



College of
**HEALTH AND CARE
PROFESSIONALS OF BC**

Board and Committee Code of Conduct

June 28, 2024



Territorial Acknowledgement

The offices of the College of Health and Care Professionals of British Columbia are located on the ancestral and unceded territories of the Coast Salish Peoples — specifically, the x^wməθk^wəyəm (Musqueam), S^kwxwú7mesh (Squamish) and səliwətal (Tseil-Waututh) Nations — the lək^wəŋən (Lekwungen) Peoples — represented today by the Songhees and x^wsepsəm (Esquimalt) Nations — and the WSÁNEĆ (Saanich) Peoples — including the BOŶÉĆEN (Pauquachin), STÁ,UTW (Tsawout), WJOŁEŁP (Tsartlip), and WŚÍŶEM (Tseycum) Nations.

As the College regulates the practice of multiple health-care professions across what is now commonly referred to as British Columbia, we acknowledge and honour all First Nations territories across these lands.

We are conscious of the privilege we hold that allows us to carry out our important work on these territories, where the First Peoples have maintained a special relationship with the lands and waters for thousands of years — since time immemorial — and where this relationship continues today.



Table of Contents

Purpose	4
Scope	4
Key Duties Grounding Standards of Conduct	4
Public duty	5
Fiduciary duty.....	5
Indigenous anti-racism and cultural safety and humility.....	6
Procedural fairness in statutory decision-making	7
Board member and committee member attributes	8
Governance and regulatory practices	8
Standards and Expectations of Conduct	9
Accountability and integrity	9
Active participation	10
Communicating with each other	10
Education and professional development	11
Anti-oppression, anti-racism, allyship, and cultural safety and humility.....	11
Personal safety and self-care.....	12
Feedback and evaluations	13
Conflict of Interest	13
Political Activity.....	15
Safeguarding Confidential Information.....	16
External Communication	16
Compliance and Reporting.....	17
Understanding the provisions of this Code	17
Reporting potential breaches of this Code.....	18
Breaches of this Code	18
Review	19
Related Documents	19
Definitions.....	20
Appendix 1: Confirmation of Understanding and Acceptance	24
Appendix 2: Declaration of Interests	25



Purpose

The College of Health and Care Professionals of British Columbia (the College) has a statutory duty to serve and protect the public as it regulates the practice of health professionals in British Columbia.¹ As leaders and decision-makers of the College, Board, committee and panel members must earn and preserve the confidence of the public by demonstrating a consistently high standard of ethical and professional conduct at all times.

This Code establishes and describes a common standard of conduct and set of expectations for all Board members and all committee members as they work to uphold the public protection mandate, support strong governance practices, and safeguard the integrity of the College.

Scope

This Code applies to all Board members and committee members at the College.

Board members and committee members must:

- read and familiarize themselves with the provisions of this Code (as amended from time to time);
- ask staff on the College's governance team for support if uncertain about any provision of this Code;
- sign the *Confirmation of Understanding and Acceptance* (see Appendix 1) of the *Board and Committee Code of Conduct* at the start of their term of office and annually throughout their term; and
- comply with this Code in the execution of their duties and obligations.

Key Duties Grounding Standards of Conduct

The provisions of this Code do not replace or override any legal or fiduciary duties and obligations placed on Board members and committee members by legislation or case law, but serve to clarify, build on these duties, and add additional expectations (e.g., Board members must still take and abide by the oath of office prescribed by the Minister of Health²).

¹ Health Professions Act, RSBC 1996, c 183, s 16(1)

² Health Professions Act, RSBC 1996, c 183, s 17.11, and Health Professions General Regulation, BC Reg 100/2020, sch. 1



The key duties on which these standards of conduct are founded are:

Public duty

The [Health Professions Act](#) (the Act) states it is the duty of the College at all times to serve and protect the public. This public duty requires that every individual involved in College decision-making understands and accepts that all decisions made will either inform or fulfil this public interest duty.

This duty requires decision-makers to have an ongoing awareness of how the practice of health professionals regulated by the College impacts the public and public safety. This includes knowing which communities within the broader public are more vulnerable or at a higher risk of not having access to or receiving safe and ethical care, what those specific risks might be, and where harm is being caused within the various practice environments.

It is part of the College's public duty to address Indigenous-specific racism within the health-care system because it has been proven that systemic racism exists and that those who are Indigenous, in particular Indigenous women, are at higher risk of receiving discriminatory and unsafe care. With the [Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act](#) (DRIPA) passing into law in November 2019, and government working to harmonize all provincial laws with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) pursuant to DRIPA (including the Act), it is incumbent upon the College to begin reviewing its regulatory practices through this legislative lens.

The Board and those committees with specific statutory decision-making responsibilities are a key mechanism through which the College's overarching duty to protect the public is fulfilled. Members of the Board and these statutory decision-making committees must take care to conduct themselves in a manner that avoids undermining the public trust in, or the credibility of, the College, or the ability of the Board and committees to make decisions in the public interest.

