



Conflict of Interest Policy

Purpose

Ringuette New Brunswick strives to reduce and eliminate nearly all instances of conflict of interest at Ringuette New Brunswick – by being aware, prudent, and forthcoming about the potential conflicts. This Policy describes how Representatives will conduct themselves in matters relating to conflict of interest, and will clarify how Representatives shall make decisions in situations where conflict of interest may exist. This Policy applies to all Representatives.

Definitions

The following terms have these meanings in this Policy:

1. *“Conflict of Interest”* – Any situation in which a Representative’s decision-making, which should always be in the best interests of Ringuette New Brunswick, is influenced or could be influenced by personal, family, financial, business, or other private interests.
2. *“Non-Pecuniary Interest”* – An interest that an individual may have in a matter which may involve family relationships, friendships, volunteer positions or other interests that do not involve the potential for financial gain or loss.
3. *“Pecuniary Interest”* – An interest that an individual may have in a matter because of the reasonable likelihood or expectation of financial gain or loss for that individual, or another person with whom that individual is associated.
4. *“Perceived Conflict of Interest”* – A perception by an informed person that a conflict of interest exists or may exist.
5. *“Representatives”* – Individuals employed by, or engaged in activities on behalf of, Ringuette New Brunswick. Including, but not limited to: Coaches, staff members, Members, convenors, contract personnel, volunteers, managers, administrators, committee members, and the President and Directors of Ringuette New Brunswick.

Background

Individuals who act on behalf of an organization have a duty to put the interests of the organization ahead of their personal interests in the performance of their role in the organization. For example, in not-for-profit organizations, board members are required, by law, to act as a trustee (in good faith, or in trust) of the organization.

Examples of Conflicts of Interest

The following are examples where conflicts of interest would arise:

(a) Any circumstance in which a Ringette New Brunswick volunteer uses their position with Ringette New Brunswick to influence a decision that may result in a personal or financial benefit to a volunteer, his family, a business associate, or a friend.

(b) Accessing financial or other resources belonging to Ringette New Brunswick, for personal use.

(c) Personal interests which conflict with the interests of the members of Ringette New Brunswick or are otherwise adverse to the interests of Ringette New Brunswick.

(d) Being a member of the board or staff of any other organization which might have material interests that conflict with the interests of Ringette New Brunswick or its Members; including dealing with matters on one board which might materially affect the other board.

Principles for Dealing with Conflict of Interest.

As preventing a conflict of interest from arising is not always possible, the following steps should be taken to manage such a situation, when it arises:

(a) Declare It. Both prior to serving on the board, council, commission or committee and during their term of office, a volunteer must openly disclose any real, perceived or potential conflict of interest as soon as the issue arises, and before the Board deals with the matter at issue.

(b) Discuss It. If the volunteer is uncertain whether they are in a conflict of interest position, the matter should be brought before the Board or respective council / commission / committee. Other volunteers who are aware of a real, potential, or perceived conflict of interest on the part of a fellow volunteer that has not been declared have a responsibility to raise the issue for clarification. Firstly with the volunteer in question and, if still unresolved, with the President of Ringette New Brunswick.

(c) Determine If It Exists. If there is any question or doubt about the existence of a real, perceived, or potential conflict, the Ringette New Brunswick Board will determine by a majority vote if a conflict exists. The volunteer potentially in a conflict position shall be absent from the discussion and shall not vote on the issue.

(d) Deal With It. Measures to mitigate or eliminate a conflict of interest will vary depending on the severity of the situation. Options may include:

i. Restrict the involvement of the individual. If a conflict of interest has been identified, the volunteer must abstain from participation in any discussion on the matter, shall not attempt to influence the outcome,

shall refrain from voting on the matter and, unless otherwise decided by the Board or respective council, commission or committee must leave the meeting room for the duration of any discussion or vote on the issue.

ii. Relinquish the Private Interest. In cases of serious conflict, the individual may choose to drop the private interest, such as membership on the Board of another organization, which is causing the conflict.

iii. Resign from their position with Ringette New Brunswick. In extreme cases where other solutions are impossible, the individual may have to resign from their position with Ringette New Brunswick.

(e) Document It. The disclosure and decision as to whether a conflict exists shall be duly recorded in the minutes of the meeting. The time the volunteer left and returned to the meeting should also be recorded.

Obligations

Any real or perceived conflict of interest, whether pecuniary or non-pecuniary, between a Representative's personal interest and the interests of Ringette New Brunswick, shall always be resolved in favour of Ringette New Brunswick.

