

VRA Code of Ethics



**VOLTA
RIVER
AUTHORITY**

PREFACE

As the Volta River Authority matures, there is the need to develop a Code of Ethics to imbue in the members of the Authority, Staff and the Authority's agents, the long held values of the Authority.

The Authority has drawn this **ethical Code** to assist members of the Authority, Staff and the Authority's agents who will be called upon to make decisions or act on behalf of the Authority, understand and appreciate the standard of conduct required of them and to apply this understanding and appreciation to their decisions and actions.

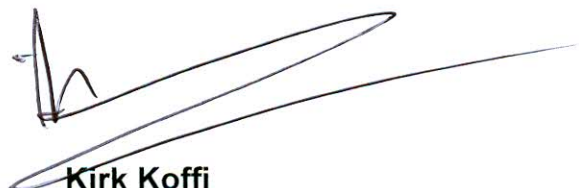
This Code provides guidelines on acceptable behaviour and what constitutes acceptable standards of behavior. It also states the Authority's mission, values, and standards. It is intended that the Code will sharpen our awareness, provide parameters for our actions and invigorate our commitment to the Authority.

We hope that the Code will be useful to all employees by providing them with guidance on sensitive issues and creating an atmosphere of trust, transparency and accountability in the Authority as well as providing high standards of practice.

Management assures staff it would abide by the content of this Code and ensure its effective implementation.

The Code will be updated regularly to make it relevant to the needs of the Authority.

It is our hope that it will effectively serve the purpose for which it is intended.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, consisting of a stylized 'K' followed by a long, sweeping horizontal line that extends to the right.

Kirk Koffi
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

November 2015

1.0 INTRODUCTION

An ethical Code is a system of moral principles, values, standards or rules that control or influence a person's behavior. In the work place, it is "the set of moral principles or values which guides behaviour". The foundation of ethics is honesty, transparency, and uprightness.

Within the Volta River Authority, work ethics are driven on the principle of VRA's core corporate values which are: accountability, commitment, trust, integrity and teamwork. These values constitute the dynamic guiding principles for every employee in conduct and the discharge of his/her duties.

In our collective effort to drive this great organization forward, it is imperative that staff abide by these work ethics, founded on our corporate values that duly place the Authority's interest paramount.

This Code shall be owned and practiced by the members of the Authority, the VRA Executive, Management, Staff and agents of the Authority and shall be publicized and enforced by VRA Management.

2.0 SCOPE AND PURPOSE

The objective of the Code is to promote good governance principles and encourage a high standard of ethical behaviour among employees of the Authority in their dealings with each other and with the Authority's external stakeholders.

The 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana obliges public officers to avoid unethical behavior or conduct, such as conflict of interest, illicit enrichment, abuse of discretion and other improper conduct.

In conformity with the tenets of the constitution, this Code of Ethics forms part of a continuing effort to develop systems and strategies to promote integrity, probity and accountability, dedicated and faithful service to the Authority and the nation as a whole, as well as build a sustainable capacity to combat corruption and other acts of misconduct.

3.0 VISION AND MISSION STATEMENT

All employees are expected to work and contribute to the achievement of the Corporate Mission, Vision and Strategic Objectives as well as live the corporate core values at all times. Employees should therefore avoid attitudes, acts and behaviours which are not in the interest of the Authority

MISSION

The Volta River Authority exists to power economies and raise the living standards of the people of Ghana and West Africa. We supply reliable electricity in a safe manner, to add financial, economic and social values to our operations and assets, to satisfy customers and meet stakeholders' expectations.

VISION***Setting the Standard for Public Sector Excellence in Africa.***

- Leadership in performance, community and industry.
- Planning well, making proactive and sound business decisions.
- Anticipating, shaping and effectively responding to relevant external forces and events.
- Becoming a leading benchmarked utility operating within the Baldrige Excellence Framework.

4.0 STATEMENT OF THE AUTHORITY'S CORE CORPORATE VALUES

The Authority's core values are:

- **Accountability:**
 - Being answerable to stakeholders of VRA.
 - Conducting business in a financially responsible manner.
 - Empowering employees and holding them accountable for results.
- **Commitment**
 - Goal and action-orientation:
 - Taking leadership initiative.
 - Building a culture of execution.
- **Trust:**
 - Gaining confidence of all stakeholders e.g. employees, lenders etc.
- **Integrity:**
 - Commitment to the principle of honesty, consistency and fairness in all dealings.
- **Teamwork:**
 - Building and working in teams to achieve results.
 - Respect for views/opinions of colleagues.
 - Providing mutual support for each other.

