

**An Post**  
**Code of Business Conduct**  
**for**  
**Employees**

20 October 2016

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Guiding Principles**

- (i) The An Post Code of Business Conduct for Employees (the Code) is intended to guide the conduct of both the organisation and its employees in all business activities.
- (ii) Business conducted in accordance with the Code will protect and promote the organisation's reputation and promote public confidence in how An Post conducts its affairs. It will also help to create a culture of excellence as An Post, and all its employees, show ongoing commitment to ethical behaviour.
- (iii) An Post's ability to live up to its commitments and ethical standards depends on the day-to-day choices and actions of each individual. These choices should be exercised in accordance with An Post's core values and associated behaviours, which support the company's mission and vision, and include integrity, honesty and fairness in An Post's conduct of its business.
- (iv) It is expected that all An Post, employees, both individually and collectively, will abide by the standard of business conduct outlined in the Code. Each employee must also strive to support all commitments that An Post has made to conduct business in an honest, fair transparent and ethical manner.
- (v) All employees should conform to and be seen to conform to the highest ethical standards in conducting the business activities of An Post with its customers, suppliers, contractors and other third parties. Employees should compete vigorously and energetically but also ethically and honestly. Adherence to the Code prevents the development of unethical practices and provides guidance to employees in dealing with potential conflicts of interest that may arise. The Code complements other established procedures, regulations and authority levels that already govern the conduct of An Post's business. This includes the Policy for Raising Matters of Concern which employees may use where they have concerns regarding any unethical practices by others. Details of this policy are available on the Company Intranet site.
- (vi) Each section of the Code covers an area in which employees have responsibilities to An Post. These include:
  - Personal conduct and protection of An Post's assets
  - Obligations in conducting An Post's business with other people and organisations
  - Conflicts of interest and other considerations affecting An Post that may arise on an employee's own time
  - Competition
  - Gifts
  - Entertainment
  - Raising Matters of Concern

## **1.2 Policy/Approach**

- (i) An Post fully subscribes to the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies adopted by the Government in 2016. A copy of this code is available on the Company Intranet site.
- (ii) Employees are expected to be conversant with the various An Post policies and procedures governing its activities, business and financial transactions. Details of these policies are available on the Company Intranet site.

## **1.3 Duty of Care to An Post**

- (i) In parallel with the general duty of care An Post has in respect of its employees, employees have a general duty of care to An Post. This duty of care includes the diligent performance of duties, the appropriate use of Company facilities and services and a requirement to deal with third parties on the Company's behalf in an ethical and honest manner.
- (ii) Employees are obliged to comply with all laws and regulations applicable to An Post's activities and its places of business.
- (iii) Section 53 of the Communications Regulation (Postal Services) Act, 2011 requires that employees do not open, delay or prevent the delivery or tamper with the mail, disclose its contents or use information obtained from mail without the addressee's consent or other lawful authority.
- (iv) Employees are required to act with integrity at all times and must never engage in fraudulent or irregular activity of any kind.
- (v) An Post has a Policy and Procedures for Raising Matters of Concern in place which refers to the disclosure, by employees or others associated with An Post, of malpractice as well as illegal acts or omissions at work. Employees are encouraged to use the procedures set out in that policy to report any instances of illegal or unethical behaviour by any of the Company's directors, managers, employees, agents or contractors. Malpractice is taken very seriously and An Post is committed to the highest possible standards of openness, probity and accountability. In line with that commitment, employees who have serious concerns about any aspect of An Post's work are encouraged and expected to come forward and voice those concerns and they may do so without fear of victimisation, subsequent discrimination or disadvantage. In circumstances where the Company is encouraging the highest ethical standards in this regard any instances of malicious reporting may be addressed in line with the Company Disciplinary Procedures.
- (vi) An Post is committed to ensuring that cost effective controls and procedures are operated to prevent, detect, deter and deal with fraud and irregularities and employees are required to co-operate fully at all times with these measures.
- (vii) It is An Post policy to report all instances of suspected fraud and other criminal offences to the Garda Síochána and to seek financial recovery through civil proceedings.

