



Parks  
Canada

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Canada



# VALUES AND ETHICS CODE

Canada 

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## Message from the Chief Executive Officer

At Parks Canada, we are truly privileged to be part of a team whose commitment and passion contribute significantly to the Agency's many successes. Over the years, we have achieved remarkable things that inspire us to continue building on the momentum of our notoriety and our accomplishments.

To achieve this, we have a Mandate which clearly defines what we do and a Vision that guides our direction. Now, we have a set of Core Values – respect, engagement, excellence and integrity – that define how we do our work at Parks Canada. These Core Values, combined with the other elements of the *Parks Canada Values and Ethics Code*, guide our daily activities and decisions and help us to ensure a healthy and thriving workplace.

Parks Canada's success is therefore defined by what we achieve and also by how we achieve it. We are successful when we work together as members of the Parks Canada team in a respectful way, when our contributions are recognized, and when we are proud to say that we are members of this great organization.

We can declare success when we, regardless of position, role or geographic location, strive to be the best we can be, willingly accept the responsibilities entrusted to us and deliver with the utmost integrity.

Our *Values and Ethics Code* has been developed to help us transform this into reality and it embodies more than just words on a page. I ask you to take the time to read and discuss our *Code* with your team members and colleagues so that we fully understand what it means to be living our Core Values. Only then will we be truly working together as a Parks Canada team to achieve new heights.

**Alan Latourelle**

Chief Executive Officer  
Parks Canada Agency

## Background

Parks Canada achieves its Mandate and Vision through the active participation of its team members, stakeholders, partners and the support of Canadians. Parks Canada is successful when we work collaboratively both within and outside Parks Canada developing and maintaining trustworthy and fruitful relationships. This collaboration stems from the way team members live and apply the Core Values of respect, engagement, excellence and integrity.

The Parks Canada Mandate, Vision and Core Values are the cornerstones of our organization and its unique character. As a solid framework for Parks Canada team member actions, Core Values and Ethics guide us in our day-to-day responsibilities and in how we work together to fulfill our Mandate and Vision. The Core Values are the foundation of *Parks Canada's Values and Ethics Code* (the Code).

Parks Canada team members have a fundamental role to play in serving Canadians, their communities and the public interest under the direction of the elected government and in accordance with the law.

# Parks Canada Cornerstones: Mandate, Vision and Core Values

## **Our Mandate: What we do together**

On behalf of the people of Canada, we protect and present nationally significant examples of Canada's natural and cultural heritage, and foster public understanding, appreciation and enjoyment in ways that ensure the ecological and commemorative integrity of these places for present and future generations.

## **Our Vision: What we want to achieve together**

Canada's treasured natural and historic places will be a living legacy, connecting hearts and minds to a stronger, deeper understanding of the very essence of Canada.

## **Our Core Values: How we work together**

Our Core Values – respect, engagement, excellence and integrity – provide a common framework for our actions as Parks Canada team members and our collaborative work to fulfill our Mandate and our Vision.

## Objectives of the *Parks Canada Values and Ethics Code*

As Parks Canada team members,<sup>1</sup> the *Parks Canada Values and Ethics Code* is our main reference tool which

1. Defines the expectations related to Parks Canada Values and Ethics, including
  - our Core Values and the expected behaviours associated with them;
  - our duties of vigilance regarding conduct that may expose the organization to risks; and
  - our responsibilities.
2. Ensures the practical application of Parks Canada Values and Ethics and their implementation in daily activities.
3. Fosters a common understanding by encouraging dialogue between Parks Canada team members.

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<sup>1</sup>The expression "Parks Canada team member" refers to any person employed by Parks Canada: indeterminate employees (including seasonal employees), term employees, term students, students, casual employees, part-time workers, and employees on secondment or assignment.



# Parks Canada Core Values and Expected Behaviours

## **Respect**

We have esteem and consideration for ourselves and others.

Since respect is essential to any relationship:

- I treat others with courtesy, thoughtfulness and empathy.
- I readily accept differences. I try to learn about and value everyone's situation, ideas and points of view.
- I personally contribute to a respectful work environment.
- I clearly express my needs and interests in a responsible manner, and I value those of others.
- I agree with established rights, freedoms, roles and responsibilities.

## **Engagement**

Through our dedication and passion, we encourage and invite others to contribute to the achievement of Parks Canada's Vision.

