



## Safety Advocate Code of Ethics

### Overview

The BC Forest Safety Council's Safety Advocates are a direct link between employers, their safety programs and the Council. In this role they hold a special position of trust.

The Council recognizes that Advocates often have existing business and personal relationships within the forest industry and may also provide separate safety advisory services to industry members as part of their own consultancy businesses. The Council values the viewpoint and expertise gained by Advocates through these relationships.

This Code of Ethics has been developed to ensure Advocates are able to confidently carry out their work for the Council with a clear understanding of the behavior expected of them. It sets out the ethical principals expected of Advocates while representing the Council and some specific guidance for Advocate conduct.

### Principles

#### *Integrity*

The integrity of Safety Advocates must be without question. This allows sector clients to rely and trust their judgment and guidance.

Advocates shall:

- Follow high standards of honesty, fairness, integrity and ethical conduct;
- Be an '**Advocate**' for the Council and the programs that the Council is involved in;
- Not be associated with any report, statement or representation known to be false or misleading;
- Respect the diversity of other Advocates, recognizing their different experiences and areas of expertise;
- Comply with Workers Compensation Act and the Occupational Health and Safety Regulations, as well as all other applicable laws and regulations;

#### **Objectivity and Conflict of Interests**

Advocates must exhibit the highest level of professional objectivity in evaluating and communicating information about the SAFE Companies Program and the Small Employer SEBASE Audit process. It is essential that Advocates are independent and impartial, not only in fact but also in appearance. Advocates are required to remain free from any real or perceived conflict of interest.

Advocates shall:

- Assist assigned companies with their end goal of becoming a SAFE Certified Company without bias, prejudice, variance or compromise;
- Remain free of any influence, interest or relationship that impairs professional judgment, independence or objectivity while providing Advocate services.
- Conduct business with the clients in a respectful, honest and fair manner, without actual or apparent conflict of interest;
- Advise the Council in writing with reasons, whenever the activities or conduct of an Advocate appear to be in conflict with this Code of Ethics;
- Not market their services at anytime during the Advocate visitation process;

### **Confidentiality**

Advocates must respect the value and ownership of information they receive during Advocate activities and must not disclose information to any third party, orally or in writing unless there is a legal or professional obligation to do so.

Advocates shall:

- Maintain appropriate levels of confidentiality of information;
- Not use company information for any personal gain, financial or otherwise that is contrary to the law, the Safety Advocate process or the interests of the Council;

### **Competency**

Advocates must apply their knowledge, skills and experience in the performance of their role.

Advocates shall:

- Engage in those services only for which they have the necessary knowledge, skills, and experience
- Continually seek to maintain and improve their proficiency, effectiveness and quality of their skills;
- Willingly and openly share their knowledge with clients and with fellow Advocates to assist in collective learning.

### **Guidance for Advocates' Conduct:**

To assist Advocates in separating personal and Council business interests, the following guidelines have been prepared. While acting for the Council, an Advocate:

#### **May:**

- If asked by an employers about further assistance for safety activities, suggest general possibilities (such as certified auditors listed on the Council website site who probably also provide program development support, appropriate professional designations to seek out etc) and can mention that he/she offers this type of service to other employers with similar issues.
- Say that a potential conflict of interest means it's inappropriate to discuss any potential business follow up while acting as an Advocate. Say that the Client is free to call them after the Advocate activities are complete if they want to discuss it further, but the Council does not allow Advocates to make contact former Council clients for personal business follow up.
- Advise employers that just because he/she has the responsibility of a Safety Advocate, that this in no way "guarantees" results with the Council. However, this does provide first hand experience/association with these activities and an understanding of the required standards.

#### **May not:**

- During the advocate visit suggest that you personally can offer services for a fee;
- Inflate the client's program deficiencies to the point that would suggest that the employer cannot 'do this on their own';
- Offer a quote or talk about your prices, fees structure and availability;
- Initiate follow up contact with the employer visited about providing services;
- Recommend or advise against using specific OH&S consultants, including yourself or your company.

As a Safety Advocate you are seen as a representative of the Council and it is difficult for clients (especially ones that are stressed about their certification) to distinguish between an Advocate of the Council and an OH&S consultant. It is your job to be sensitive to this and not exploit the Advocate relationship for your personal or professional gain