Fiduciary duty

While the College has a duty to the public, its Board and committee members have a special fiduciary duty of loyalty to the College and must act in the College's best interests, not only as this relates to the College's interest in upholding its duty to the public, but also its other statutory responsibilities. The Supreme Court of Canada has ruled that members are required to put the College's interests above their own, and to:

...act honestly and in good faith vis-à-vis the corporation. They must respect the trust and confidence that have been reposed in them to manage the assets of the corporation in pursuit of the realization of the objects of the corporation. They must avoid conflicts of interest with the corporation. They must avoid abusing their position to gain personal benefit. They must maintain the confidentiality of



information they acquire by virtue of their position. Directors and officers must serve the corporation selflessly, honestly and loyally...

Peoples Department Stores Inc. (Trustee of) v. Wise, 2004 SCC 68

All Board members and some but not all committee members have a fiduciary duty to the College as a result of their roles. This may depend, for example, on whether and how much authority over the deployment and management of the College's financial, human, and material resources is vested in them as committee members. Chairs and vice-chairs of committees are more likely to have such a duty as a result of the additional responsibilities they perform in those roles.

Committee and panel members who have questions about their specific situation should contact their committee chair, panel chair or staff designated to support their work.

Indigenous anti-racism and cultural safety and humility

Recognizing that systemic Indigenous-specific racism has long existed within the health-care system and accepting that health profession regulators play a role in ensuring that Indigenous people receive the same access to safe and ethical care as all others, all B.C. health profession regulators – in partnership with the First Nations Health Authority – are signatories to a declaration expressing their commitment to address and dismantle Indigenous-specific racism within the health-care system.³ As part of this declaration, each regulator is committed to encouraging and empowering staff, Board members, committee members and panel members to develop cultural humility and foster cultural safety.

This commitment was reinforced in July 2021, when the Registrars of nine of the legacy health profession regulators in B.C. issued a direct apology to Indigenous peoples, communities and registrants who have experienced and suffered from racism while engaging with regulatory organizations and with the health professionals they regulate.⁴ Commitments to action were outlined and a report describing progress on those actions was published in 2023.⁵ This amalgamated College chooses to inherit the commitments of its legacy colleges and to the work of integrating cultural safety and humility into its regulatory practices.

As leaders and decision-makers of the College, Board and committee members have a duty to:⁶

- learn about and understand the social, legislative, and political history of the Indigenous peoples of B.C., the ongoing impact of settler-colonialism in Canada and its enduring traumatic legacy, and the effects of widespread Indigenous-specific

³ [Declaration of Commitment to Cultural Safety and Humility](#), BC Health Regulators (March 2017)

⁴ [Indigenous Racism in B.C. Health Care: An Apology and Commitment to Action](#) (July 2021)

⁵ [Joint Apology and Commitment to Action: 2021-2023 Report](#) (September 2023)

⁶ [Board and Committee Composition Matrices](#)



- racism within the health-care system on the health outcomes of Indigenous peoples;
- participate in ongoing learning of the distinct and important Indigenous rights and Indigenous-specific approaches, protocols, and perspectives that inform discussion and decision-making;
- commit to substantial, sustainable change to become culturally safe spaces which act to name and address Indigenous-specific racism and discrimination; and
- support the College as it works to develop a culturally safe organization and standards for health professionals, through a consistent and continuous practice of cultural awareness, humility, and safety during discussions and decision-making.

Procedural fairness in statutory decision-making

Procedural fairness is a fundamental aspect of Canadian administrative law that regulates state agencies (such as the College, which exercises statutory authority delegated from the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia). It speaks to the duty of administrative decision-makers to ensure their decisions are made using a fair and open procedure, appropriate to the decision being made and its statutory, institutional, and social context, with an opportunity for those whose rights are impacted by the decision to put forward their views and evidence fully and have them considered by the decision-maker. The requirements of procedural fairness can vary widely case-by-case, depending on the statutory framework and the rights affected, but will often require written reasons and always require that decisions be made free from a reasonable apprehension of bias, by an impartial decision-maker.

Perception of bias is influenced by colonial history and structures; in considering fairness, regulators should seek to uphold the legal pluralism framework⁷ as set out in DRIPA. By doing so Board and committee members will demonstrate that they are meeting the expectation to move towards not only recognizing but upholding the inherent rights and title of First Nations whose territories encompass the land area colonially known as B.C., as well as inherent rights to health and wellness of Indigenous peoples (First Nations, Métis, and Inuit) from elsewhere in Canada who now live in B.C. A distinctions-based approach⁸ will be applied to statutory decision-making to ensure the First Nations legal orders of the territory are honoured and recognized before considering approaches and teachings from other Indigenous groups. The College will ensure access to an Indigenous consultant who understands the approach and the evolving relationships between First Nations (title and rights holders), other First Nations peoples, Métis and Inuit peoples. A First Nations consultant who has real connection to the First Nations title and rights holders will provide the best perspective about how this approach should be implemented to ensure the application of rights of Indigenous peoples is not at the expense of the original peoples of the territory.

