MOHAWK NATION
OF GRAND RIVER
SECRETARIAT

BOOK IX OF THE REGISTER'S BOOKS

Ethics and Conflicts of Interest

What every officer of the Nation owes it: the principles of public office, conflicts of interest, declarations, gifts, stepping aside, holding several offices, leaving office, reporting wrongdoing, and breaches.

One of the National Books of the Mohawk Nation of Grand River.

First edition · October 2026

Ethics and Conflicts of Interest

Book IX of the Register’s books

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SECTION 1

The principles

What every officer of the Nation owes the Nation.

For every officer, at every level — and for anyone who deals with them.

Its colour: **Forest**

PRINCIPLES

Principle	In practice
Service	Act in the Nation’s interest, never for your own gain or your family’s
Integrity	Owe nothing to anyone who might influence your work
Fairness	Decide on the merits and the evidence, by the Nation’s rules
Accountability	Answer for your decisions; every act is on the Register and the Ledger
Openness	Give reasons; withhold only what the rules require
Honesty	Tell the truth, and declare every interest that touches your work
Example	Hold yourself to these, and expect them of others

After the Seven Principles of Public Life (the Nolan Principles, 1995) and the UN International Code of Conduct for Public Officials (1996).

RULE No officer may approve their own work, their own application, or anything in which they or their family have an interest. The Register refuses it; this book explains why.

SECTION 2

The oath of office, and the yearly attestation

What every officer promises, and confirms each year.

The wording is proposed: for the Nation to adopt by its Gazette.

Its colour: **Forest**

THE OATH

“I, [First name, Middle names, LAST NAME], promise that I will serve the Mohawk Nation of Grand River faithfully in the office of [office]; that I will act in the Nation’s interest and not my own; that I will declare every interest that touches my work, and step aside when I should; that I will accept no gift or favour that could influence me; and that I will keep the Nation’s records and confidences. So I promise.”

Each year

	Step
1	Read the rules again, and complete the Nation’s integrity training
2	Renew your declaration of interests
3	Attest, in the Register, that you have kept the rules over the past year — or say where you have not
4	Your superior confirms; the attestation goes on the Ledger

SECTION 3

Conflicts of interest

When a private interest could touch an official duty.

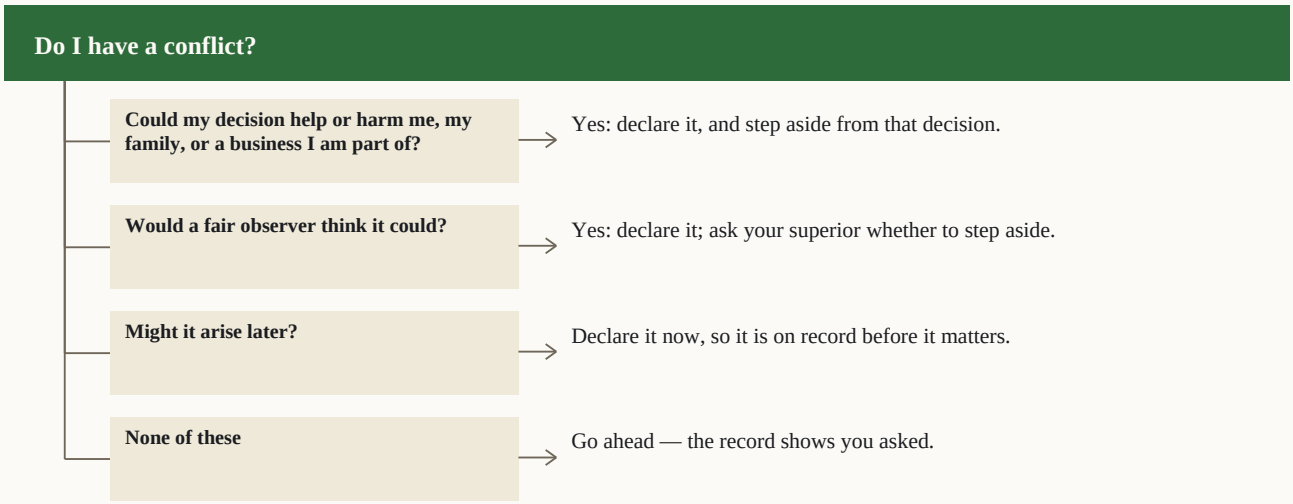
After the OECD Guidelines for Managing Conflict of Interest in the Public Service.