## **2. PROTECTING CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION**

### **2.1 An Post Information**

- (i) Employees who have, or gain, access to An Post proprietary and confidential information (e.g. financial reports, employee records, computer source code and programmes) must take every precaution to keep this information confidential. Employees must also ensure that no such information is given to third parties without prior permission from an appropriate manager, with an adequate level of authority within An Post.
- (ii) Protecting Company information also means reporting information as completely and accurately as is practicable. It is incumbent on all employees to ensure that all information reported (written and other reports) is accurate, relevant and timely.
- (iii) Dishonest reporting or omission of material information from reports within An Post or to organisations or people outside the organisation is strictly prohibited. This includes not only reporting information inaccurately, but also deliberately or carelessly organising it in a way that is intended to materially mislead or misinform those who receive it. Employees must ensure that they do not make false or misleading statements in both internal and external reports and/or other documents submitted or maintained for Government departments or for the Postal Regulator. Dishonest reporting can lead to civil or even criminal liability for employees.
- (iv) Employees, are entitled to reimbursement for reasonable expenses but only if these expenses are actually incurred. To knowingly submit expense claims for travel, meals, accommodation, or for any other expense not incurred is both a fraudulent act and dishonest reporting and where it is established that it has occurred will result in disciplinary action up to, and including, dismissal.

### **2.2 Acquiring Information about others**

- (i) The receipt of sensitive business, financial, technical or other information from competitors or other industry organisations carries significant risks. Other organisations also have intellectual property, including confidential information that they want to protect. In some circumstances, these companies are prepared to disclose and allow others to use this proprietary information for a particular purpose. In certain situations, companies may, in return, seek information from An Post. Where requests of this nature are made, and before information is disclosed, it must first be cleared by an appropriate manager, with an adequate level of authority, within An Post.
- (ii) If employees receive another party's proprietary information, they must ensure the information is not misused or misappropriated. Data obtained under confidentiality or similar agreements should be treated in accordance with the agreed terms. Employees must try to ensure that, in all situations, An Post's relationship with its business partners is maintained to the highest standards. They must also ensure that the public profile of the organisation is not adversely affected by the manner in which proprietary information is used. In exceptional circumstances An Post may be required to release sensitive information received

from others in the public interest. In such cases, An Post will consult with the third party in advance of disclosure of the information, where this is appropriate.

### **2.3 Data Protection**

An Post complies with the Data Protection Acts. Personal data may be accessed by the persons we hold information on. Employees must ensure that all personal data on living persons which they record on computer or manual files is necessary, relevant, accurate and objective. Personal data must be deleted when it is no longer required. Compliance with An Post's Data Protection Policy helps maintain our reputation and avoids recording information, which if released, could cause embarrassment to, or reflect negatively on, An Post. Details of the Company Data Protection Policy including access requests for personal data are available on the Company Intranet site.

### **2.4 Freedom of Information Act**

- (i) An Post is not governed by the Freedom of Information Act at present but it is nonetheless affected by it. This is because An Post provides a wide range of information such as; financial reports, strategic plans, material on service quality, subsidiary companies to public bodies that are covered by the Act. Such information, provided most frequently to the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment and the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, could, under this Act, find its way into the public arena. (Details of the Freedom of Information Act 2014 and how it may impact on An Post are available on the Company Intranet site).
- (ii) Much of the information that flows from An Post to officials in Departments such as Communications, Climate Action and Environment and Public Expenditure and Reform is routine and of no particular business value. A small amount, however, is confidential and commercially sensitive. Disclosure of such information into the public domain would not be in the interests of An Post.
- (iii) In these circumstances, it is important that employees in An Post, who provide information to public bodies governed by the Freedom of Information Act, are familiar with the aims and general operation of that Act. Awareness of the Act will ensure that sensitive information is appropriately treated and made public only in accordance with this law.
- (iv) It is not intended that the Act should affect, except in minor respects, the maintenance of routine, effective communication between An Post and public bodies governed by the Act.

### **2.5 Proprietary Information**

- (i) In the event that employees cease working for or with An Post for any reason, including retirement and/or service contract cessation, all property, including documents and media which contain An Post proprietary information must be returned to An Post. Also, An Post's ownership of intellectual property, created by or with the assistance of an individual, continues even after the individual ceases to be directly involved with An Post.

### **3. PROTECTING THE ORGANISATION'S ASSETS**

- (i) It is each individual's responsibility to comply with all measures intended to ensure efficient, safe and appropriate use of An Post equipment. It is also each individual's responsibility to comply with Health & Safety standards. Everyone who uses equipment also has a responsibility for understanding its proper use and ensuring, insofar as they are responsible for doing so as part of their job, that it is maintained in good condition.