Since Parks Canada's success requires a collective and concerted effort:

- I work with other Parks Canada members, teams and functions and I appreciate their contribution to my work.

- I seek and offer frank and respectful feedback.
- I remain aware of my work environment, offer assistance and support other Parks Canada team members.
- I create and maintain the connections needed for a mutually beneficial relationship with Parks Canada team members, stakeholders and partners.
- I share and use best practices.

## **Excellence**

We are known for the quality of our policies, programs and services in the protection and presentation of natural and cultural heritage.

Since excellence requires that each team member contributes to the best of his/her abilities:

- I constantly strive to produce quality work and to fully assume my assigned responsibilities.
- I make the best use of the resources available to meet Parks Canada's objectives and priorities.
- I seek out, seize and encourage learning opportunities.
- I show innovation to meet Parks Canada's needs and challenges.
- I take the time to recognize and celebrate excellence.

## **Integrity**

We subscribe to rigorous ethical standards and act honorably to serve the public interest.

To preserve the confidence of the Canadian public and the Parks Canada team:

- I respect the rule of law and carry out my duties in accordance with legislation, policies and directives in a non-partisan and impartial manner.
- I loyally carry out Parks Canada managers' lawful decisions and I help them be accountable to the Minister responsible for the Agency.
- I make sure that I do not use my official duties to obtain an inappropriate advantage for myself or to advantage or disadvantage others.
- I act at all times with integrity and in a manner that will bear the closest public scrutiny.
- I take responsible action when I detect any behaviour which does not cohere to Parks Canada Values and Ethics.

# Duties of Vigilance

Values and ethics are necessary for maintaining trustworthy and fruitful relationships between Parks Canada team members, stakeholders, partners and Canadians. These relationships are essential for our long-term success and we are all responsible for them.

An incident can quickly undermine relations and have serious consequences for the organization.

We must act with vigilance to minimize risk in the following situations:

## **1. Providing advice and loyally carrying out decisions**

As Government of Canada employees, we serve the public interest under the leadership of democratically elected representatives. We must therefore ensure that the Agency remains impartial and effective.

In this regard, all team members must:

- provide leaders with information, analyses and necessary advice, while ensuring that they remain open, honest, frank and objective at all times;

- use opportunities for sharing and the means provided by the Agency to make their opinions known, and to support lawful decisions made by leaders;
- implement decisions made in a responsible and professional manner; and
- exercise their right to freedom of expression in a way that does not call into question their loyalty to their employer.

For further guidance, refer to the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat document entitled *Duty of Loyalty*.

## **2. Care and use of government property and assets**

Parks Canada owns or rents many assets. These include but are not restricted to vehicles, buildings, space, premises, facilities, uniforms, office and shop equipment and supplies, computers, software, video equipment, telecommunications devices, government credit cards and documents. Parks Canada team members recognize that these assets are to serve the public interest.

In this regard, all team members must:

- only use these assets in the conduct of their official duties, and not for personal gain or use;

- seek prior authorization from his/her supervisor for any uses other than those officially recognized by Parks Canada; and
- account for and protect any and all assets that they possess or control and report the loss or damage of any items immediately to their supervisor.

### **3. Conflict of interest**

Conflicts of interest can seriously undermine the public's trust in Parks Canada.

A conflict of interest is a situation in which a public servant has private interests that could improperly influence the performance of his/her official duties. A conflict of interest may also be a situation in which a public servant uses his/her public office for personal gain.

- An *actual* conflict of interest is based in facts.
- An *apparent* conflict of interest could be perceived by a reasonable observer to exist, whether or not this is the case.
- A *potential* conflict of interest could reasonably be foreseen to exist in the future.

To avoid a conflict of interest, all team members must:

- ensure that they never use their official duties to inappropriately obtain an advantage for themselves or to advantage or disadvantage others;
- take all necessary measures to prevent and resolve any actual, apparent or potential conflicts of interest between their official responsibilities and their private affairs; and
- comply at all times with the requirements of the Parks Canada Agency's *Conflict of Interest and Post-Employment Policy*.

#### **4. Working within existing limits**

Limitations include but are not restricted to laws, agreements, contracts, policies and directives. They ensure that Parks Canada is consistent and aligned when delivering programs and activities and stays within the authorities given to the organization by the Government of Canada.

