day that their candidacy is publicly announced, whichever is later. Until a leave of absence commences an employee cannot solicit funds for their own campaign.
- 8.4. An employee is required to resign if elected to federal, provincial, or municipal office.

9. Stewarding College Resources.

- 9.1. Employees steward College Resources effectively, efficiently, and for their specified purpose.
- 9.2. Employees foster institutional autonomy and steward relationships to limit undue influence of external entities.

10. Respectful Environment.

- 10.1.** Employees cultivate an equitable, diverse, and inclusive working and learning environment, free from discrimination, harassment, and violence, including sexual violence. Employees are expected to:
- 10.1.1. Promote a high standard of respect for and treat all students, employees, and the general community with courtesy and fairness.
 - 10.1.2. Not discriminate against persons on any of the areas or grounds protected by relevant and associated legislation.
 - 10.1.3. Not engage in behaviour which may reasonably be perceived as a violation of the Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying Policy or the Sexual Violence Policy.
- 10.2.** Employees conduct interactions in a mutually respectful manner, respecting the personal dignity of all, while not limiting the right of participants to challenge beliefs, views, and opinions and to engage in rational debate.
- 10.3.** Employees protect and foster informed, meaningful, and inclusive participation in the operation of the College, respecting requirements of provincial legislation that allows for the expression of a diversity of views and opinions and debate.
- 11. Academic Freedom.** Employees protect and foster academic freedom and the pursuit, discovery integration, application, and dissemination of knowledge and understanding through independent thinking, expression, discussion, and debate.
- 12. Drugs and Alcohol.** Employees do not use drugs or alcohol in a way that affects their performance and safety, the performance and safety of others (e.g. colleagues, students, visitors), or that negatively impacts the operations or reputation of the College.
- 13. RDC President.** For the following provisions, Guideline 13.1 applies to the current President when the President is reappointed, their contract is extended or renewed, or on December 15, 2019, whichever comes first. Guidelines 13.2 through 13.6 apply to the current President when the President is reappointed, their contract is extended or renewed, or on April 4, 2020, whichever comes first. Guidelines 13.1 through 13.6 apply immediately to a new individual appointed as President.
- 13.1. Concurrent Employment or Appointment.** The President of the College must seek approval in writing from the Board of Governors and from the Ethics Commissioner to engage in an appointment, business, undertaking, or employment, including self-employment, other than his or her role with RDC.
- 13.2. Restrictions on Holdings.** The President must not own or have a beneficial interest in publicly-traded securities unless the securities are:
- held in a blind trust approved by the Ethics Commissioner, or
 - held in an investment arrangement approved by the Ethics Commissioner.
- 13.3. Disclosure Statements.** The President must file a disclosure statement with the Ethics Commissioner in the form, manner, and timeline determined by the Ethics Commissioner. The President must file an amended disclosure statement annually, and within 30 days after the occurrence of any material changes to the information contained in a current disclosure statement.
- 13.4. Returns Relating to Persons Directly Associated.** The President must file a return relating to persons directly associated with the President, in a form, manner, and timeline determined by the Ethics Commissioner. The President must file an

amended return annually, and within 30 days after the occurrence of any material changes to the information contained in a current return.

13.5. Post-employment Restrictions. For a period of 12 months from the last day the President was employed at RDC the President must not:

- 13.5.1. lobby any public officer holder.
- 13.5.2. act on a commercial basis or make representations on his or her own behalf or on behalf of any other person regarding any ongoing matter in which the President directly acted for or advised a department or public agency involved in the matter.
- 13.5.3. make representations with respect to a contract with or benefit from a government department or public agency with which the President had significant official dealings.
- 13.5.4. solicit or accept on his or her own behalf a contract or benefit from a government department or public agency with which the President had significant official dealings.
- 13.5.5. accept employment with an individual or organization with which the President had direct and significant official dealings.
- 13.5.6. accept an appointment to the board of directors or equivalent body of an organization with which the President had direct and significant official dealings.