The reputation of the organisation, its employees and its products and services are also important assets that all employees have a responsibility to protect.

#### **3.1 Physical Assets**

- (i) Employees should be alert to and are expected to report any situations or incidents they become aware of that could lead to the loss, theft, or misuse of Company property. Managers/supervisors should accurately record Company property issued to employees and should recover that property before the employee departs from An Post's employment (Circular 81/2007) Details of this circular are available on the Company Intranet site. All such property or assets should be returned to An Post by employees prior to departure.

#### **3.2 Internal An Post Information Systems**

- (i) The reliance placed on internal information and communications facilities in carrying out An Post's business makes it crucial to ensure their integrity. These facilities should only be used for conducting business on behalf of An Post.
- (ii) Any unauthorised use of these facilities, whether or not for personal gain, will be considered a disciplinary matter. It is each person's responsibility to ensure that the use made of An Post information systems is relevant to the work undertaken and is properly authorised. An Post's internet, e-mail and telephone usage policies must be complied with.
- (iii) Employees are required to familiarise themselves with the An Post IT Policies and Standards and adhere to them. They are designed to ensure that the integrity of the organisation's information systems is maintained to the highest standards.
- (iv) The An Post IT Policies and Standards and the e-mail and telephone usage policy are published on the An Post Intranet site and can be accessed by employees directly from there or via their Line Manager as required.

#### **3.3 Intellectual Property**

- (i) Employees assign all rights, titles and interest in intellectual property developed when employed by An Post to An Post.
- (ii) This intellectual property includes such things as technical plans, IT programmes, documents which relate to An Post's actual or anticipated business, or from the work performed. This property is exclusively owned by An Post, whether or not

it results from tasks performed on behalf of An Post either during or after work hours relating to An Post business.

- (iii) Employees who leave An Post are obliged to ensure that intellectual property developed by or entrusted to them is retained by An Post. There is an onus on employees leaving the organisation to ensure that under no circumstances is this property disclosed to outside agencies or prospective employers who may operate in the same market as An Post and would be deemed by the organisation to be competitors.
- (iv) Copyright to work completed by employees during their term of employment with the organisation shall remain with An Post for the full term of the copyright. Similarly, any patent developed during employment will also belong to An Post. Employees will not be entitled to any additional copyright payments or patent royalties.

#### **4. COMMUNICATING INFORMATION TO EMPLOYEES AND THE PUBLIC**

- (i) An Post will provide employees with all relevant information affecting the organisation as appropriate. An Post will ensure that this information is complete and accurate and presented in a manner that is meaningful and easy to understand.
- (ii) Employees are required to disseminate accurately and speedily relevant An Post information to their reporting staff and colleagues in order to ensure that all employees are fully informed on matters that are likely to affect them.

##### **4.1 Confidential Information**

- (i) It is essential that, where circumstances dictate, certain information must remain confidential to protect An Post's competitive position and to comply with applicable agreements and laws.

##### **4.2 Partnership**

- (i) An Post is committed to the development of a customer and business centred partnership process and has invested substantial resources to facilitate this initiative. As part of this process, An Post employees are encouraged to engage in dialogue on matters that are likely to affect them and their work and that impact on the organisation in advance of decisions being taken.
- (ii) The partnership process has been established to ensure that change initiatives and work related problems are discussed with employees, the primary focus being to improve the services provided. This process is also concerned with providing a means whereby employees can express their views and contribute to the future success of the organisation. An Post acknowledges that, through the partnership process, its employees can contribute to this success.
- (iii) There is an opportunity for each individual employee to participate in the partnership process and to ensure that their suggestions, comments and concerns are communicated in an honest and clear manner. In circumstances where employees have criticisms relating to issues concerning their work and the way in which it is performed, these should be relayed in a direct and constructive way to

their line manager, the objective being to improve the organisation's effectiveness. Conversely, where criticisms are raised by employees, feedback should be accepted from others in the same spirit.

- (iv) An Post has ensured that appropriate mechanisms have been put in place whereby individual employees can discuss issues with their line manager. Where issues are discussed and problems or difficulties raised, the manager concerned will pursue these on behalf of the employee and inform the individual employee of progress or decisions taken.