5.0 BENEFITS

This Code shall:

- I. Provide explicit guidance and standards to members of the Authority, Executive, Management and other employees on how to behave when confronted with ethical challenges.
- II. Provide new employees with ethical guidance and a sense of common identity.

- III. Provide the basis for continuous education and improvement in ethical and professional conduct of the Authority's business.
- IV. Inspire public confidence in the Authority, promote strong public image and enhance the Authority's reputation.
- V. Signal to suppliers and customers the Authority's expectation regarding proper conduct and generally acceptable standards of behavior.
- VI. Promote a culture of excellence in the Authority by demonstrating the commitment of the Authority to ethical behavior.

6.0 APPROVAL AND OVERSIGHT RESPONSIBILITY

Members of the Authority shall approve this Code, oversee its regular review and update as well as overall compliance with its tenets.

The Director, Human Resources shall be responsible for the official interpretation and revision of this Code as necessary in consultation with relevant stakeholders.

7.0 RESPONSIBILITY FOR IMPLEMENTATION AND REVISION

Upon the approval of this Code by Members of the Authority, the Human Resources Department, in conjunction with relevant Department(s) within the Authority, shall be responsible for the implementation and revision of this Code. They shall ensure:

- a) That the Code is published and widely circulated among staff;
- b) That staff knowledge about the Code is regularly updated;
- c) That Heads of Departments, front-line Managers/Officers who handle the Authority's business are well-informed about their personal responsibilities under the Code;
- d) Periodic training in general work ethics and standards of conduct to staff, including mandatory induction courses for all new employees;
- e) That all other relevant measures including the establishment of a committee to monitor the ethical climate and handle resultant matters are instituted.

8.0 PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

Certified professionals shall at all times be guided by the code of conduct of their professional bodies in their conduct and performance of the Authority's business. Other employees of the Authority shall at all times conduct their official activities professionally and with integrity.

Staff must be objective in exercising judgment and making recommendations. Nothing other than the best and proper interests of the Authority and its

stakeholders shall influence decisions and actions of the employees of the Authority.

9.0 STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

All persons covered by this Code are required to exhibit values, standards and moral conduct that support the mission and values of the Authority and are expected to conduct themselves in a manner deserving of public trust.

The following list is not all-inclusive but is intended to illustrate the minimum expectations for acceptable workplace conduct and performance for employees of the Authority:

- i. Report to work punctually, perform duties to expected standards and close on time
- ii. Seek approval from supervisors in advance for any changes to the established work schedule, including the use of annual vacation leave and late arrivals and early departures.
- iii. Perform assigned duties and responsibilities with the highest degree integrity.
- iv. Devote full effort and attention to VRA during work hours.
- v. Maintain the qualifications, certification, licensure, and/or training requirements identified for their positions.
- vi. Demonstrate respect for the Authority and towards coworkers, supervisors, managers, subordinates, and VRA's agents, and customers.
- vii. Use the Authority's equipment, time, and resources judiciously and as authorized.
- viii. Support efforts that ensure a safe and healthy work environment.
- ix. Utilize all forms of leave and related employee benefits in the manner for which they are intended.
- x. Resolve work-related issues and disputes in a professional manner and through established corporate processes.
- xi. Meet or exceed established job performance expectations. Employees are expected to perform all duties with proficiency and due professional care. Incompetence or dereliction of duty will attract sanctions in accordance with applicable policies and procedures.
- xii. Make work-related decisions and/or take actions that are in the best interest of the Authority.
- xiii. Comply with the letter and spirit of all the Authority's policies and procedures.
- xiv. Report circumstances or concerns including any inappropriate (fraudulent, illegal, unethical) activities of other employees that may affect satisfactory work performance to management or appropriate authority.

- xv. Obtain approval from the appropriate authority prior to accepting an additional appointment outside the Authority.
- xvi. Obtain approval from supervisor prior to working overtime.
- xvii. Notify the Human Resources or Finance Departments immediately an overpayment or wrong payment is discovered on pay slip or paycheck.
- xviii. Work as a team to achieve Departmental and Corporate goals and objectives.
- xix. Conduct themselves at all times in a manner that supports the mission of the Authority and the performance of their duties.

10.0 CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Article 284 of the 1992 Constitution of Ghana says “a public officer shall not put himself in a position where his personal interest conflicts or is likely to conflict with the performance of the functions of his office”

The Authority's service conditions define Conflict of Interest as:

“where an employee at any level in the Authority makes, takes, or participates in taking, making or in any way attempts to use his official position to influence a corporate decision in which he knows or has reason to know he has a material, financial or any other interest.”

