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| | | **Administrative Procedure** |
| | | **Code of Conduct** |
| | **Department:** | **Corporate Services** |
| | **Approved by:** | **Leadership Council** |
| | **Date Approved:** | **May 13, 2024** |
| | **Revision Date(s):** | **March 9, 2026** |
| | **Review Date:** | |
| | **External References**<br>• *The Saskatchewan Employment Act and The Occupational Health and Safety Regulations, 2020* | |

## Purpose

- The purpose of this administrative procedure is to communicate an expectation of acceptable conduct and provide guidance
- in ethical decision-making for all Saskatchewan Distance Learning Centre (Sask DLC) employees.
- This administrative procedure should not be regarded as a comprehensive listing of compliance issues. In any situation where appropriate conduct is unclear or ambiguous, employees must seek advice and direction of Sask DLC.

## Scope

- This administrative procedure applies to all individuals affiliated with Sask DLC, including employees, contractors, practicum students, volunteers, partners and any other stakeholders involved in the activities and operations of Sask DLC.
- Employees who are members of a professional regulatory body or association are expected to adhere to the standards and code of conduct of that body, in addition to this Code of Conduct. Where a conflict exists between the two, the higher standard shall apply.

## Policy Statement

- Sask DLC is committed to fostering a workplace environment that upholds the highest standards of conduct, ethics and professionalism.
- All individuals associated with Sask DLC are expected to adhere to the standards outlined in Sask DLC's Code of Conduct. Compliance with Sask DLC policies, administrative procedures and all applicable laws is considered a term and condition of employment with Sask DLC.
- Sask DLC employees are obligated to:
  - Comply with all applicable laws, Sask DLC policies and administrative procedures;
  - Prioritize safety and wellbeing of students at all times;
  - Conduct themselves outside of work in a manner consistent with the trust placed in them as public sector employees;
  - Be mindful of their responsibility as role models in school, in the community and online;
  - Maintain professional, respectful and appropriate relationships with students, families, colleagues and public that reflect positively on Sask DLC and public sector education;

- Promote a work environment based on trust and respect;
- Avoid conflicts of interest;
- Ensure open communication;
- Keep organizational information confidential; and
- Ensure the workplace is free from alcohol, illicit drug or cannabis use, vaping, additional substances, cigarette, cigar, pipe or any smoking device (e.g., electronic cigarette) that is burning or heating any tobacco or non-tobacco substance and a result produces gases, vapours, particles or other emissions.

## Procedures

**1. Respect and Ethical Responsibility**

a) It is every employee's responsibility to fulfill the terms and conditions of their contract of employment and it is also each employee's responsibility to work with colleagues and students in mutually supportive ways to develop effective professional relationships with members of the educational community, public sector stakeholders, and general public.

**2. Personal Integrity**

a) Every Sask DLC employee has a fundamental obligation to act honestly and with integrity at all times. As outlined in Reporting Criminal Charges Administrative Procedure, every employee must inform the Chief Executive Officer or designate when they are charged with a criminal offence within 48 hours.

b) Sask DLC employees must avoid public comment on workplace concerns and address issues through appropriate internal channels.

**3. Conduct Outside of Work**

a) It is expected that employees apply the same standards of professional and ethical conduct outside of work as they would in their professional role. Conduct outside of work may give rise to disciplinary action where it:

i) involves or puts at risk the safety or wellbeing of a student;
ii) constitutes a criminal offence;
iii) brings Sask DLC or the education sector into disrepute; or
iv) reflects adversely on the employee's fitness to work with children or vulnerable persons.

**4. Professional Communication with Students and Online Conduct**

a) All professional communication between Sask DLC employees and students, whether in person, by phone or through written or electronic means must be professional in nature and limited to matters directly related to the employee's role and the student's learning at Sask DLC.

b) All electronic communication between employees and students that relates to their role at Sask DLC must occur through Sask DLC-approved and monitored platforms.

c) Employees are expected to maintain professional boundaries in all electronic communication interactions with Sask DLC students. Where social media connections with current students exist

or are initiated, all communication must adhere to the standards outlined in this administrative procedure.

5. **Harassment and Violence**
   a) Every Sask DLC employee has a right to work in a respectful environment that is free from harassment and violence. Refer to the Prevention of Harassment and Violence Administrative Procedures or contact Human Resources.

6. **Conflict of Interest**
   a) Sask DLC employees are expected to conduct themselves with personal integrity, ethics, honesty and diligence in performing their duties. Sask DLC employees are required to support and advance the interests of Sask DLC and avoid placing themselves in situations where the private interests may be in conflict with, or be perceived to be in conflict with the interests of Sask DLC. In the event of a conflict of interest, employees will make the conflict known to the appropriate supervisor and remove themselves from the situation. Refer to Administrative Procedures on Conflict of Interest for further guidance.

7. **Use of Sask DLC Property**
   a) Sask DLC property, including equipment and material, shall not be used for inappropriate purposes.
   b) Sask DLC employees are responsible for making reasonable efforts to avoid and prevent unjustified waste, loss or damage to any Sask DLC property.

8. **Use of Time**
   a) Sask DLC employees are expected to use work time for Sask DLC work purposes.

9. **Confidentiality and Privacy**
   a) All employees as per their signed Oath of Office are required to respect the privacy of students, families and staff and are required to maintain confidentiality of all information gained by virtue of being an employee, a practicum student, contractor or a volunteer.

10. **Safe and Healthy Working Environment**
    a) Sask DLC is committed to providing a safe and healthy work environment for all employees and to avoid adverse impact and injury to the environment. Sask DLC is committed to complying with all environmental and workplace health and safety laws and regulations.