## **5. AN POST'S COMMITMENT TO EMPLOYEES**

### **5.1 Work Environment**

- (i) An Post values the contributions of all its employees. To ensure the commitment of employees members over the longest term appropriate, An Post will continue to provide work that is satisfying, stimulating and rewarding, in a safe and pleasant work environment.
- (ii) An Post will ensure that its employment and service contract practices are fair and will continue to promote a policy of dignity and respect in the workplace, in accordance with its core values and as set out in the Company's Dignity at work Policy. (Details of this policy are available on the Company Intranet site).

### **5.2 Misconduct**

- (i) An Post will not tolerate conduct which has an adverse impact on the work environment. This conduct includes, threats, violent behaviour or the sale or possession of illegal drugs or other controlled substances.
- (ii) Employees should not be on An Post premises or in an An Post work environment if they are under the influence of/or affected by alcohol or illegal drugs. The consumption of alcohol or illegal drugs on An Post premises is not permitted. Each individual has a personal duty of care and a responsibility to ensure that he/she is not under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs/substances while on duty in line with company policy. Employees who fail to adhere to these requirements will be subject to disciplinary action.

The consumption of alcohol on An Post premises will not be permitted other than in exceptional circumstances, subject to the prior approval of management, for business promotions or other special business events.

### **5.3 Academic Pursuits**

- (i) An Post will endeavour to support, whenever possible, work-related aspirations of its employees. This support is and will continue to be demonstrated by the provision of training and development opportunities within the organisation. Subject to budgetary constraints, An Post will, where possible, also provide some financial support for employees who decide to undertake further academic studies, where this is relevant to their work. The Educational Support Scheme (Circular

45/2007 available on An Post's intranet) outlines the criteria for taking part in this scheme.

#### **5.4 Recruitment Policy**

The ability of An Post to achieve its business objectives depends significantly on the quality of its workforce. The purpose of the recruitment and selection process is to find the best available employees in an efficient and cost effective manner, while also ensuring that the process complies with all relevant employment and equality legislation. An Post is an equal opportunities employer.

#### **5.5 Training & Development**

- (i) An Post acknowledges that its staff are an extremely valuable resource who can provide the Company with the vital competitive advantage and edge over its competitors. Supporting the ongoing development of all employees to deliver top quality service to customers efficiently and cost effectively is essential. The Company values the input of the Unions through the Training & Development Joint Working Group in this regard.

### **6. COMPETITION**

- (i) An Post will compete vigorously, but in an ethical and legitimate manner. A Guide for employees entitled "Fair Play, Complying with Competition Law", available on the intranet, explains how employees are expected to comply with Competition law. All relevant employees must adhere to the standards set out in this Guide.
- (ii) An Post will ensure that as a provider of a public service, all decisions and actions taken by the organisation comply with competition regulations and laws.
- (iii) Where comparisons are made between An Post and its competitors, employees should ensure that these comparisons are fair and objective. It is the responsibility of each employee to ensure that he/she does not improperly denigrate competitors and/or their products or services. Materially false or misleading statements and innuendoes about competitors, their products or services, is considered to be improper and unacceptable behaviour. Such conduct damages the respect and integrity An Post enjoys and is contrary to its core values.

### **7. PERSONAL AND PUBLIC ACTIVITIES OF EMPLOYEES**

#### **7.1 Impartiality**

- (i) Whilst An Post respects the rights of individuals to participate in personal and public activities outside work, these activities must be consistent with An Post's public service remit. Personal and public activities which are likely to compromise An Post or undermine public confidence in the organisation are inconsistent with a continuing role within An Post for the relevant employee.
- (ii) Employees must use discretion in engaging in outside activities and must ensure that their identification with any particular project, product, service or viewpoint

does not represent, or could not reasonably be inferred to represent, any implied or actual association with, or endorsement by, An Post where such would be considered to be inappropriate by the management of An Post.

- (iii) It is incumbent on employees to ensure that unfair advantage is not taken, and could not reasonably be implied to be taken, of their connection with An Post, and to ensure that no undesirable publicity is drawn to An Post resulting from their engagement in such outside activities. This is particularly relevant where the individual is involved in high profile or political or controversial activities and has access to sensitive areas within An Post. Employees involved in such activities must ensure that this does not lead to a situation in which public confidence in the professionalism and trustworthiness of An Post employees is undermined.

## **7.2 Political Campaigns**

- (i) An Post does not reimburse employees for personal political contributions, nor does it allow employees to campaign on Company time or property. Employees will not be paid by An Post for any time spent running for public office, serving as an elected official or campaigning for a political candidate. Should an employee wish to engage in such activities during normal working hours, An Post will provide them with a reasonable amount of time off without pay subject to prior approval by their Functional Director and the Human Resources Director.

