

Code of Conduct for Data Administrators in Handling CheckMySchool App Reports

This Code of Conduct is built around the recognition that everything we do in connection with the use of the CheckMySchool App will be, and should be, measured against the highest possible standards of ethical conduct. We set the bar high for practical as well as aspirational reasons: Our commitment to the highest standards helps us connect with education stakeholders, improve our platforms, and empower Filipino citizens to engage in education governance. Respect for our app users and for each other is foundational to our success, and something we need to promote every day.

So please do read the Code and follow it in spirit and letter, always bearing in mind that each of us has a personal responsibility to incorporate, and to encourage other authorized CheckMySchool contact persons to incorporate, the principles of the Code and values into our work. And if you have a question or ever think that one of your fellow government personnel or the government as a whole may be falling short of our commitment, don't be silent. We want – and need – to hear from you.

Who Must Follow Our Code?

We expect all persons accessing and administering data from CMS app backend to know and follow the Code. They include of CheckMySchool project staff and app developer, Department of Education contact persons from various offices, and others who will be authorized to access CMS app data. Failure to do so will result in cancellation of access and possible disciplinary action based on applicable laws and policies, such as the Data Privacy Act. While the Code is specifically written for CheckMySchool and government personnel, we expect our contractors, consultants, and others who may be temporarily assigned to perform work or services for CheckMySchool to follow the Code in connection with their work on the app. Failure of a CheckMySchool contractor, consultant, or other covered service provider to follow the Code will result in termination of their relationship with CheckMySchool.

What If I Have a Code-Related Question or Concern?

If you have a question or concern, you are encouraged to ask the CMS secretariat. You may also submit a question or raise a concern of a suspected violation of our Code or any other CheckMySchool app policy through the CheckMySchool secretariat. In the case of DepEd, you may send it through Bureau of Human Resources and Organizational Development.

No Retaliation

CheckMySchool prohibits retaliation against anyone who reports or participates in an investigation of a possible violation of our Code. If you believe you are being retaliated against, please contact CheckMySchool Secretariat.

I. Serve Our Users

Our users value CheckMySchool not only because we provide relevant feedback platform and services, but because we hold ourselves to a higher standard in how we treat them. Keeping the following principles in mind will help us to maintain that high standard:

1. Integrity

CheckMySchool's reputation as an official platform for feedback and monitoring of education service delivery that our users can trust is our most valuable asset, and it is up to all of us to make sure that we continually earn that trust. All of our communications and other interactions with our users should increase their trust in us.

2. Usefulness

Our app's features, functions and services should make CheckMySchool more useful for all our users. We have many different types of users, from students, teachers, parents and other relevant stakeholders but one guiding principle: "Is what we are offering useful?"

3. Privacy, Security, and Freedom of Expression

Our app users entrust to us their personal information and school reports. Preserving that trust requires that each of us respect and protect the

privacy and security of that information. We strictly limit access to and use of users' personal information, and require that each of us take measures to protect user data from unauthorized access. Know your responsibilities under these procedures, and collect, use, and access user personal information only as authorized by our app's Privacy Policy and in accordance with the Data Protection Act of 2012.

CheckMySchool is committed to advancing privacy and freedom of expression for our app users around the Philippines. Where user privacy and freedom of expression face government challenges, we seek to implement recognized standards that respect those rights as we develop platforms and respond to government requests to access user information or remove user reports. Contact CheckMySchool secretariat if you have questions on implementing these standards in connection with the use of CheckMySchool app.

4. Responsiveness

Part of being useful is being responsive. We recognize the validity of every user report when we see it, and we do something about it. We suspend and avoid assumptions, malice and derogatory labeling of reports as irrelevant or useless until proven otherwise. We seek to clarify when it is confusing and provide correction when misleading or bogus. We take pride in responding to communications from our users, including simple queries and irritating complaints about certain school problems. If someone speaks, let's listen.

5. Harassment, Discrimination, and Bullying

We prohibit discrimination, harassment and bullying in any form – verbal, physical, emotional or visual. Reports sent to CheckMySchool app should not be used as basis to reprimand or accuse the sender of wrongdoing. It should have no effect on the status of employment or assessment of performance of teachers and other government personnel.

If you believe a user has been bullied or harassed because of report sent to the app, we strongly encourage you to immediately report the incident to the CheckMySchool secretariat or the Bureau of Human Resources and Organizational Development of the Department of Education, or both. Similarly, unit heads who learn of any such incident should promptly and thoroughly investigate any complaints and take appropriate action.

6. Take Action

Any time you feel our app users aren't being well-served, let someone in either CheckMySchool or the Department of Education know about it. Continually improving our app's features, functions and services takes all of us, and we're proud that CheckMySchool app champions our users and steps up when the interests of our users are at stake.

II. Avoid Conflicts of Interest

When you are in a situation in which competing loyalties could cause you to pursue a personal benefit for you, your friends, or your family at the expense of CheckMySchool or our users, you may be faced with a conflict of interest. All of us should avoid conflicts of interest and circumstances that reasonably present the appearance of a conflict.

When considering a course of action, ask yourself whether the action you're considering could create an incentive for you, or appear to others to create an incentive for you, to benefit yourself, your friends or family, or an associated business at the expense of CheckMySchool. If the answer is "yes," the action you're considering is likely to create a conflict of interest situation, and you should avoid it.

Below, we provide guidance in seven areas where conflicts of interest often arise:

- Personal investments
- Outside employment, advisory roles, board seats, and starting your own business
- Business opportunities found through work
- Similar inventions
- Friends and relatives; co-worker relationships
- Accepting gifts, entertainment, and other courtesies
- Use of CheckMySchool features, functions and services

In each of these situations, the rule is the same – if you are considering entering into a situation that creates a conflict of interest, don't. If you are in a situation that may create a conflict of interest, or the appearance of a conflict of interest, review the situation with CheckMySchool secretariat. Finally, it's important to understand that as circumstances change, a

situation that previously didn't present a conflict of interest may present one.

III. Preserve Confidentiality

We may get press attention around our innovations and our work, and that's fine. However, certain kinds of CheckMySchool information, if leaked prematurely to the press, can hurt our initiative and put people's welfare in danger. Our responsibilities extend beyond not revealing confidential CheckMySchool material – we must also:

- properly secure, label, and (when appropriate) dispose of confidential CheckMySchool material;
- safeguard confidential information that CheckMySchool receives from others under non-disclosure agreements;
- take steps to keep our passwords, secret codes, and other confidential intellectual property secret.

IV. Obey the Law

CheckMySchool takes its responsibilities to comply with laws and regulations very seriously and each of us is expected to comply with applicable legal requirements and prohibitions. While it's impossible for anyone to know all aspects of every applicable law, you should understand the major laws and regulations that apply to your work. A few specific laws are easy to violate unintentionally and so are worth pointing out here:

1. No bribery

Like all undertakings, CheckMySchool is subject to lots of laws in the Philippines, that prohibit bribery in virtually every situation. The rule for us at CheckMySchool is simple – don't bribe anybody, anytime, for any reason.

2. No extortion

CheckMySchool app data should not be used to extort money or any material gift from anybody, anytime, for any reason.

VIII. Conclusion

CheckMySchool aspires to be a different kind of initiative. It's impossible to spell out every possible ethical scenario we might face. Instead, we rely

on one another's good judgment to uphold a high standard of integrity for ourselves and our work. We expect all involved in accessing and processing CheckMySchool app data to be guided by both the letter and the spirit of this Code. Sometimes, identifying the right thing to do isn't an easy call. If you aren't sure, don't be afraid to ask questions to your immediate superior.

Last updated June 24, 2019