Its colour: **Forest**

CONFLICTS

Kind	What it is	Example
Actual	A private interest that does touch a decision now	A Lands officer asked to approve a boundary for their cousin’s farm
Apparent	One a fair observer would think touches it, even if it does not	A Teller who owns a café that takes Grand River dollars, handling the café’s deposit
Potential	One that could touch a decision later	An officer whose spouse is applying for a loan next month

How to read the tree: start at the question at the top, and follow the first branch that applies to you. Each branch ends in what to do.



WHY A small nation is a nation of relatives. The answer is not to forbid officers from serving among their own people, but to declare, and step aside when it matters — openly, every time.

SECTION 4

Declarations of interest

What every officer declares, and when.

The form, and its Record Code family, are proposed: for the Conventions to adopt.

Its colour: **Forest**

DECLARATIONS

Declare	For example
Every office you hold, in the Nation and outside it	Teller; director of a business; officer of another body
Businesses you own or help run	The café; a craft business
Your interests in land on the Tract	A lot you hold; a lease
Debts to anyone who deals with the Nation	A loan from a business that tenders to the Nation
Family members who hold office or deal with the Nation	A sister who is a Magistrate; a son with a contract
Gifts and hospitality received in your role	See Section 4

	Step
1	On joining an office, before acting in it
2	Every year, on the anniversary of joining
3	Within 14 days of any change
4	Approved by your superior; the Inspection Division sees every declaration

What is public	What stays private
That a declaration is made, and its date; the offices and businesses declared	Amounts, addresses, and details of family members — seen only by the officer’s superior and the Inspection Division

SECTION 5

A declaration, filled in

A specimen declaration, and what the public sees of it.

Its colour: **Forest**

A SPECIMEN

SPECIMEN — Declaration of interests	
Officer	Ruth WHITE · Lands Officer
Offices held	Lands Officer (the Nation); treasurer of the Grand River Beadworkers’ Circle
Businesses	White Beadwork (sole owner) — takes Grand River dollars
Land on the Tract	A lease of a lot on the river road
Debts to those who deal with the Nation	None
Family in office or dealing with the Nation	Brother, Daniel WHITE, holds a lot whose boundary is under review
Gifts this year	A beaded bag from a Wall supporter, worth about GR$40 — kept, declared
Stepping aside	From the boundary review of her brother’s lot
Approved by	The Director of Lands, 2026-10-26

What the public register shows

Officer	Office	Declared	Interests (summary)
Ruth WHITE	Lands Officer	2026-10-26	Treasurer of a beadworkers’ circle; owns a beadwork business; a lease on the Tract; steps aside from one boundary review

SECTION 6

Gifts and hospitality

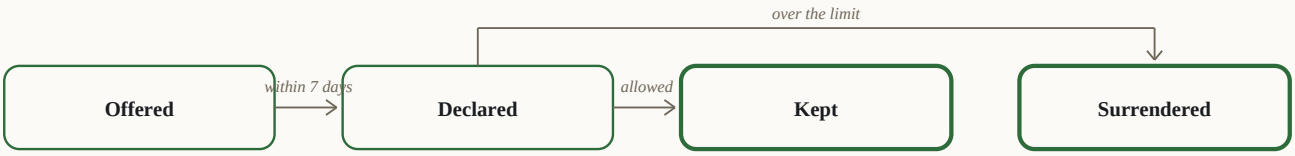
What may be accepted, and what must be declined.

The amounts are proposed: for the Nation to adopt by its Gazette.

Its colour: **Forest**

GIFTS

How to read the diagram: each box is a state a gift can be in — offered, declared, then kept or surrendered — and each arrow is a step, with its rule.