## **8. CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

- (i) A conflict of interest may arise if an individual engages in any activities, or advances any personal interests, at the expense of An Post's interests.

### **8.1 Attendance to duties**

- (i) An Post accepts that employees are free to engage in any activity outside normal working hours provided that, in doing so, this does not impair their ability to give a satisfactory service to the organisation in accordance with their contract of employment. It is up to the individual concerned to avoid situations in which their primary loyalty to the organisation may become divided.
- (ii) Employees are expected to give ongoing undivided attention to their work duties. Any activity which impedes the employee from carrying out his/her duty involves a breach of his/her contract of employment. Where such activities or involvement impacts on the employee's capacity to perform his/her work in a competent manner, disciplinary action may be taken, up to and including dismissal.
- (iii) An Post may request employees to discontinue their involvement in any activity or interest which could potentially be in conflict with the interests of the organisation, impair the ability of employees to perform their work in a satisfactory manner, or have an adverse effect on their punctuality or attendance.
- (iv) If an individual has a concern relating to an activity or interest they should inform and seek guidance from their Functional Director or the Human Resource

Director regarding their involvement in any activities or interests outside work where the employee's involvement in these activities either conflicts with An Post's interests or could potentially do so.

## **8.2 Involvement in Other Business Activities**

- (i) Employees must not become engaged in outside activities or have a business or financial interest that may compete with An Post or could be regarded as being a conflict of interest with their terms and conditions of employment.
- (ii) Any employee who is either employed in or running any business, consultancy or company outside of his/her relationship with An Post, or who has a significant financial interest in such a business, must inform their Functional Director and the Human Resources Director in writing.
- (iii) The Functional Director and the HR Director will assess if there is a conflict of interest and will notify the employee accordingly.
- (iv) An employee may be requested to discontinue his/her involvement in the outside business or activity concerned or, in certain circumstances, asked to dispose of his/her financial stake in such interests. Alternatively, An Post may alter the employee's contract of employment to avoid such a conflict of interest.

## **8.3 Competing Against An Post**

- (i) Employees must have no involvement with any competitors to An Post.
- (ii) Involvement in outside business activities which do not compete with An Post may not be regarded as constituting a conflict of interest provided the two activities are strictly separate. The following criteria must be observed by all employees engaged in activities outside An Post:
  - work for the other organisation(s) is not performed on An Post time
  - any work performed by employees outside of An Post must not, when counted with the hours worked in An Post, exceed the maximum hours permitted under the provisions of the Organisation of Working Time Act, 1997
  - while engaged in outside activities, employees must ensure that An Post equipment and supplies and other employees' time are never used on outside activities
  - employees must not promote or attempt to sell products or services resulting from their outside business activities to other employees within An Post or on An Post premises or on An Post time.
- (iii) Employees and directors may not take up employment or appointments or provide consultancy services to bodies in the private sector that compete with, An Post or take up such positions where it gives rise to the potential for conflicts of interest and/or to breaches of the person's duty of confidentiality to An Post.

#### **8.4 Documentation**

- (i) In the course of work, employees may receive documents which deal with business matters that conflict with his/her personal interests. Where this happens, the employee should not read the document any further, report it and pass the documents to his/her immediate manager explaining the position in writing.

#### **8.5 Meetings**

- (i) An employee should excuse himself/herself from any meetings where there is discussion of issues that conflict with his/her own interests. The employee should notify his/her manager that he/she withdrew from the meeting in accordance with the provisions of this Code and should also report the matter to the Company Secretary.

### **9. GIFTS AND ENTERTAINMENT**

#### **9.1 Definition**

- (i) In this context, gift is broadly defined as anything that is given to employees, either as a result of a relationship with a particular party or because the employee is a public figure and for which the recipient employee does not pay fair market value.
- (ii) Gifts offered by personnel of different organisations differ widely and may, for example, include material goods, services, promotional premiums, travel and accommodation for business or vacation purposes, tickets to sporting or cultural events and on-going discounts not generally or readily available to the public at large.
- (iii) Under Section 38 of the Ethics in Public Office Act, 1995, an employee will be judged to have corruptly accepted a gift unless he/she can prove otherwise.