⁷ British Columbia Law Institute (2023) Legal Pluralism in Canada (Primer 3)
<https://www.bcli.org/wp-content/uploads/PRIMER-3-Legal-Pluralism-in-Canada.pdf>

⁸ Government of British Columbia (2023). Distinctions-Based Approach Primer.
https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/british-columbians-our-governments/indigenous-people/aboriginal-peoples-documents/distinctions_based_approach_primer.pdf



As some of the statutory decisions made by the Board or committees will have a significant impact on the lives of College registrants, such decisions may be held to a high standard of procedural fairness if and when scrutinized by the courts.

Board and committee members have a duty to be aware of these fundamental principles when exercising their powers and performing their duties, especially the need to make decisions that are impartial, fair, made within a reasonable time considering the circumstances, and to provide clear rationales for the decisions made. The interpretation of “within a reasonable time” or timeliness should consider the difference in expectations held by Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. Colonially, timeliness refers to the quickest possible arrival of an outcome; speed is a measure of success and quality. For many Indigenous peoples and communities, the concept of timeliness is linked with the respect necessary to make meaningful room for culturally relevant communications, protocols, and relationship and trust building. Timeliness means taking the time to communicate safely.

Board member and committee member attributes

In its Board and committee composition matrices, the Board has approved a set of attributes that all Board and committee members are expected to possess, cultivate, and actively integrate into their personal conduct and work while serving with the College. Members were selected because they bring or are willing to learn the skills and knowledge necessary to govern the organization. Members were also selected because they added to the collective needs of the Board or committee by holding specific personal and professional experience and bringing diverse backgrounds and perspectives. Over time, the College will establish mechanisms that prioritize new members who have cultural safety, humility, and anti-racism knowledge, skills, and capacity.

Each member’s commitment to contributing individually and collectively to the work of their respective group ensures that they will fulfil their duties and obligations:

- as leaders and decision-makers, by contributing to a strong, safe and supportive organizational culture focused on public safety; and
- as ambassadors, by fostering public trust in the processes applied and decisions reached.

Governance and regulatory practices

The expectations within this Code of Conduct are drawn from diverse sources. Board and committee members have a duty to conduct themselves according to these practices. The College’s governance and regulatory practices are built on current regulatory and governance theory, on evidence informed practices, and on Indigenous wise practices.



- Current regulatory and governance theory has been developed through research and experience (consistent use, trial, and error) and has been shown by organizations worldwide to work successfully and minimize outdated practices.
- Wise practices are effective and culturally appropriate actions which contribute significantly to the development of sustainable and equitable conditions. In applying these practices, optimal results for Indigenous Peoples are achieved.

Combining and giving equitable space and weight to the above, even when a practice is not familiar to non-Indigenous Board and committee members, results in wise practices (effective and culturally appropriate actions, tools, principles and decisions) being applied to colonial processes. These processes manage role clarity, accountability and transparency of decisions made in the public interest, Board member and committee member effectiveness, evaluation, data collection and analysis, and other regulatory activities.⁹ In doing so, the College is taking steps towards transforming regulatory processes in response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action, the In Plain Sight Report recommendations, DRIPA and the Safe Spaces Playbook.

Standards and Expectations of Conduct

The standards and expectations of conduct established below are the minimum requirements for Board members, committee members and panel members to meet their duties. As no Code of Conduct can address every situation that a Board, committee or panel member may encounter, all members remain responsible for exercising good judgment and, when uncertain of how to proceed, obtaining guidance regarding appropriate conduct in the circumstances.

Accountability and integrity

Board members, committee members and panel members are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions. They must:

- support the statutory duties and objects set out in the Act and the vision, principles, direction, and goals of the College as they are developed and evolve;
- be honest in their dealings with the College, and with others on behalf of the College;
- act ethically, and not commit or condone an illegal or unethical act, nor instruct another person to do so, in relation to any College business;
- admit to mistakes and seek to rectify potentially adverse consequences in a timely way; and
- pay due care and attention to the College's business, its pledge to address Indigenous-specific racism, and its commitments to support and contribute to improving the health-care system.

⁹ HealthCareCAN (2018). Bringing reconciliation to healthcare in Canada: Wise practices for healthcare leaders. https://www.healthcarecan.ca/wp-content/themes/camyno/assets/document/Reports/2018/HCC/EN/TRCC_EN.pdf



Active participation

Board members, committee members and panel members are accountable for actively participating in the work of the Board or their committee or panel. They must:

- attend scheduled meetings;
- obtain leave from the Board chair, committee chair or panel chair for extended absences as soon as is practicable;
- be prepared for meetings by reading all pre-circulated materials;
- exercise skill and diligence in their work;
- participate in Board, committee or panel discussions and decision-making;
- apply judgment carefully, making decisions that are transparent, objective, impartial, and fair, and based on an analysis of all available and relevant data;
- seek assistance from colleagues or staff to clarify any aspect of their work, role, or responsibilities on which they are confused or uncertain;
- not make prior commitments to vote in any given way on matters that may arise in future; and
- respect the finality of decisions made at any Board, committee or panel meetings.

Communicating with each other

Board members, committee members and panel members are expected to engage in collaborative and robust discussions that recognize and respect the individuality and personal values of their colleagues and staff. They must:

- ensure communication at meetings is clear, respectful, and courteous;
- engage in the practice of active listening by not interrupting conversations or holding side conversations during Board, committee or panel discussions;
- work collaboratively to create a culturally safe space, brave conversation space, and seek consensus, by considering the opinions of others, striving for integration of viewpoints, building on ideas, and engaging in open and honest discussion and debate;
- be respectful of all viewpoints that may be expressed in good faith by their colleagues in the course of Board, committee or panel deliberations; and
- be aware of their personal power, privilege, and spheres of influence so as to not exercise, or seek to exercise, individual authority or influence over other members, especially outside of meetings, which might have the effect of limiting open discussion, creating factions, or oppressing those from marginalized or racialized populations.



Education and professional development

Board members, committee members and panel members are expected to demonstrate an earnest, legitimate, and ongoing commitment to acquire the experience and knowledge necessary to make them as effective as possible in their roles. They must:

- familiarize themselves with the principles of key legislation and governing documents:
 - for Board, committee and panel members, this includes the Act and its regulations, relevant Indigenous law and traditions, and the bylaws;
 - for committee and panel members, this also includes any legislation directly relevant to the work of their committee or panel;
- familiarize themselves with all relevant policies:
 - for Board members, this includes all policies established by the Board;
 - for committee and panel members, this includes all policies established by the committee or panel of which they are a member in addition to any relevant Board policies;
- complete mandatory orientation to the commitment and obligations of the College to Indigenous cultural safety, cultural humility, and Indigenous-specific anti-racism;
- commit to ongoing individual self-reflective practice and ongoing education about Indigenous cultural safety, cultural humility, and Indigenous-specific anti-racism using a consistent and structured unlearning plan to support meaningful change;
- participate in all other educational or learning opportunities provided or hosted by the College;
- identify developmental or educational needs for the Board, its committees, their panels, or the College; and
- recognize the limits of the education offered by the Board, committees, panels and College, taking steps when needed to participate in self-directed learning to expand awareness and knowledge of subjects that may support their individual contribution to discussions and decision-making.

Anti-oppression, anti-racism, allyship, and cultural safety and humility

Board members, committee members and panel members are expected to be able to hold themselves and others accountable for creating safe and inclusive spaces in which brave conversations about racism, power, bias, and privilege can occur within the context of their work. They must:

- promote a culturally safe environment, recognizing and supporting inclusiveness and diversity of all peoples;
- encourage and empower initiatives to develop cultural safety and foster an ongoing practice of cultural humility;
- foster a “speak up” culture where members openly and honestly communicate concerns, issues, and potential barriers to cultural humility and safety;



- take a believing stance when Indigenous Board, committee and panel members raise concern or comment;
- commit to mounting a timely and active response when an issue of Indigenous-specific racism is raised, as opposed to inaction when concerns are raised (this may require deviation from existing protocols, as well as time and resources);
- honour a culturally safe process to raise “harm alarms” and colonial knots to appropriate levels especially when raised by Indigenous people who are present;¹⁰
- be aware of and responsive to the impact of bias, the perception of bias, language used, and words chosen, to limit unintended harm to others;
- be aware of and understand the nature of privilege to be able to effectively engage in discussions with, or pertaining to, individuals or groups who have not had or do not have the same access to benefits or advantages;
- support diversity and gender equity as paths to changing behaviour, breaking down barriers, building social trust, and promoting equity for historically marginalized or oppressed groups;
- proactively speak up to acknowledge instances or systems of racism, listening to and supporting colleagues do the same, so that concerns are addressed by everyone and not only those living with or experiencing racial oppression or harm;
- learn and understand what it means to be anti-racist and an ally, and how to actively model this behaviour;
- take a zero-tolerance approach to any display of Indigenous-specific racism, discrimination, oppression, abuse of power, ridicule, vulgarity, belittlement, or impropriety (including microaggressions or unwelcome communication that may cause harm, embarrassment, offence, or humiliation), made privately or otherwise;
- respect and protect the privacy and personal information or stories that may be shared by their colleagues or other individuals during meetings or gatherings; and
- recognize where they might benefit from additional information or education on subjects such as anti-racism, allyship, intersectional discrimination, bias, and cultural safety and humility, and take steps to engage in group or personal learning beyond that directed by the Board or its committees and panels.

Personal safety and self-care

Board members, committee members and panel members are expected to perform their duties and responsibilities without compromising or causing harm to themselves or others. They must:

- not engage in any College business while impaired by alcohol or drugs;
- self-monitor and guard themselves from becoming impaired by
 - a physical or mental ailment,
 - emotional disturbance, or

¹⁰ Jongbloed, K., Hendry, J., Behn Smith, D., and Gallagher K^wunuhmen, J. (2023). Towards untying colonial knots in Canadian health systems: A net metaphor for settler-colonialism. *Healthcare Management Forum* 36(4), 228-234. <https://doi.org/10.1177/08404704231168843>



- an addiction, such as to alcohol or drugs,
- to the extent that their ability to perform their Board, committee or panel duties and responsibilities to the required standard is materially compromised.
- should their ability to perform their Board, committee or panel duties and responsibilities be materially compromised, refrain from participating in College business and take steps to seek appropriate treatment and other assistance;
- work to ensure any Board, committee or panel forum is free from discrimination on any basis that might constitute a violation of human rights legislation;
- support an environment for Board members, committee members, panel members, staff, registrants, and external partners that is culturally safe and free from microaggressions, bullying, harassment, unwelcome sexual attention, or physical contact, psychological, verbal or physical abuse, threats, oppression, or violence;
- establish and respect personal boundaries and engage in consent-based interactions; and
- ensure there is no retaliation or reprisal by the College or anyone acting on its behalf against any person who in good faith raises an example of violation of this Code.

Feedback and evaluations

Evaluation and accountability mechanisms will be created in part through relationships with Indigenous partners to ensure the College is going in the right direction and milestones are reached. Board members, committee members and panel members are expected to participate in regular evaluations, assessments, or surveys. As meaningful change can only occur if accurate and representative data is collected, members must:

- be familiar with evaluation frameworks and strive to meet individual and collective performance expectations;
- respond promptly to College communications that invite or require a response;
- respond to and participate in individual and collective performance evaluations with a goal to address gaps or to inform meaningful change; and
- participate in other survey or review processes whenever called upon to do so.

Conflict of Interest

A conflict of interest arises when a Board member, committee member or panel member has a personal interest, private interest, or owes a duty to another organization, individual or entity that conflicts with their duties as a Board, committee or panel member of the College. A conflict of interest also exists if a reasonable person would believe there is a realistic possibility that a Board, committee or panel member's personal or private interest or outside duty has, or may have, an improper influence on their decisions or actions as a member.

A conflict of interest may be direct, indirect, personal, professional, financial, or non-financial. A conflict of interest can arise from many relationships, including but not limited to the following:



- directorships or other employment with, or interests in, business enterprises, organizations or professional practices that have competing interests with the College;
- share ownership or debt holding;
- beneficial interests in trusts;
- existing professional or personal associations with the College or with staff;
- professional or personal associations or relationships with other organizations or groups;
- family or private social relationships.

Examples of situations in which a conflict of interest is presumed to arise include, but are not limited to, a member:

- using confidential information obtained in their capacity as a Board, committee or panel member for personal gain or for the gain of others;
- being a party to, or otherwise voluntarily taking steps to support, any legal proceeding against the College or the College's interests; or
- soliciting or accepting any benefits or gifts, including but not limited to cash, securities or commissions, other property, preferential loan terms, opportunities for personal or financial gain, or invitations to attend events or functions, that could influence, or appear to influence, Board, committee or panel decisions in any person's favour.

A Board, committee or panel member may accept gifts of nominal value that would bring the College into disrepute if made public. Members may accept gifts above nominal value that carry cultural significance so long as receipt of the gift does not result in a sense of obligation to offer preferential treatment to the sender. Gifts that could result in a sense of obligation must be returned.

A conflict of interest may also arise in other circumstances, such as when a Board, committee or panel member participates in registration, quality assurance, inquiry, or discipline discussions about a registrant or applicant who is well known to the member, and about whom they may have relevant and specific knowledge.

Board, committee and panel members have a duty to declare any actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest, including any conflicts that may materialize at any time during their term of office. They must take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest and the interests of the College by:

- promptly disclosing the interest, either in or outside of meetings, taking time to:
 - outline the specific nature of the conflict of interest,
 - provide the rationale for why they believe their interests are or may be conflicted, and
 - seek advice on how best to manage the conflict;



- if so determined, not taking part in any discussion or voting on the matter;
- ensuring they take no action to influence voting on the matter;
- leaving the meeting while the matter is being considered, if that portion of the meeting is closed or in camera; and
- depending on the nature and extent of the conflict, resigning from the Board, committee or panel.

Instead of addressing a conflict of interest during a meeting, Board, committee or panel members may choose to have an earlier or later private discussion with the Board chair, the committee chair, the panel chair, or the Registrar or other staff, if:

- it is unclear whether a conflict of interest exists;
- there are cultural nuances to consider;
- disclosing a conflict of interest during a meeting may influence the discussion or vote;
- the matter is sensitive or confidential; or
- there are broader concerns that must be reviewed.

If a conflict of interest is discovered after a decision has been made, the Board, committee or panel member must immediately disclose the nature of the conflict to the Board chair, committee chair, panel chair, or Registrar, as appropriate, who may recall the Board, committee or panel to address the issue.

Annually, or more frequently if any significant changes occur, Board and committee members will be required to review, complete and sign a [Declaration of Interests](#) (see Appendix 2), to assist members to self-reflect and identify positions or relationships that could influence their attitude and lead to an actual or perceived conflict.

Political Activity

This section does not apply in respect of Board elections.

Board, committee and panel members may participate in political activities including membership in a political party, supporting a candidate for elected office, or seeking elected office. However, such political activities must be clearly separated from activities related to their roles as Board, committee or panel members.

If engaging in political activities, Board members, committee and panel members must remain impartial and retain the perception of impartiality in relation to their duties and responsibilities to the College. Board, committee and panel members must not engage in political activities while engaged in College business or use College facilities, equipment, or resources in support of political activities.

Partisan politics are not to be introduced into the Board, committee, or panel working environments; however, informal private discussions among Board, committee and panel members are acceptable. Political discussions with staff are discouraged.



Safeguarding Confidential Information

Board, committee and panel members have a duty to maintain the confidentiality of information they receive in those capacities, except where authorized or required by law to disclose information or where disclosure is approved by the Board. This confidential information includes that which is not ordinarily available to the public, such as:

- personal information about registrants, applicants, complainants or witnesses, or staff;
- information about Board, committee, and panel decisions and decision-making processes; and
- business, financial, legal, and technical information proprietary to the College and its work.

Board members, committee members and panel members must:

- access only that information relevant to the Board, committee, or panel's work;
- take reasonable care to discuss or share information they receive as members with only those individuals authorized to receive it;
- keep secure all working documents for Board, committee and panel meetings, including notes taken to prepare for and during meetings;
- ensure that no deliberations, decisions, resolutions or reports from in camera meetings are discussed or disclosed unless the Board approves otherwise;
- take appropriate precautions to safeguard Board, committee or panel information against loss, damage, theft, inappropriate access, or misuse;
- protect information in public places by avoiding open discussions and limiting use of electronic communication devices when reading or reviewing Board, committee or panel material;
- dispose of confidential information in accordance with College policy; and
- adhere to all other obligations of confidentiality as established by the Act, the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, the bylaws, and College policies as they relate to the management, security, and privacy of information, and use of social media.

The obligations under this section continue to apply after a Board member, committee member or panel member's term of office has ended.

External Communication

Subject to any applicable bylaws, Board, committee and panel members must abide by College policies approved by the Board regarding external communication with the public, external stakeholders and the media, including, without limitation, any policy on official College spokespersons that may be approved by the Board from time to time.



If approached by the media or any other individual, group, or organization to provide opinions or comments pertaining to the work or operations of the College, members must forward any enquiry immediately to the Registrar, who will address or forward the enquiry as appropriate.

In addition to any applicable provisions contained in the bylaws and policies, members must:

- not make representations on behalf of the Board, its committees, its panels or the College, unless expressly authorized by the Board to do so;
- not engage in activities, speak publicly or online on matters where their words or actions might be perceived as an official act or representation of the College, unless expressly authorized by the Board to do so;
- not use their position with the College to lend weight to the public expression of their personal opinions;
- respect and support the finality of decisions made by the Board, committees and panels in their communications with the public as a member; and
- recognize the scope of their authority and not overstep into the domain of the Registrar as may relate to engaging with staff, other than to further their knowledge of matters before the Board, committee or panel, or governance-related matters.

Compliance and Reporting

In signing the declaration appended to this Code, all Board, committee and panel members are committing to comply fully with the provisions of this Code.

Understanding the provisions of this Code

Where a Board, committee or panel member is uncertain of their duties or any aspect of this Code, even if seemingly minor in nature, they are encouraged to seek clarification or discuss their concerns with the Board chair, their committee chair, their panel chair or staff designated to support their work, such as the Registrar or staff on the College's governance team.

In the event of a breach of this Code, failure to seek clarification when it would have been reasonable to do so may be a factor considered by the Board when deciding to take an action referred to below (see [Reporting potential breaches of this Code](#)).



Reporting potential breaches of this Code

If a Board, committee or panel member:

- witnesses another Board, committee or panel member supporting or committing an illegal or unethical act in relation to any College business;
- becomes aware that another Board, committee or panel member has potentially violated the Act or its regulations, or the bylaws;
- feels unduly pressured to make a decision or vote against their own conscience or will during Board, committee or panel meetings;
- witnesses or experiences inappropriate or unsafe behaviour (including but not limited to microaggressions, bullying, abuse, racism, oppression, or discrimination);
- fears for their safety when working with the Board, their committee or their panel; or
- has any other information that might indicate a serious breach of this Code,

they must bring the matter to the attention of any one of the following individuals: the Board chair; their committee or panel chair; the Registrar; their committee or panel liaison; or any staff member on the College's governance team, describing the specific nature of the breach.

Breaches of this Code

The Board is responsible for reviewing breaches of this Code. Subject to the Act and any applicable bylaws, if a Board, committee or panel member is found by the Board to have breached this Code, the Board may do one or more of the following:

- decide to take no further action;
- request that the member take appropriate corrective action, generally or as may be specified by the Board;
- ask the member to resign from office;
- remove the member from office in accordance with the Act or bylaws; or
- take any other action the Board considers necessary or appropriate in the circumstances.

If an appointed Board member is found to have breached this Code and as a consequence the Board takes one or more of the actions listed above, the Board may submit a written report to the Minister, summarizing the circumstances of the breach and setting out the Board's rationale for the action taken.



Review

The Board will review and re-approve this Code at least every two years, or more frequently if necessary, with any amendments the Board considers necessary or appropriate to ensure its provisions remain effective and relevant to the business of the College.

