

Ethical Framework

Adopted by the CAPB Membership August 22, 2003

Preamble

There can be little question that legitimate police powers are derived from the consent of the public. As a result, it is incumbent upon the members of the Canadian Association of Police Boards (CAPB) to safeguard the public trust by acting ethically. Therefore, the primary duty of all CAPB members is to work diligently in support of Canadian democratic values that are enshrined in the Constitution and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

To this end, the CAPB endorses the Ethical Framework developed and adopted by the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police (CACP) to help all police executives foster a professional ethical environment that enables police personnel to act in a manner that is consistent with Canadian democratic values. Further, the CAPB has elected to establish its own Ethical Framework to help all police board members foster a professional ethical environment.

The Ethical Framework highlights the responsibilities of CAPB members to: the public; the Police Chief, police associations and the police organization as a whole; their professional partners; and themselves personally. The Ethical Framework identifies board members' responsibilities and ethical values that are based upon the ethical foundation of justice, rule of law, moral core, human dignity and democratic principles.

Decisions made by CAPB members should be in keeping with the Ethical Framework.

Ethical Foundation

The ethical foundation of justice, rule of law, moral core, human dignity and democratic principles forms the context for ethical decision making, which must guide our decisions.

Justice

Fairness, equity and impartiality in the application of the law.

Rule of Law

Equality of access to the rights enshrined in the Constitution and the Charter of Rights & Freedoms.

Moral Core

The moral imperative to act in a manner that is consistent with what is good, right and just.

Human Dignity

Respect for human dignity and the rights of persons.

Democratic Principles

The balance of individual and personal freedoms with the concept of social order, civic

responsibility and the general public good.

Recognition of the legitimate authority of office-holders and the importance of maintaining the public trust.

Ethical Values

The "rightness" of a decision can be judged on whether it is consistent with these ethical values:

- Empathy
- Honesty
- Courage
- Respect
- Equity
- Transparency
- Integrity
- Trustworthiness

Board Member Responsibilities

The key relationships for police board members are with the public, their police chief and organization, their police associations, their professional partners, their fellow board members, and themselves personally.

Public

Responsibilities of CAPB members toward the people they serve and other public officials include:

- Actively advancing the public safety agenda
- Being a wise steward of public resources
- Ensuring the provision of competent and responsive services
- Respecting the legitimate authority of municipal Council and other public office holders
- Being accountable

Police Chief, Associations and the Organization

Responsibilities of CAPB members toward their Chief of Police, police associations, employees of their police service, and the police service as a corporate entity, include:

- Setting and focusing on the strategic priorities
- Fostering a healthy and safe work environment
- Promoting continuous learning and career development
- Fostering professionalism
- Maintaining accountability
- Setting the moral tone
- Respecting the legitimate roles of the Chief of Police and the Associations
- Promoting harmonious and collaborative labour relations

Professional Partners

Responsibilities of CAPB members toward others in the policing profession, their fellow board members and others engaged in services related to the policing profession include:

- Building value-based relationships
- Sharing knowledge
- Upholding the public trust
- Being accountable
- Consulting effectively

Personal

Responsibilities of CAPB members toward themselves include:

- Maintaining focus on the strategic direction
- Modeling leadership attributes
- Managing life-work balance
- Delivering on commitments
- Persevering
- Learning about their roles and responsibilities as a board member
- Developing themselves
- Maintaining self-discipline
- Avoiding conflicts of interest and the appearance of personal gain

Considerations for Ethical Decision-Making

The following are issues for consideration and guidance in the decision-making process for board governors.

1. Consistency with the law, existing codes of conduct, board policies and by-laws
2. Consistency with the CAPB Ethical Framework
3. Identification of those potentially affected by the decision
4. Identification of the probable consequences of the decision
5. Assessment of the potential beneficial or detrimental impacts flowing from the decision, or the failure to make a decision
6. Avoidance of any real or perceived conflicts of interest or the perception of personal gain
7. Ability to justify the decision in terms of the public trust.