#### **9.2 Receiving Gifts**

- (i) Employees are responsible for ensuring that they maintain the highest standards when involved in dealings with outside agencies whether or not they are acting on behalf of An Post in this capacity. As such, employees and/or their family members should never solicit or accept personal advantages or gifts of material value from firms or persons and which gifts arise directly or indirectly as a result of the employee's association with An Post.
- (ii) Business gifts may be accepted by employees as courtesies where they are designed to build understanding and goodwill among business partners. In this context, during the traditional gift giving seasons, gifts of modest value may also be accepted, where refusal to accept might give offence.
- (iii) When an employee is a guest in another country and if the gift is being offered as part of a public occasion it is best to accept the gift on behalf of the organisation.

In such situations, the employee should report the gift to his/her manager and hand it over to the organisation.

- (iv) Employees may accept promotional items of limited value, such as inexpensive pens, calendars, mugs that bear a company's name. Employees of An Post may also present gifts such as these to other business partners.
- (v) The value of gifts accepted in any year from any one source must not exceed €150. All employees are expected to disclose fully all individual gifts with a value exceeding €75 to their Functional Director.
- (vi) A gift which exceeds these criteria should be returned with a polite explanation stating that acceptance of the gift is not permitted under the An Post Code of Business Conduct. Details of returned gifts must be notified in writing by the employee to his/her manager.

### **9.3 Giving Gifts**

- (i) Employees should not give any money or any gift to any director, executive, official or employee of any supplier, customer or any other organisation if doing so would influence or could reasonably give the appearance of improperly influencing the organisation's relationship with An Post. Employees may provide a gift of a nominal value once it falls within the parameters set out in this Code in relation to receiving gifts and the same financial and practical guidelines apply.

### **9.4 Receiving Business Entertainment**

- (i) Entertainment of employees by suppliers or customers is acceptable within normal commercial criteria where such are designed to build understanding and goodwill among business partners. However, business entertainment must be moderately scaled and clearly intended to facilitate business goals. This criteria is defined as follows:
  - business entertainment in the form of meals and beverages at a local venue is acceptable as long as it is modest and infrequent
  - a ticket for a sports event (such as football, golf, racing, etc.) or other public entertainment at a local venue may be accepted
  - attendance at such events should be regarded with discretion and not become habitual
  - the number of people representing An Post at such events should be kept to a minimum and such representatives should always behave in an appropriate manner
  - identification in a public way by An Post employees with a particular supplier/vendor should be avoided
  - endorsement of a particular supplier's design/product, to the exclusion of others, should be avoided, except where this accords fully with An Post policy and is properly authorised in advance
  - under no circumstances may cash or cash vouchers be accepted by any employees
  - entertainment should, as far as possible, be on an equivalent and reciprocal basis

- overnight accommodation and foreign trips paid for by third parties are not permitted
- (ii) An offer of entertainment which exceeds the criteria should be declined with a polite explanation stating that acceptance of the offer is not permitted under the An Post Code of Business Conduct. Details of such offers must be notified in writing by the employee to his /her manager.

### **9.5 Providing Business Entertainment**

- (i) Entertainment by An Post employees of customers, suppliers and other parties is acceptable within normal commercial criteria where such are designed to build understanding and goodwill among business partners. However, An Post business entertainment must be moderate and clearly intended to facilitate business goals.
- (ii) The criteria outlined above, in relation to receiving business entertainment, apply equally to entertainment provided by An Post.

### **9.6 Sponsorship**

Sponsorship must never be solicited from suppliers/vendors and where any such sponsorship is offered it may only be accepted with express prior approval in writing by the employee's manager.

## **10. PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS**

### **10.1 Purchasing Procedures**

- (i) In many circumstances, employees will be required to transact business on An Post's behalf. Employees must ensure that all business transactions are properly accounted for and reported in the Company records.
- (ii) An Post's Purchasing Procedures apply to all employees in jobs that deal directly with suppliers and potential suppliers. These procedures must be adhered to. This ensures fairness in the choice of suppliers and honesty and transparency in all business transactions with them.
- (iii) If domestic or foreign travel is necessary to investigate products or services, An Post will pay the costs involved for its employees. Supplier's offers of foreign travel and/or hotel accommodation should not be accepted, as this could influence or be seen to influence the procurement decision.

### **10.2 Choosing Suppliers**

- (i) Employees involved in procurement activities on behalf of An Post must ensure fairness in the choice of suppliers and honesty and transparency in all business transactions with them.
- (ii) Purchasing decisions must be made on the basis of professional procurement practice including competitive price, quality, quantity, delivery and service. Furthermore, the suppliers own ethical and environmental standards and practices may have an influence on An Post's purchasing decisions.