Gift or hospitality	Proposed rule
Worth under GR$50	May be kept; declared
Worth GR$50 to GR$200	Declared; kept only if the superior allows
Worth over GR$200	Declined, or surrendered to the Nation
From anyone with a decision pending before you	Declined, whatever its worth
Cash, or anything easily turned into cash	Declined, always
A ceremonial or cultural gift, given in the Nation’s ways	Received with respect, declared, and recorded as the Nation’s, not the officer’s

SECTION 7

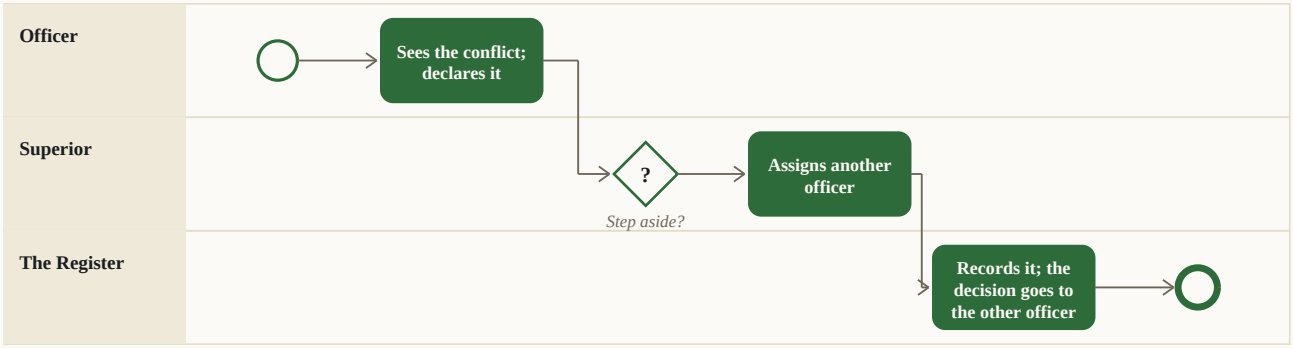
Stepping aside

How an officer steps aside, and who takes over.

Its colour: **Forest**

RECUSAL

How to read the diagram: each row is one party. Follow a conflict from the officer who sees and declares it, to the superior who decides, to the Register that records it and passes the decision to another officer.



	Step
1	Declare the conflict as soon as you see it — before acting, not after
2	Your superior decides whether you step aside, and assigns another officer
3	Take no part: no advice, no influence, no access to the file
4	The declaration and the decision are recorded on the Register

SECTION 8

Holding several offices

Which offices may be held together, and which may not.

Its colour: **Forest**

SEVERAL OFFICES

Officers of a small nation often hold more than one office. That is allowed — openly declared — except where one office must check the other.

Never held together	Because
Applicant and approver of the same thing	No one approves their own work
An office and the inspector of that office	The Inspection Division must be independent of what it inspects
Treasurer General and Chief Compliance Officer	Compliance must be independent of the Treasury
Magistrate, and investigator or prosecutor in the same matter	The Court must be independent of those who bring matters to it
Issuer signer, twice	The two signatures to create Grand River dollars must be two people

WATCH FOR Where one person holds offices that touch each other — the Secretary-General who is also Editor-in-General of the press of record, for example — the relationship is declared publicly, and the safeguards of each office (Book XXVII) apply.

SECTION 9

Contacts, lobbying and purchasing

Who tries to influence a decision; and integrity in what the Nation buys.

Its colour: **Forest**

INFLUENCE

A record of contacts

When anyone outside the Nation’s offices seeks to influence a decision — a developer, a supplier, an agent, a government — the officer records the contact in the Register: who, when, about what, and what was asked. The record of contacts about decisions is published each quarter. It shows the public who has sought to influence the Nation, without exposing residents seeking their own services.

Buying for the Nation

Rule	Why
Above a set amount, an open call for offers	So the Nation gets the best value, and anyone may compete
No splitting one purchase into smaller ones to stay below that amount	The limit cannot be dodged
No buying from yourself, your family, or a business you are part of — unless declared and decided by another officer	No officer profits from their office
Every contract recorded, with its value and who won it	Anyone can see where the Nation’s money goes
Contracts of the Nation (Book XXI) for the terms	The terms are signed, sealed and carried out openly

The amounts are proposed: for the Nation to adopt by its Gazette.

SECTION 10

Test yourself

Six situations, and what to do.

Its colour: **Forest**

TEST YOURSELF

1 · A supplier offers you two tickets to a game, while their tender is with you.

Answer: Decline. Anything from someone with a decision pending before you is declined, whatever its worth.

2 · Your cousin applies for a lot, and the application lands on your desk.

Answer: Declare, and ask your superior to assign it to another officer. Take no part.

3 · An Elder gives you a beaded strap in thanks, in the Nation’s way, at a ceremony.

