

RACQUETBALL ASSOCIATION OF IRELAND

CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY

This policy applies to members of the Board of Directors, Sub-Committees, Provincial Branches, volunteers and employees of Racquetball Association of Ireland.

What is a 'Conflict of Interest'

A Conflict of Interest occurs when a person has a role or position within an organisation that requires them to make decisions in the best interest of the organisation, but they also have a competing private or personal interest which may affect their judgment.

The risk is that persons in such a situation will make decisions, sometimes unwittingly, in their own personal interest rather than the interests of the organisation. It is important to recognise that it is natural for conflicts of interest to occur, and the objective of this policy is to manage, rather than prevent them from happening.

There is no right or wrong approach to handling potential conflicts of interest. Ultimately, the issue is about the application of common sense.

Why have such a policy?

The Racquetball Association of Ireland is committed to the highest ethical and professional standards in the execution of its responsibilities, and expects all members to behave with honesty, integrity, and good judgment. Members should respect the rights of others and are accountable for their actions.

Members of the Racquetball Association of Ireland's Executive Committee and officials have an obligation to act in the best interests of the Racquetball Association of Ireland, and in accordance with its rules and regulations, and aims and objectives. All volunteers and members have similar obligations.

Conflicts of interests may arise where an individual's personal, family or business interests and/or loyalties conflict with the objectives of the Racquetball Association of Ireland. If in doubt, it is better to declare a possible interest.

- Conflicts of Interest may create problems and could potentially :
- Inhibit free discussion ;
- Result in decisions or actions that are not in the best interests the Racquetball Association of Ireland and its members, and
- damage the reputation of the Racquetball Association of Ireland

The aim of this policy is to manage all potential conflicts of interest and protect both the organisation and the individuals involved from any appearance of impropriety.

Even the appearance of a conflict of interest can damage the reputation of the Racquetball Association of Ireland.

Conflicts of interest may come in a number of different forms:

These forms will generally involve ;

- direct financial gain or benefit to the interested party, such as a payment for services provided to the Racquetball Association of Ireland and its affiliates, or
- the award of a contract to an organisation in which the interested party has interest or involvement and from which there is an opportunity for financial gain.

The declaration of interests

Under this policy, Board Members, members of staff, volunteers, and other officials are required to declare their interests, both private and professional, in their dealings with the Racquetball Association of Ireland or its affiliates, and must also declare any gifts or hospitality received in connection with their role in the Racquetball Association of Ireland.

A declaration of interests form is provided for this purpose, listing the types of interest you should declare.

The declaration of interests needs to be reviewed and updated at least annually, and also when any material changes occur.

If an individual is unsure what to declare, or whether/when a declaration requires updating, the best rule is to err on the side of caution. If anyone would like to discuss the issue of conflicts of interest, please contact the the Racquetball Association of Ireland President for confidential guidance.

Interests will be recorded on the Racquetball Association of Ireland's register of interests, which will be maintained by the the Racquetball Association of Ireland President on a confidential basis. The register will be accessible only by the President, Secretary and Treasurer.

Data Protection

The information provided will be processed in accordance with data protection principles as set out in the Data Protection Act 1998/2003. Data will only be processed to ensure that the Board Members and officials act in the best interests of the Racquetball Association of Ireland and its affiliates. The information provided will not be used for any other purpose.

What to do if you face a conflict of interest?

If you believe you have, or may have, a conflict of interests, you should declare your interest at the earliest opportunity and withdraw from any subsequent discussion or involvement in the activity. You may, however, participate in discussions from which you could benefit indirectly, for example, where the benefits are universal to all users, or where your benefit is minimal.

If you fail to declare an interest that is/becomes known to the Racquetball Association of Ireland, the President will be obliged to declare that interest on your behalf. You will be notified and will be required to explain why the interest was not declared, and subsequently, adhere to the terms of this policy.

Decisions taken where a board member, official or member of staff has an interest

If it is unclear whether a Board Member, other official or member of staff has a conflict of interest, the Board will decide by vote, requiring a simple majority. A quorum must be present for the discussion and decision, excluding those interested parties.

Board members may not vote on matters affecting their own interests. They must absent themselves from the discussion or at the discretion of the Chair, participate in the discussion but not the decision-making process.

All decisions under a conflict of interest will be recorded and reported in the minutes of the meeting.

The report will record:

- The nature and extent of the conflict;
- An outline of the discussion;
- The actions taken to manage the conflict.

Where it is deemed there is a conflict of interests, all information relating to the Board discussion, report and subsequent vote will be furnished to the individual, who will have the right to respond to the Board.

Managing contracts

A board member, official or member of staff must not be involved in managing or monitoring a contract in which he/she has an interest. If such an interest is declared/deemed to exist, the individual will be relieved of his/her involvement, and management/monitoring arrangements for such contracts will include provisions for an independent challenge of bills and invoices. Such contracts may be terminated where it is deemed that the terms of the contract were unduly influenced by such interest and resulted in reduced benefits to the Racquetball Association of Ireland and/or its affiliates.

Racquetball Association of Ireland

Conflict of Interest Declaration

NB: All Executive Committee Members must submit a return on an annual basis even if it is a nil return – this will usually happen at the first meeting post AGM.

NAME _____

Position held _____

Declared Conflicts of

Interest

Personal Interests

Family Interests

Signed: _____ Date _____