13.6. Waiver. The President may apply to the Ethics Commissioner for a waiver or reduction of the time period in 13.5.

PROCEDURE:

1. Implementation, Awareness and Compliance.

- 1.1. Notice Period. This policy will be made public on April 15, 2019 and implemented effective April 30, 2019.
- 1.2. The College ensures that, upon hire, all employees read this policy and become aware of the College's expectations with respect to their behaviour. On an annual basis, employees confirm in writing their understanding of, and commitment to the expectations of the Code of Conduct Policy.
- 1.3. Senior Administration members are responsible for monitoring compliance with this policy.

2. Disclosing Conflicts.

- 2.1. All employees are required to complete the Conflict of Interest Disclosure Form upon commencement of employment and submit the completed form to the appropriate member of Senior Administration. Thereafter, the form is to be completed annually, or at such time that an employee's Apparent or actual Conflict of Interest status changes.
- 2.2. A copy of the Disclosure Form is placed in the employee's personnel file. Disclosed information is subject to the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* and is held securely and confidentially.

- 2.3. If an employee's Apparent or actual Conflict of Interest status changes following their annual submission of their disclosure form, the employee must disclose that change of status as soon as possible by completing a new form for submission to their Senior Administration member.

3. Filing Complaints of Misconduct

- 3.1. Individuals may report a complaint regarding alleged Misconduct through this policy and the *Reporting and Investigating Safe Disclosures Guidebook*.
- 3.2. A complaint may not proceed to formal investigation under this policy if:
 - 3.2.1. The matter may be effectively resolved through an alternative, informal process with the agreement of all parties involved; or
 - 3.2.2. The matter is more appropriately dealt with through another established RDC policy or process; or
 - 3.2.3. The matter is determined to be trivial, frivolous, vexatious, or an abuse of process. In such cases, the complainant may also be subject to discipline, up to and including termination of employment.

4. Investigating Formal Complaints of Misconduct

- 4.1. If the Vice President Corporate determines that resolution of the complaint of Misconduct requires a formal investigation, the Vice President Corporate either conducts the investigation or appoints a person or person(s) to an investigating team to conduct the investigation. The investigating team may include external experts, where considered appropriate by the Vice President Corporate.
- 4.2. The individual or team conducting the investigation notifies the Respondent of the formal investigation within ten (10) working days of the appointment of the individual or team.
- 4.3. Prior to making a decision, the individual or team conducting the investigation advises the Respondent in sufficient detail of the evidence being considered and invites the Respondent and advisor, if desired, to meet with the individual or team and respond to that evidence orally and/or in writing.
- 4.4. When an investigation determines that an individual has engaged in Misconduct, that individual may be subject to discipline, up to and including termination of employment. The Vice President Corporate determines and implements any discipline under this policy. If the Vice President Corporate is the subject of the investigation and discipline is warranted, the action is taken by the President.
- 4.5. The discipline identified under this policy and the *Reporting and Investigating Safe Disclosures Guidebook* is in addition to, and apart from, any other sanctions that may be provided for by law. Any discipline arising under this policy is undertaken in accordance with relevant collective agreements and terms and conditions of employment.
- 4.6. For detailed procedures see *the Reporting and Investigating Safe Disclosures Guidebook*.

OFFICER RESPONSIBLE: Vice President Corporate

POLICY CATEGORY: Non-Academic Policy

RECOMMENDING AUTHORITY: Service Council, upon recommendation from Deans' Council

CONSULTATION FOR REVIEW: President, Senior Administration

POLICY REVIEW DATE: April 2024

EFFECTIVE DATE: April 30, 2019

REVISION HISTORY: April 30, 2019; Conflict of Commitment Policy rescinded
April 30, 2019; Conflict of Interest Policy rescinded

RELATED POLICIES:

- [Academic Freedom](#)
- [Alcohol at College Events and Facilities](#)
- [Cannabis on Campus](#)
- [Harassment and Discrimination](#)
- [Research Involving Humans](#)
- [Information Access and Protection of Privacy](#)
- [Integrity in Research and Scholarship](#)
- [Intellectual Property](#)
- [Safe Disclosure \(Whistleblower\)](#)
- [Sexual Violence](#)
- [Smoking and Tobacco Use](#)
- [Social Media](#)
- [Student Rights and Responsibilities](#)

CONNECTION TO BOARD POLICIES:

All RDC policies support relevant Board of Governors policies.