Answer: Receive it with respect, declare it, and record it as the Nation’s.

4 · A colleague asks you to approve their own expense claim “to save time”.

Answer: Refuse: no one approves their own work, and the Register will not allow it.

5 · A developer phones you about a notice of interest you are handling.

Answer: Record the contact in the Register: who, when, and what was asked.

6 · You see a Teller counting cash alone, again and again.

Answer: Report it to the Inspection Division. You are protected from any reprisal for reporting in good faith.

SECTION 11

Measuring integrity

What the Nation publishes each year, and who watches the system.

The Integrity Commissioner is proposed: an office for the Nation to consider.

Its colour: **Forest**

MEASURING

Published each year	Shows
Declarations due, and made on time	Whether officers keep their declarations current
Times an officer stepped aside	That conflicts are being managed, not hidden
Gifts declared, kept and surrendered	That the gift rules are used
Contacts recorded about decisions	Who seeks to influence the Nation
Reports of wrongdoing received, and how each ended	That reports are taken seriously, and how quickly
Breaches found, and their outcomes	That the rules have consequences

An Integrity Commissioner

An independent office — answering to no one it oversees — that advises officers in confidence on what to declare and when to step aside, keeps the register of interests, publishes the yearly report, and receives reports of wrongdoing alongside the Inspector General. Canada’s Conflict of Interest and Ethics Commissioner is the model.

SECTION 12

Leaving office, reporting wrongdoing, and breaches

After office; speaking up; and what happens when the rules are broken.

The cooling-off period is proposed: for the Nation to adopt by its Gazette.

Its colour: **Forest**

AFTER, AND WHEN IT GOES WRONG

After leaving office

For one year after leaving an office, a former officer does not deal with that office on behalf of anyone else, and never uses what they learned in it for private gain.

Reporting wrongdoing

	Step
1	Report to the Inspector General or the Inspection Division — directly, or through the public complaint page
2	Your report is kept confidential, and your name shared only with your consent
3	No one may be punished, demoted or treated worse for reporting in good faith; reprisal is itself a breach
4	The Inspection Division answers, and tells you what was done

When the rules are broken

Step	How
Investigated	By the Inspection Division, answering to the Inspector General
Heard fairly	The officer is told what is alleged, sees the evidence, and is heard
Decided	By the Inspector General; reviewable by the Court of the Nation
Outcome	From advice, to removal from the decision, to removal from office; recorded on the Register

How we compare

Benchmark	What they do	What the Nation does
The UN International Code of Conduct for Public Officials (1996)	Loyalty to the public interest; declarations; no improper gifts	Sections 1 to 4
The UN Convention against Corruption (2003)	Codes of conduct, declarations of interest, protection of those who report (Articles 8 and 33)	Sections 3 and 7
The OECD Guidelines on Conflict of Interest (2003)	Actual, apparent and potential conflicts, managed openly	Section 2
The Nolan Principles (UK, 1995)	Seven principles of public life	Section 1
Canada’s Conflict of Interest Act (2006)	Public declarations, gift rules, a cooling-off period, an independent commissioner	Sections 3, 4 and 7; the Inspector General

Questions an expert or critic would ask

In a small nation, isn’t everyone related?
Yes — which is why the rule is to declare and step aside, not to forbid. What matters is that every interest is on the record before it matters.

Who watches the Secretary-General?
The Inspector General may inspect any office; the Court of the Nation is independent of the Secretariat; every act is on the Ledger.

Isn’t one person holding several offices a problem?
It can be. That is why some offices may never be held together, and why every combination that is allowed is declared publicly.

The standards

Standard	For
ISO 37000 (2021)	The governance of organisations
ISO 37001	Anti-bribery management systems
ISO 37002 (2021)	Whistleblowing management systems
ISO 37301	Compliance management systems
ISO 37008 (2023)	Internal investigations
OECD Recommendation on Public Integrity (2017)	A whole system of integrity, not only rules
UN Convention against Corruption (2003), Articles 8, 12 and 33	Codes of conduct; integrity; protecting those who report
G20 High-Level Principles on Asset Disclosure (2012)	What officers declare, and what the public sees
EU Whistleblower Directive (2019/1937)	Safe channels; no reprisal
UNCITRAL Model Law on Public Procurement (2011)	Buying openly and fairly