In other words, a conflict of interest situation exists when;

- i. An employee's/agent's private interest interferes in any way, or even appears to interfere, with the interests of the Authority.
- ii. An employee takes actions or has interests that make it difficult for him or her to perform his or her work in the Authority objectively and effectively.
- iii. An employee (or a member of his or her family) receives improper personal benefits as a result of misuse of his or her position in the Authority.

An Employee must avoid any relationship or activity that might impair, or even appear to impair, his/her ability to make objective and fair decisions when performing his/her job. Accordingly employees shall not involve themselves in any situation that could involve actual or potential conflict of interest.

An employee owes it a duty to advance the legitimate interests of VRA at all times. Staff must never use VRA property or information for personal gain or personally take any opportunity that is discovered through their position with the Authority.

10.1 ACTS OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Consequently, employees shall not:

1. Engage in any business venture which competes with the business of the Authority.
2. Own companies or act as agents for companies which execute contracts for the VRA for financial gains. Any employee with such interest shall declare the interest by completing the Declaration Form as provided in Appendix 1 of this Code and shall be excluded from taking any decision relating to the matter.
3. Own companies or act as agents for companies which deal with the VRA as suppliers. Any employee with such interest shall declare the interest by completing the Declaration Form as provided in Appendix 1 of this Code and shall be excluded from taking any decision relating to the matter.
4. Willfully make any purchases on behalf of the Authority at inflated market values or in quantities not justified by reasonable requirements for VRA operations.
5. Willfully make any purchases which will result in financial loss to the Authority.
6. Engage in any employment activity, paid or unpaid, regular or casual during office hours, without permission.
7. Induce customers and potential customers to pass on official jobs to them to execute as private jobs or accept offers from them to undertake jobs which should be executed by the Authority.
8. Be employed by, or act as an agent/consultant to, a competitor or potential competitor, supplier or contractor, regardless of the nature of the employment, while in the employment of VRA.
9. Have a competing personal interest, financial interest or potential gain in any VRA transaction.

Employees may not accept gifts, discounts, favors or services from a customer/potential customer, competitor or supplier.

10.2 Other Areas of Conflict of Interest

VRA is committed to competing solely on the merit of its products and services. Employees and agents should avoid any actions that create a perception that the Authority obtained favourable treatment from other entities or gave favourable treatment in exchange for business courtesies. To achieve this, employees may not:

- I. Give business courtesies including gifts, gratuities, meals, refreshments, entertainment or other benefits to persons or companies with whom VRA does or may do business.
- II. Give or accept business courtesies that constitute, or could reasonably be perceived as constituting, unfair business inducements or cause embarrassment or reflect negatively on VRA's reputation.

- III. Accept compensation, honoraria or any amount of money from entities with which the Authority does or may do business. Employees with questions about accepting business courtesies should talk to their Heads of Department, Area HR Managers or the Director, Human Resources.

10.3 Obligation to Declare Conflict of Interest

All Members of the Authority, the VRA Executive, Management, Staff and agents of the Authority have the direct obligation and responsibility to report their own, or any other, real or apparent interest or conflict of interest to the relevant authority, immediately they are appointed and/or when such conflicts are identified (see Appendix I for the Form for Declaration of Conflict of Interest).

Any employee who has private interest in any commercial or business transaction with the Authority which may be deemed to conflict with his/her official duties shall declare such interest by completing the Declaration Form as provided in Appendix 1 of this Code.

The relevant authority shall expressly grant permission or disallow the person declaring conflict of interest from performing or getting involved in performing the work/duty in question/conflict.

10.4 Accepting Business Courtesies

Usually business courtesies extended to employees in the course of duty are offered because of one's position and influence in an organisation. Staff should not be compelled to accept business courtesies. Employees may however accept unsolicited business courtesies such as nonmonetary gifts (e.g. corporate logo apparel or similar promotional items) from approved customers/suppliers that promote fruitful working relationships and goodwill with the organization/company that the Authority maintains or may establish a business relationship with. Such courtesies should be brought to the attention of the employee's Head of Department and appropriately registered.

Employees who represent the Authority in the award of contracts or contribute to the allocation of business or who participate in negotiation of contracts must avoid actions that create the appearance of favoritism or that may adversely affect the Authority's reputation for impartiality and fair dealing.

10.5 Offering Business Courtesies

Any employee who offers a business courtesy must ensure that it cannot reasonably be interpreted as an attempt to gain an unfair business advantage or otherwise reflect negatively upon the Authority. An employee may never use personal funds or resources to do something on behalf of VRA that cannot be done with the Authority's resources. Accounting for business courtesies must be done in accordance with approved VRA procedures.

The Authority may provide nonmonetary gifts (i.e., VRA logo apparel or similar promotional items) to approved customers/clients. Further, management may approve other courtesies, including meals, refreshments or entertainment of reasonable value provided that:

