

# Code of Conduct for Members of National Council, National Committees, Commodity Sections & Project Teams

## Mission

As a member of the National Council/National Committee\* of the Irish Farmers' Association, I will support the Association's mission to advance and protect the interests of our members, farmers and rural communities, and actively promote it.

## Organisational Values

In my role as Council/Committee member, I promise to abide by the fundamental values that underpin all the activities of our Association.

- **Accountability:** Everything IFA does will be able to stand the test of scrutiny by our members, and the promotion and maintenance of confidence and trust. IFA will also be credible to the members of the public, the media, other stakeholders and the regulatory authorities.
- **Integrity and Honesty:** These will be the hallmarks of all conduct within IFA, when dealing with fellow Council/Committee members and staff, and with voluntary officers and members at all levels. IFA is committed to fairness in all business dealings and with external individuals and agencies.
- **Transparency:** The IFA will strive to promote an atmosphere of openness throughout the organisation in order to engender confidence among our members, staff, members of the public and regulators.

In addition to the above, I agree to the following:

## Loyalty

I acknowledge my responsibility and duty of loyalty to the Association.

## Obligations

- I will abide by the IFA Constitution and Rules, and organisational policies and procedures.
- The Council will ensure there are appropriate controls over the use of Association resources.
- The Council will ensure all regulatory and statutory obligations imposed on the Association are fulfilled.

## Conflicts of Interest

- I will always act in the best interests of the Association.
- I will declare to the Council/Committee any conflict of interest or any such circumstance as may be viewed by others as potentially conflicting with the mission and business of the Association as soon as it arises.
- I will respect the decisions of the Council/Committee and do as it requires regarding conflicts or potential conflicts of interest.

## Guardian of the Association's reputation

- When I am asked to represent the Association, any comments I make will reflect current IFA policy even if I do not agree with it.
- When speaking as a private citizen, I will aim to uphold the reputation of the Association and its officers and staff.
- I will take an active interest in the Association's public image.

## **Personal Gain**

- I will not personally gain from my role as a Council/Committee member nor will I permit others to do so as a result of my actions or negligence.
- I will claim expenses only as appropriate to business needs. I will document expenses and seek reimbursement according to agreed procedure.
- I will not accept donations, gifts or hospitality without the guidance of the President or Association Secretary/Committee Chairman or Executive Secretary.
- I will use IFA resources responsibly, when authorised in accordance with procedure.

## **At Council/Committee meetings**

- I will respect the principles of good governance in all my actions and live up to the trust placed in me by IFA.
- I will strive to attend all Council/Committee meetings.
- I will abide by Council/Committee procedures and practice.
- I will strive to be prepared for meetings in order to contribute my opinions during meetings, while avoiding unnecessary repetition.
- I will respect the authority of the President/Committee Chairman.
- I will avoid personalised comments at meetings, keep comments focussed on policy and performance, and maintain a respectful attitude to the opinions of others and their right to speak without interruption.

## **Reporting**

I acknowledge my responsibility to report back within the structure of the Association on relevant matters discussed and decisions taken.

## **Collective responsibility**

I will support collective decisions of the Council/Committee and accept a majority vote.

## **Confidentiality & Data Protection**

- I will respect the confidentiality of sensitive information, including commercially sensitive information, personal information and any information received in confidence, and will not release or disclose such information.
- I acknowledge my responsibilities under Data Protection legislation in regard to the treatment of personal information.

## **Enhancing governance**

- I will participate in appropriate induction, training and development activities for Council/Committee members.
- I will support the President/Committee Chairman in his leadership role and the Director General/Executive Secretary in his executive role.
- I acknowledge the responsibility of the Association Secretary for advising and supporting the President and the Council on all matters relating to governance. If I have any concerns about governance matters in the Association, I will raise them directly with the Association Secretary or President/Executive Secretary or Committee Chairman, in confidence where appropriate.

## **Staff**

- I will strive for a positive and constructive working relationship with staff, which is necessary for the effectiveness of IFA, always respecting the appropriate boundaries between staff and voluntary members.
- I acknowledge that the Director General is responsible, in consultation with the President and Deputy President, for all staff matters. I will therefore take up any issues concerning staff directly and privately with the Director General or as directed by him.
- I recognise the Council's responsibility to have due regard to the interests of employees and to ensure IFA's compliance with all employment legislation.

## **IFA Elections**

I recognise that all staff are required to remain non-aligned in IFA election campaigns and will not seek support from staff.

## **Party politics**

I will not seek a nomination for political office and will not be active in party politics, ie hold any position in a party political or independent political organisation at the level of county officer or higher.

## **Protected disclosure ('Whistleblowing')**

I acknowledge IFA's commitment to protected disclosure, which allows for the disclosure of information that in the reasonable belief of the person disclosing it tends to show serious wrongdoing (whistleblowing), so that the matter can be raised without fear of reprisal. The channel for such disclosures is to the Chairman of the Audit Committee.

## **Leaving Council/Committee**

- I understand that any substantial breach of this code may result in my suspension or removal from the Council/Committee under IFA rules.
- Should I wish to resign, I will inform the President/Chairman in writing, stating my reasons for resigning from the Council/Committee.
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**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## **National Council member of the Irish Farmers' Association**

*\*All references in this Code to Committees shall apply to the Committee/governing body of all Commodity Sections and to all Project Teams.*