



# **Buddhist Recovery Network**

## **Conflict of Interest Policy**

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## **A. Preamble**

As an organisation inspired by Buddhist teachings and traditions, the Buddhist Recovery Network (BRN) is committed to promoting truthfulness and transparency in the conduct of its affairs, and the altruistic pursuit of community benefit over the narrow, self-interested pursuit of personal gain. To this end, the organisation has adopted the following Conflict Of Interest policy.

## **B. Definition**

A Conflict of Interest arises where a Director or Officer's personal interests, or interests which they owe to another body, and those of the BRN arise simultaneously or appear to be in conflict. Where a decision-maker may personally profit from a Board or Committee decision, the potential for individual benefit must be acknowledged, and the policy below followed. In addition to this, involvement in another organisation (eg a recovery, Buddhist or academic organisation) may result in conflicting loyalties. Directors must understand that providing undivided loyalty to the organisation is one of the fundamental duties of trust required under US law and the laws of other countries in which the BRN operates.

## **C. The Policy**

This policy applies to Directors, Officers, Employees or Volunteers making decisions and / or allocating resources on behalf of the organisation. Where such a decision draws the individual into a situation as described above, the affected person must fully disclose the nature of the interest and withdraw from discussion, lobbying and voting on the matter. Any decision shall be approved only when a majority of disinterested committee members determine that it is in the best interest of the BRN to proceed with the proposal. The Minutes of the meetings at which such a situation arises shall record such disclosure, abstention and rationale.

As a matter of policy, the organisation also insists upon the following:

- Any payments made to an individual working for the BRN in any capacity must be reasonable, and must not exceed fair market value;
- Loans shall not be granted to Officers or Directors. (Under US statutory law, loans for executive relocation expenses may be permitted under certain circumstances);
- The Buddhist Recovery Network's Annual Report and accounts shall disclose any payment or benefit received by Directors and Officers;
- Should an individual be in any doubt as to whether a conflict exists, the organisation strongly recommends that a potential conflict is declared, and others invited to make the evaluation.

#### **D. Examples of Circumstances where a Conflict Should Be Understood To Exist:**

- Engagement by the Buddhist Recovery Network as an employee, consultant or advisor (where a material benefit will be received by the individual);
- Involvement in a company which is being considered for a contract or commercial relationship;
- Offering one's personal property to be used by the BRN (particularly where a payment will be made or a sense of debt or obligation is being created);
- Granting a loan to the BRN (particularly if an interest rate is proposed);
- Where potential benefit may accrue to the individual's family, friend, business partner or colleague;
- Where benefits or services from the organisation are received by the individual to an exceptional degree;
- The individual holds other charity or organisational roles that create divided loyalties when discussing a specific issue.

#### **E. Examples Not Requiring Disclosure:**

- Receipt of benefits which are available to all;
- Inconsequential benefits unlikely to influence judgement;
- Receipt of benefits generally considered to be standard business practice eg relevant and reasonable out of pocket expenses incurred in the process of undertaking the legitimate work of the organisation.