- (iii) The overall aim is to purchase the most economic goods and services which meet our quality and other specifications, to the highest professional standards in compliance with Public Sector and EU Procurement Guidelines.

### **10.3 Conflicts of Interest**

- (i) Actual and perceived conflicts of interest must be avoided by all An Post employees involved in purchasing decisions. Employees with actual or potential conflicts of interest should notify their manager of the conflict and should not take part in the related purchasing decision. The manager will appoint another person to make the purchasing decision where necessary.
- (ii) Where an employee has an interest in a company which supplies products and/or services to An Post, he/she must not attempt to influence decisions regarding the selection process in order to obtain special treatment for a particular supplier. Any attempt to do so will undermine the integrity of the organisation and breaches purchasing regulations. This may result in the employee being subject to disciplinary action.

### **10.4 Procedure**

- (i) Purchases should be made only in accordance with An Post Group Purchasing Procedures. The procedures are available on the An Post Intranet. Clarification on the procedures may be obtained from An Post Purchasing department.
- (ii) Competitive tendering is the normal procurement method in An Post, save in exceptional circumstances. If, for some compelling reason, a significant contract is to be awarded without competitive tendering it should only be done with the express consent of the Chief Financial Officer and the Chief Executive. The Chief Executive will notify the Board of An Post of all exceptions to the competitive tendering process and explain the exceptional circumstances involved at the earliest available opportunity.

### **10.5 Confidentiality**

- (i) All supplier and tender information relating to a tender process must be treated in the strictest confidence, at least up to the time of contract award. Disclosure of such information, particularly to another interested party, is strictly prohibited. Adherence to this principle is required to ensure all suppliers are treated equally and fairly.
- (ii) After the award of contract, information may be provided in accordance with the Forum on Public Procurement in Ireland Debriefing Charter, or the provisions of EU procurement directives.
- (iii) All confidential information must be properly safeguarded by employees.

## **11. EQUALITY**

### **11.1 Discrimination**

- (i) An Post is committed to maintaining a healthy, safe and productive work environment which is free from discrimination or harassment based on race, colour, religion, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability, marital status, or membership of the travelling community in accordance with An Post's Dignity at Work Policy. (Details of this policy are available on the Company Intranet site).
- (ii) In accordance with An Post's Dignity at Work Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy, An Post does not tolerate sexual harassment, harassment or bullying in any form. Employees found to be engaged in such acts, or who have misused their positions of authority in this regard, will be subject to disciplinary action (up to and including dismissal) or to breach of service contract proceedings as appropriate. An Post's Dignity at Work Policy is available from the HR department and is also on the An Post Intranet.

### **11.2 Equal Opportunities**

- (i) An Post promotes equal opportunities for all employees including creating an ethos in which all employees can realise their full potential. An Post's Disability Policy explains how the company provides equal opportunities to persons with a disability. An Post's Equality Policy and Disability Policy are available on the An Post Intranet.
- (ii) An Post is committed to providing all customers with quality service at all times. The Company is also committed to listening to our customers and to developing services in response. The Company is also committed to taking a proactive approach in providing information to customers and in dealing with any complaints.

### **11.3 Employee Responsibility**

- (i) Each employee has a responsibility for creating and sustaining a pleasant, secure and productive working environment in which all employees and third parties are treated fairly and with dignity and respect.

## **12. COMMITMENT TO OUR STAKEHOLDERS**

- (i) In accordance with the Postal and Telecommunications Services Act, 1983, it is the general duty of An Post to conduct its affairs so as to ensure that;
  - (a) charges for services are kept at the minimum rates consistent with meeting approved financial targets, and
  - (b) revenues of the Company are not less than sufficient to;
    - (i) meet all charges properly chargeable to revenue (including depreciation of assets and proper allocation to general reserve) taking one year with another,
    - (ii) generate a reasonable proportion of capital needs, and

- (iii) remunerate capital and repay borrowings
- (ii) An Post values its customers and treats all customers equally. An Post believes that sustainability can only be secured through satisfied and loyal customers and that customer satisfaction is at least partly dependent on satisfied and effective employees.
- (iii) An Post will strive continually to achieve and maintain market leadership through the provision of superior value services and products. To support a culture of excellence, the organisation will invest substantial resources to develop its range of services and products.
- (iv) An Post seeks to minimise the impact of its operations on the environment.