Representatives will not:

- i. Engage in any business or transaction, or have a financial or other personal interest, that is incompatible with their official duties with Ringette New Brunswick, unless such business, transaction, or other interest is properly disclosed to Ringette New Brunswick and approved by Ringette New Brunswick.
- ii. Knowingly place themselves in a position where they are under obligation to any person who might benefit from special consideration or who might seek preferential treatment.
- iii. In the performance of their official duties, give preferential treatment to family members, friends, colleagues, or organizations in which their family members, friends, or colleagues have an interest, financial or otherwise.
- iv. Derive personal benefit from information that they have acquired during the course of fulfilling their official duties with Ringette New Brunswick, if such information is confidential or not generally available to the public.
- v. Engage in any outside work, activity, or business or professional undertaking that conflicts or appears to conflict with their official duties as a representative of Ringette New Brunswick, or in which they have an advantage or appear to have an advantage on the basis of their association with Ringette New Brunswick.
- vi. Without the permission of Ringette New Brunswick, use Ringette New Brunswick property, equipment, supplies, or services for activities not associated with the performance of their official duties with Ringette New Brunswick.

- vii. Place themselves in positions where they could, by virtue of being a Ringette New Brunswick Representative, influence decisions or contracts from which they could derive any direct or indirect benefit.
- viii. Accept any gift or favour that could be construed as being given in anticipation of, or in recognition for, any special consideration granted by virtue of being a Ringette New Brunswick Representative.

Disclosure of Conflict of Interest

9. On an annual basis, all Ringette New Brunswick Board Members and candidates for election to the Board, Directors, Officers, Employees, and Committee Members will complete a **Declaration Form (Appendix A)** disclosing any real or perceived conflicts that they might have. Declaration Forms shall be retained by Ringette New Brunswick.
10. Representatives shall disclose real or perceived conflicts of interest to the Ringette New Brunswick Board of Directors immediately upon becoming aware that a conflict of interest may exist.
11. Representatives shall also disclose any and all affiliations with any and all other ringette organizations.

Minimizing Conflicts of Interest in Decision-Making

11. Decisions or transactions that involve a conflict of interest that has been proactively disclosed by a Ringette New Brunswick Representative will be considered and decided with the following additional provisions:
 1. The nature and extent of the Representative's interest has been fully disclosed to the body that is considering or making the decision, and this disclosure is recorded or noted
 2. The Representative does not participate in discussion on the matter
 3. The Representative abstains from voting on the decision
 4. For board-level decisions, the Representative does not count toward quorum
 5. The decision is confirmed to be in the best interests of Ringette New Brunswick
12. For potential conflicts of interest involving employees, the Ringette New Brunswick Board of Directors will determine whether there is a conflict and, if one exists, the employee will resolve the conflict by ceasing the activity giving rise to the conflict. Ringette New Brunswick will not restrict employees from accepting other employment contracts or volunteer appointments provided these activities do not diminish the employee's ability to perform the work described in the employee's job agreement with Ringette New Brunswick or give rise to a conflict of interest.

Conflict of Interest Complaints

13. Any person who believes that a Representative may be in a conflict of interest situation should report the matter, in writing or verbally if during an official meeting of the Board of Directors, to the Ringette New Brunswick Board of

Directors who will decide appropriate measures to eliminate the conflict. The Board of Directors may apply the following actions singly or in combination for real or perceived conflicts of interest:

1. Removal or temporary suspension of certain responsibilities or decision-making authority
 2. Removal or temporary suspension from a designated position
 3. Removal or temporary suspension from certain Ringette New Brunswick teams, events and/or activities
 4. Expulsion from Ringette New Brunswick
 5. Other actions as may be considered appropriate for the real or perceived conflict of interest
14. Any person who believes that a Representative has made a decision that was influenced by a real or perceived conflict of interest may submit a complaint, in writing, to Ringette New Brunswick to be addressed under Ringette New Brunswick's *Discipline and Complaints Policy*.
15. Failure to comply with an action as determined by the Board of Directors will result in automatic suspension from Ringette New Brunswick until compliance occurs.
16. The Board of Directors may determine that an alleged real or perceived conflict of interest is of such seriousness as to warrant suspension of designated activities pending a meeting and a decision of the Board of Directors.

Enforcement

17. Failure to adhere to this Policy may permit discipline in accordance with Ringette New Brunswick's *Appeals and Complaints Policy*.

This Policy is subject to review at least once every three years

Date of last review: December 2023

