

Diocese of Erie
Conflict of Interest Policy (Parish)

Statement of Policy: Members of pastoral and finance councils, advisory boards, or committees of the parish and its affiliated organizations or entities which make recommendations or decisions on financial matters must avoid any conflict or appearance of conflict between their own interests and those of the parish, particularly as these interests relate to business relationships with the parish, either individually, in a representative capacity, or as a result of a family relationship or close friendship. The same holds true for those parish employees who are involved in the selection of individuals or firms which supply goods or services to the parish.

Implementation of Policy:

Persons serving the parish as volunteer members of such Councils, boards, or committees or as employees should be aware that their service may give rise to a conflict of interest (direct or indirect), or the appearance of or potential for a conflict of interest. The relationship between the parish and those responsible for its care is one which implies an assumption of commonality of purpose.

Those serving the parish must be aware of direct and indirect, conflicts of interest and disclose any such conflict to the pastor or administrator before entering into business transactions with the parish. The conflict may or may not preclude such transactions, depending upon the facts and circumstances.

- Direct Conflict – A person serving the parish has a business relationship with the person or entity doing business with the parish. For example, a parish council member will have a direct conflict if he/she has an ownership interest in a company selling goods or services to the parish.
- Indirect Conflict – A person serving the parish has a family, social, or close relationship with a person or entity doing business with the parish. For example, the parish business manager will have an indirect conflict if he/she is the spouse or close relative of a company owner whose firm sells goods or services to the parish.

In addition, a potential conflict of interest may exist when a person serving the parish is in the position to use his/her status to influence decisions for their personal advantage or for the advantage of family members, relatives, or close friends.

If a business interest does or may affect the commonality of purpose, then such conflict must be disclosed to the pastor or administrator. A person making this disclosure as a result of any conflict of interest or appearance of a conflict of interest shall be designated as an “interested party.”

Once the disclosure has been made, the pastor or administrator shall decide whether such duality of interest may undermine or impugn the best interests of the parish. If so, the interested party shall be excluded from any deliberations concerning the issue and/or business transaction. In reaching such a decision, the pastor/administrator shall be guided by the needs of the parish; the availability of quality goods or services to satisfy those needs; and the result of an open and informed selection process.

Each such case shall be reviewed upon its own facts and circumstances. If it is determined that the duality of interest creates a substantial conflict of interest, then the pastor/administrator may refrain from entering into a business relationship with the interested party until such time as the duality of interest ceases to exist.

This conflict of interest policy is to be made known to all persons now serving or hereafter selected to serve the parish as members of Councils, boards, or committees who are involved with parish financial matters and to those employees who are involved in the selection of vendors or suppliers.

rev. 10/15/07

Parish Letterhead

Parish Conflict of Interest Information and Compliance Statement

I have read and understand the Parish Conflict of Interest Policy and agree to abide by its terms and conditions.

Please describe below any relationships, positions, or circumstances in which you are involved that you believe could contribute to a conflict of interest as defined in the policy on Conflict of Interest or write "none" if there are not such conflicts:

I agree that if any situations arise of which I am aware that in any way contradict the above statements, I will immediately notify the pastor of any conflict, real or potential, and make full disclosure thereof.

Date

Signature