Related Documents

- B.C. Cultural Safety and Humility Standard for Health Organizations (2020)
- [B.C. Human Rights Code](#)
- CHCPBC Board and Committee Composition Matrices
- Bylaws
- [Declaration of Commitment to Cultural Safety and Humility](#), B.C. Health Regulators (March 2017)
- Indigenous Cultural Safety, Humility and Anti-Racism Practice Standard (2022)
- Indigenous Racism in B.C. Health Care: An Apology and Commitment to Action (July 2021)
- Joint Apology and Commitment to Action: 2021-2023 Report (Sept 2023)
- CHCPBC Guidelines - Board Meetings
- [Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act](#)
- [Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act](#)
- [Health Professions Act](#)
- [Health Professions General Regulation](#)
- Regulations under the Act
- Safe Spaces Playbook
- [United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#)

Reviewed by the Board on:		2024-06-25	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Reviewed by the Registrar/ Deputy Registrar on:		Select date	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A
Date Approved 2024-06-25	Approved By <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Board		
Date Effective 2024-06-28	Revision history	Last Updated	2024-06-28
Next Review 2026-06-28		Previous Update	
Responsible (role)	Executive Director, Strategy, Governance and Social Accountability		



Definitions

In this Code:

Act means, unless the context requires otherwise, the *Health Professions Act*.

Anti-racism means the practice of actively identifying, challenging, preventing, eliminating, and changing the values, structures, policies, programs, practices, and behaviours that perpetuate racism. It is more than being non-racist – it is acting to create conditions of greater inclusion, equality, and justice.

Bias means a favourable or unfavourable predetermined inclination, preference, tendency, or perspective (“perception of bias” means the belief of others that bias will occur or has occurred).

Board means the Board for the College under section 17(1) of the Act.

Board chair means the Board chair who is elected under Bylaw 2.4.

Board vice-chair means the Board vice-chair who is elected under Bylaw 2.5.

Board election means an election of registrants to the Board under section 17(3)(a) of the Act.

Board member means an appointed Board member or an elected Board member, as each of those terms is defined in the bylaws.

Brave conversation means group discussions which encourage the open sharing of opinions and concerns that may cause significant initial discomfort to those involved in conversation but must take place if justice and equity is to be achieved.

Bylaws means the bylaws for the College made under the Act.

Code means this Board and Committee Code of Conduct.

College or CHCPBC means the College of Health and Care Professionals of British Columbia.

Colonial knot refers to a metaphor used to describe settler-colonialism as a net full of knots that entangles Indigenous Peoples and prevents them from exerting sovereignty and self-determination. The net can also depict Indigenous resistance and the work of “untying colonial knots” within our own spheres of influence can contribute to dismantling the settler-colonial net and result in a sacred restoration of Indigenous Peoples’ ability to be in right relations with their lands and waters.

Colonialism is where groups or countries partially or fully steal land and resources from Indigenous peoples, occupy the land, and exploit the land and resources for economic



purposes. Following the acquisition of land and resources, colonizers establish laws and processes that continuously violate the human rights of the Indigenous peoples and force them to conform to the newly established laws and processes of the colonial state.

Committee means a committee established in the bylaws.

Committee member means an individual who is appointed to (a) a committee, or (b) an ad hoc working group or task force as may be formed by the Board or Registrar from time to time, if the Board or Registrar directs that this Code applies to members of the working group or task force.

Cultural humility is a process of self-reflection and introspection to understand personal and systemic biases and to develop and maintain respectful processes and relationships based on mutual trust. Cultural humility involves humbly acknowledging oneself as a learner when it comes to understanding another's experience.

Cultural safety is an outcome based on respectful engagement that recognizes and strives to address power imbalances inherent in the health-care system. It results in an environment free of racism and discrimination, where people feel safe when receiving health-care.

Discrimination means targeting an individual or group of people for negative treatment because of specific characteristics such as race, religion, gender, disability, or other protected characteristics as defined by the B.C. Human Rights Code. Discrimination can occur at an individual, organizational, or societal level. It occurs when a particular social group is denied access to goods, resources, and services, either through action or inaction.

Diversity refers to individual and unique human differences, dimensions, qualities, and characteristics such as age, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, physical abilities, race, etc.

Equity is a term that describes fairness and justice in outcomes, recognizing diversity and disadvantages, and directing resources and services towards those most in need to ensure equal outcomes for all.

First Nations is the preferred terminology for the Indigenous peoples and their descendants, who self-identify as neither Métis nor Inuit.

Health-care system means the organizations, institutions (including governments), resources, and people whose primary purpose is to improve health.

Impartiality is the quality of being fair, unbiased, and unprejudiced; (perception of impartiality means to be viewed by others as being fair and unbiased).

Indigenous refers to the first peoples who identify as First Nations, Métis, or Inuit.



Indigenous-specific racism means the ongoing, systemic, and race-based discrimination experienced by the First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples and communities that maintains unequal treatment rooted in colonial practices and policies.

Intersectional discrimination happens when two or multiple grounds of discrimination operate simultaneously.

Microaggression means brief and commonplace verbal, behavioural, or environmental indignities (whether indirect, subtle, intentional, or unintentional) that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative racial slights and insults toward people of colour.

Oppression means the unjust abuse of power that prevents individuals from having access to opportunities, freedoms, or justice.

