

## Document 4: Code of Conduct and Ethics

This document outlines the standards of **conduct and ethics** that all employees are expected to follow. We are committed to providing a workplace that is respectful, inclusive, and in compliance with all legal and ethical standards. Our Code of Conduct covers policies on non-discrimination, anti-harassment, professional behavior, confidentiality, conflicts of interest, and related areas. By adhering to these guidelines, we maintain a positive and safe work environment for everyone.

**Equal Opportunity and Non-Discrimination:** Our company is an equal opportunity employer. We strictly prohibit discrimination or unfair treatment of employees or applicants on the basis of **race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, disability, veteran status, genetic information, or any other characteristic protected by law**. All employment decisions (hiring, promotion, training, termination, etc.) are based on merit, qualifications, and business needs. We comply with all relevant employment laws ensuring equal opportunity. If you feel you have experienced or witnessed any form of discrimination, report it to HR immediately – such reports will be taken seriously and investigated promptly.

**Anti-Harassment Policy:** We are committed to a workplace free of harassment. **Harassment** of any kind – whether sexual harassment or other forms such as bullying, offensive jokes or slurs, or any unwelcome conduct – is strictly forbidden. This applies to conduct between coworkers at all levels, as well as interactions with clients or vendors. Sexual harassment, in particular, includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal/physical conduct of a sexual nature that affects an individual's employment or creates a hostile environment. If you experience or witness harassment, you must report it to HR or a manager. We will take immediate action to investigate and address the issue. Retaliation against anyone who reports harassment is also strictly prohibited. Our anti-harassment and non-discrimination policies are in place to protect everyone and ensure respect in the workplace.

**Professional Behavior and Respect:** We expect all employees to treat colleagues, customers, and partners with courtesy and professionalism. This includes being mindful of language and tone, cooperating with team members, and embracing our diverse workforce. Disrespectful behavior, intimidation, or creating a hostile work environment will not be tolerated. Always communicate in a constructive and professional manner, even when disagreements arise. We encourage open dialogue and feedback, but it should be done respectfully.

**Privacy, Confidentiality, and Data Security:** During your employment, you will have access to confidential company information – such as business strategies, customer data, trade secrets, or personal data about employees. **Protecting confidential information is a serious responsibility.** Every employee is required to sign a Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA) as part of onboarding, agreeing not to disclose or misuse company confidential information. You should only share sensitive data internally on a need-to-know basis and never externally unless

authorized. Additionally, respect **employee privacy** – for example, personal information of colleagues or customers should be kept confidential and handled according to our data protection policies. Our privacy and security policies (see Document 9 for IT security) guide how to handle data safely. If you are ever unsure about whether information is confidential or how you can use it, ask your manager or IT security team.

**Conflict of Interest:** Employees should avoid situations where personal interests conflict with those of the company. A **conflict of interest** can occur if you have a personal or financial stake in a company transaction or relationship (for example, contracting a family member's business without disclosure), or if you take outside employment that interferes with your ability to perform your job. You are expected to act in the best interest of ABC Inc. at all times. If you think you may have a conflict of interest, disclose it to HR or management so we can determine the proper course of action. We also have guidelines on accepting gifts or entertainment from vendors – generally, modest tokens are fine, but anything of significant value should be reported to avoid any perception of bias.

**Use of Social Media:** We recognize that social media is part of daily life. However, when using social platforms, **be mindful of representing the company**. Do not share confidential information or make disparaging remarks about the company, coworkers, or customers online. Even on personal accounts, if your profile identifies you as an employee, your actions can reflect on us. Our policy is simple: use good judgment, respect our confidentiality and harassment policies, and make it clear that your views are your own (e.g., consider adding "opinions are mine, not my employer's" in profiles if you discuss industry topics). If you are responsible for posting on official company social media, follow the branding and content guidelines provided by marketing.

**Compliance with Laws and Company Policies:** All employees must follow applicable laws and regulations (e.g., workplace safety laws, insider trading laws if applicable, etc.) as well as all company policies. This includes policies outlined in this handbook and any others specific to your department. Violations of laws or policies can result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

**Reporting and Discipline:** If you witness any unethical behavior or policy violations, you are encouraged (and in some cases obligated) to report it. We provide multiple channels for reporting: your manager, HR, or an anonymous hotline (if available). We will investigate all reports impartially. Employees who violate the Code of Conduct or any company policies may face disciplinary measures, which can range from a warning or required training up to termination, depending on the severity of the offense.

Our Code of Conduct exists to ensure **everyone** in the company has a safe, fair, and pleasant working environment. By following these guidelines and exercising good judgment, you contribute to a positive workplace culture. **Thank you** for upholding our standards of integrity and respect.