### **13. LOCAL COMMUNITIES**

An Post is located in or has a presence in a large number of communities throughout the country. It is the responsibility of each employee to ensure that An Post's relationship with these communities is a positive one. An Post encourages employees to be active in the civic life of their communities.

### **14. ETHICS IN PUBLIC OFFICE ACTS, 1995 AND 2001**

#### **14.1 Disclosure Requirements**

Designated directors and holders of designated positions in An Post are required under the Ethics in Public Office Acts, 1995 and 2001, to disclose interests they may hold that could materially influence them in or in relation to the performance of the functions of their position by reason of the fact that such performance could so affect those interests as to confer on or withhold from them or their spouse or child a substantial benefit.

#### **14.2 Statement of Registrable Interests**

A Statement of Registrable Interests must be completed each year by designated directors and holders of designated positions. The Company Secretary will write to each designated director/holder of designated position annually in this regard. The statement of registrable interests covers:

- i) designated directors and holders of designated positions own interests, and
- ii) the interests, of which they have actual knowledge, of their spouse, child or a child of their spouse

Designated directors and holders of designated positions must not serve as directors of any organisation which supplies goods or services to, or competes with An Post. They must also provide the Company Secretary with written notice in circumstances where a spouse or other close relative is involved or intends to pursue an activity or become involved in a business interest that could be regarded as constituting a conflict of interest with An Post.

### **14.3 Registrable Interests**

#### 1. Occupational Income

This includes income from a trade, profession or rental income exceeding €2,600.

#### 2. Shares

Shareholdings in any company where the aggregate value of the shares exceed €13,000.

#### 3. Directorships

A directorship or shadow directorship of any company held during the relevant period.

#### 4. Land

Any interest in land worth over €13,000 must be disclosed. A private home or holiday home is not included in this.

#### 5. Travel, Accommodation, Meals etc.

Travel facilities, accommodation, meals and entertainment provided free of charge or at a discounted price which, in aggregate, at commercial prices, would exceed €650.

#### 6. Remunerated Positions

Any remunerated position as a political or public affairs lobbyist, consultant or adviser held by a designated director or holder of a designated position.

#### 7. Public Service Contracts

Details of any contract to which the person concerned was a party, or was in any other way, directly or indirectly interested, for the supply of goods or services to a Minister of the Government, or a public body during the period, if the value supplied exceeded €6,500 in aggregate.

#### 8. Gifts, Property and Services

A gift given, or gifts given by the same person, where the value exceeded €650. Property supplied or lent or a service supplied for less than commercial value where the commercial value would have exceeded €650.

#### 9. Other Interests

Any other interests which they, or their spouse, or child or a child of their spouse, holds which could materially influence the designated director and holder of a designated position in the performance of his/her official duties.

## **15. PUBLICATION AND CIRCULATION**

- (i). A copy of this Code of Business Conduct for Employees shall be given to each An Post employee. Each new employee shall be given a copy at the commencement of their employment with the Company.
- (ii) This Code of Business Conduct for Employees will be published on the An Post Intranet site and on the An Post website.

## 16. REVISION

- (i) An Post shall review this Code of Business Conduct for Employees at least every two years.

## 17. SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS

- (i) This section provides an indicative checklist of actions and behaviours that are (a) encouraged or mandated for all employees of the Company, and those that are (b) discouraged and forbidden. It is intended as a guideline and it is not meant to be exhaustive or definitive.

### Employees **will**:

- Be truthful and honest in all business dealings.
- Ensure that there is no conflict of interest between their work in An Post and any outside personal interest.
- Inform their manager in writing if any such conflicts arise.
- Ensure An Post obtains the best value for money in procurement and business dealings (subject to appropriate material specifications if relevant).
- Progress any concerns and grievances using, in the first instance, agreed internal Processes and procedures.
- Ensure that their work complies with all applicable laws and regulations in the countries in which An Post operates.

### Employees **will not**:

- Participate in any matter or transaction where a conflict of interest exists.
- Disclose details of confidential Company matters to third parties including the media.
- Accept any money, significant gift, material or service from a customer or supplier.
- Behave in any manner which may damage the reputation of An Post.

## 18. ADVICE AND CLARIFICATION

- (i) Employees should consult with their immediate line manager, Human Resources Manager or the Company Secretary if they have any doubts or require clarification on any aspect of this Code.