Panel means a panel established in the bylaws.

Panel member means an individual who is appointed to a panel.

Personal information has the same meaning as in Schedule 1 of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

Power refers to social mechanisms such as wealth, citizenship, language, patriarchy, ableism, heterosexism, whiteness, or education that permit some individuals greater access to and control over resources than others.

Privilege is the unearned (and often unconsidered) cultural, legal, social, and institutional rights, advantages, favours, or benefits afforded to an individual based on their social group membership.

Racism is the belief that a group of people are inferior based on the colour of their skin, their culture, or spirituality.

Reasonable refers to the common law principle of a hypothetical individual who approaches any situation with an average degree of care, caution, skill, and judgment and takes action having drawn the same conclusions under the same circumstances or having had knowledge of the same facts.

Registrar means the Registrar who is appointed under section 21(1) of the Act for the College.

Safe refers to a sense of being empowered to be authentically oneself because there is protection from reprisal, harm, or danger, even in spaces that are uncomfortable due to the nature of the environment, the subject matter under discussion, or where beliefs, knowledge, or practices are being exposed or challenged.

Staff means the employees, contractors, assessors, and inspectors of the College.



Systemic racism is a form of racism that is embedded into societal structures, institutions, or systems (e.g. practices, policies, or legislation) and results in perpetuating inequities such as profiling, stereotyping, social exclusion, and discrimination for racial groups.

United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 2007. This is a universal framework of minimum standards for the survival, dignity, and well-being of the Indigenous peoples of the world and elaborates on existing human rights standards and fundamental freedoms as they apply to the specific situation of Indigenous peoples.



Appendix 1: Confirmation of Understanding and Acceptance

Confirmation of understanding and acceptance of the Board and Committee Code of Conduct

This form must be completed by all College Board and committee members upon appointment to the Board or a committee, and on an annual basis.

By signing this Statement, you accept and agree to abide by the *Board and Committee Code of Conduct* and you understand that should you be found to have contravened the Code of Conduct:

- If you are a Board member, the Board may recommend to the Minister that you be removed from office.
- If you are a committee member, the Board may remove you from office.

Name _____

Position with the College _____

Signature _____

Date _____



Appendix 2: Declaration of Interests

Declaration of Interests

Good governance requires a solid understanding of conflicts of interest (real or perceived). As a regulator, it is important to identify and manage conflicts.

A decision-maker needs to be in a position to participate objectively.

- An actual conflict can occur when an individual's own personal interest in the outcome of a situation can influence, impair or prevent that person from pursuing an objective, fair and principled approach to decision-making.
- A conflict of interest exists when an individual or their friend, family member, business associate, partnership or corporation could benefit from the result or consequences of that person's participation in a decision made on behalf of the College.
- The possibility that others will perceive that an individual has a conflict in a given situation is also significant. This can arise when others could perceive that the decision-maker would be unable to make an objective decision about an issue, quite apart from whether the decision-maker believes this perception to be true. Perceptions of conflicts are as important to public confidence as actual conflicts.

College Board and committee members and staff can use this declaration of interests to identify and declare their personal interests or connections with others in positions of influence that could result in actual or perceived conflicts.

The declaration of interests assists with self-reflection and the identification of positions or relationships that could influence a person's attitude resulting in an actual or perceived conflict.

Please review the *Board and Committee Code of Conduct* section titled "Conflict of Interest" and use the table on the next page to provide details as they relate to you and to any other connected person. A connected person could be a spouse, partner, family member or anyone with whom you have a direct financial relationship such as a business partner, employer or employee.

Declaring an interest is only the first step. If you have declared an interest that is determined to be a real or perceived conflict, you must remove yourself from related discussions and decision-making on behalf of the College.



Name _____

Position with the College _____

Relationship	Details relating to you	Details relating to a connected person
<p>1 Paid employment (or previous employment if applicable)</p> <p><i>Give details of all paid employment including full/part time, consultancies, contract and paid directorships.</i></p>		
<p>2 Ownership of any business or consultancy</p> <p><i>Include any relevant details relating to a connected person.</i></p>		
<p>3 Appointments, offices, and memberships of other bodies, voluntary or otherwise</p> <p><i>Individuals are free to engage in political activities or to maintain associations with professional organizations. A</i></p>		



Relationship	Details relating to you	Details relating to a connected person
<p><i>declaration of these positions give assurance that there is no conflict with the College's statutory function.</i></p> <p><i>Specifically include any involvement with professional associations/groups. But also:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>directorships</i> • <i>local authority membership</i> • <i>tribunals</i> • <i>special interest groups</i> • <i>political groups, etc.</i> 		
<p>4 Close personal ties with other College advisors, Board/Committee members, or staff</p> <p><i>Individuals who have close ties with other decision-makers may be perceived as having an undue influence on decisions.</i></p>		
<p>5 Any other declarations</p> <p><i>Include any information that may be relevant such as:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>court of legal findings or published opinions</i> • <i>whether you have been</i> 		



Relationship	Details relating to you	Details relating to a connected person
<i>investigated or disciplined by any professional association or body.</i>		