11. **Intellectual Property**
    a) Sask DLC employees create significant and valuable written works, technology and data compilations. They also identify problems and develop solutions by making improvements to equipment, tools and processes. These creations and solutions developed and owned by Sask DLC constitute intellectual property. In general, employees should treat Sask DLC's intellectual property as confidential information.

**12. Use of the Internet, Email and Electronic and Social Media**

a) Under no circumstances are employees authorized to engage in any activity that is illegal under local, provincial, federal or international law while using Sask DLC resources. When using Sask DLC computer systems, authorized users are responsible for the security of their passwords and accounts. All users accepting access to Sask DLC computer systems consent to being monitored with network accounts being subject to reasonable search. Refer to Administrative Procedures for Acceptable Use of Technology.

**13. Standards of Dress**

a) All employees to maintain a professional appearance while in the workplace, or while attending Sask DLC-sanctioned events;
b) Clothing should be appropriate to the duties and generally established standards and should be kept neat, clean and tidy;
c) Employees should wear/carry employee identification as required by Sask DLC's policy;
d) A "business casual" standard is expected of employees working in offices or meeting with clients, stakeholders, community members, or colleagues outside the office. The principle behind this definition is that as professionals working for government should always be dressed in a manner that is suitable to meeting the requirements of their positions (e.g., attendance at court, meetings with supervisor, manager or director, members of the public, and/or representatives from other organizations or ministries);
e) "Business casual" clothing should be appropriate and in good taste; examples of inappropriate choices are provided below:
    i. Stained, damaged, worn, torn or patched clothing;
    ii. Gym wear including shorts, sweats and yoga pants;
    iii. T-shirts with controversial or offensive messages or logos; and,
    iv. Attire that is unnecessarily revealing.
f) Sask DLC employees are also encouraged to choose appropriate and safe footwear;
g) While Casual Fridays allow a reprieve from the more formal attire requirements of the week, employees should also consider their schedule for that day (meetings, client contact, etc.) and adjust accordingly. Employees are expected to use their best judgment to determine what is appropriate and if in doubt, consult their supervisor. The "Casual Friday" option is not available to staff designated to wear a uniform.
h) Supervisors are expected to immediately address inappropriate attire of an employee.

**14. Illegal, Illicit or Recreational Substances**

a) Sask DLC has an educational and societal responsibility to prohibit the employee use or possession of alcohol and drugs at all buildings and property owned or leased by Sask DLC.

**15. Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act**

a) *The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FOIP) governs government agencies including Sask DLC. As a government agency, Sask DLC has a need to collect personal information about students, parents and employees. Sask DLC also has a corresponding duty to protect the privacy of that information and to allow access to information. Refer to Administrative Procedures on Privacy for further guidance.

**16. Reporting Misconduct**

a) Employees who become aware of conduct that may be inconsistent with this administrative procedure are encouraged to raise their concern through appropriate channels. Where it is reasonable and safe to do so, employees may first address the concern directly with the individual involved.
b) Regulated professionals should also consult their professional body's standards to ensure compliance with any applicable reporting obligations.
c) Concerns may be raised with a direct supervisor, or with Human Resources where the concern involves a supervisor. Reports made in good faith will be treated with sensitivity and confidentiality.
d) In cases of gross misconduct, employees may report directly to the member of the Senior Leadership Team responsible for their area.
e) Employees are protected from reprisal for raising concerns in good faith under this administrative procedure.
f) A supervisor who receives a report of misconduct shall inform the Director of Human Resources to initiate investigation and determination of appropriate corrective action, if required.
g) This procedure does not replace Reporting Wrongdoing Administrative Procedure, which provides a separate process for disclosures of concerns that may constitute wrongdoing under *The Public Interest Disclosure Act*.

## Roles and Responsibilities

**Sask DLC is responsible to:**

a) Ensure all employees are advised of and understand the expectations of the Code through initial orientation and annual review process;
b) Ensure the administrative procedure is available to all employees; and
c) Promptly and objectively take appropriate corrective action when violations of the Code are identified.

**Employees are responsible to:**

a) Acknowledge this administrative procedure upon commencement of employment through the employee onboarding process;
b) Employees hired prior to the inclusion of this administrative procedure in the employee onboarding process shall acknowledge this administrative procedure through the regular annual review cycle;
c) Know, understand and comply with this administrative procedure;
d) Complete any mandatory training and annual review of this administrative procedure; and
e) Inform the employer of any known breach of this administrative procedure.

## Non-Compliance

**1.** Non-compliance with this administrative procedure may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

**2.** Refusal to acknowledge this administrative procedure upon commencement of employment may result in withdrawal of the offer of employment.

## Definitions

- **Conflict of Interest:** A conflict of interest refers to a situation in which a public servant has private interests that could compete with or that may be perceived to compete with their duties and responsibilities as an employee.

  A conflict of interest can also be a situation where an employee can use their position for private gain, non-monetary or otherwise. A conflict may also occur when the private interest benefits an employee's family, friends or organization in which the employee or their family or friends have a financial interest.

- **Electronic Communication:** Any communication transmitted through digital or electronic means, including but not limited to email, text messaging, phone calls, video calls, instant messaging and any social media platform or application, regardless of whether the account or device used is personal or Sask DLC-issued.

- **Private Interest:** Private interest means a relationship, obligation, duty, responsibility or benefit unique to the employee or a person related to the employee.

- **Confidential Information:** Confidential information includes, but is not limited to, privileged information, third party information, personal information, technical, financial or scientific information and any other information collected, obtained or derived for or from Sask DLC records that must or may be kept confidential under the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, 1990* and the *Health Information Protection Act, 1999* and other applicable policies and legislation.