In this regard, all team members must:

- respect Government of Canada and Agency laws, policies, regulations and directives;

- seek prior approval in the very rare case where non-compliance would be considered in the public interest; and
- exercise due diligence by keeping informed and maintaining contact with his/her supervisor or a specialist on any question or request for clarification.

## **5. Relationships among Parks Canada team members**

The nature of the relationships among Parks Canada team members determines the quality of our workplace. To foster trustworthy and fruitful relationships, maintain and strengthen them, all members must:

- treat other Parks Canada team members with fairness as described in the *Human Resources Values and Operating Principles*;
- never harass other Parks Canada team members, stakeholders or partners;
- never retaliate against others;
- show diligence by reporting incidents of harassment or retaliation, and by using existing support resources, services and mechanisms available at Parks Canada.



## To obtain help

The present *Code* cannot cover all ethical issues and concerns that are likely to arise in the workplace. Situations will vary greatly and it may be difficult to decide what action to take. In such cases, you should discuss the matter with your supervisor or another manager with the proper authority, as soon as possible.

As Parks Canada team members, we all have a role to play in strengthening the ethical culture of our organization.

Parks Canada Centre for Values and Ethics

A safe place to call

Toll-free, confidential number:

**1-866-787-6780**

You can also call upon the professionals at the Centre for Values and Ethics to help you address work-related concerns and issues. The Centre for Values and Ethics offers personalized services to all Parks Canada team members and ensures confidentiality.

## Application of the *Parks Canada Values and Ethics Code*

The *Parks Canada Values and Ethics Code* came into effect in April 2014. The present version of the *Code* and the *Conflict of Interest and Post-Employment Policy* replace the 2006 *Parks Canada Agency Code of Ethics*.

This *Code* is applicable to all Parks Canada team members. For team members who are on leave, including those on leave without pay, they continue to be governed by the *Code* throughout their period of leave. Contractors and volunteers are also required to comply with the spirit of the present *Code*.

Compliance with the *Parks Canada Values and Ethics Code* forms part of the conditions of employment at the Parks Canada Agency. At the time of signing the letter of offer, all Parks Canada team members acknowledge that compliance with the *Code* is a condition of employment. A breach of this *Code* may result in corrective actions, including disciplinary measures of varying degrees up to termination of employment.

# Responsibilities

## **1. Responsibilities of all Parks Canada team members regarding values and ethics**

All Parks Canada team members have an important role to play in fostering and maintaining trustworthy and fruitful relationships and developing trust within the team, as well as with stakeholders, partners and the Canadian public.

Each Parks Canada team member is required to:

- apply the Core Values and expected behaviours of the *Parks Canada Values and Ethics Code* in his/her day-to-day activities;
- promptly inform his/her manager when he/she is personally involved in a situation with the potential to contravene the *Parks Canada Values and Ethics Code* and to damage the Parks Canada Agency brand;
- promptly resolve any situation that may appear to be a breach of the *Parks Canada Values and Ethics Code*; and
- remain vigilant and seek the necessary advice and guidance depending on the situation.

Pursuant to the *Public Servants Disclosure Protection Act*, Parks Canada has established an internal mechanism for the disclosure of wrongdoings. Accordingly, any employee who believes that a wrongdoing has been committed may disclose the situation to his/her supervisor or to the Ombudsman.

## **2. Specific responsibilities of Parks Canada supervisors regarding values and ethics**

In addition to their responsibilities as Parks Canada team members, supervisors at all levels have responsibilities related to personnel supervision. They make sure that Parks Canada Values and Ethics are a clear and concrete part of day-to-day operations and our commitment to service.

Supervisors must provide leadership and encourage other Parks Canada team members to adopt Parks Canada Values and Ethics.

Supervisors themselves must embody the Core Values and the expected behaviours. As supervisors, they are responsible to implement the Core Values and expected behaviours in day-to-day activities within their teams.

More specifically, supervisors are expected to:

- act rapidly to address any situation that is perceived or reported as contravening the *Parks Canada Values and Ethics Code*;
- engage in ongoing dialogue with their team members about Parks Canada Values and Ethics;
- employ and exemplify proper conduct with members of their team;
- provide a copy of the *Parks Canada Values and Ethics Code* to all new team members and discuss it with them; and
- ensure that all team members comply at all times with both the spirit and the requirements of the *Code* by providing the necessary support or taking the appropriate corrective action.

### **3. Specific responsibilities of the Parks Canada management team: middle managers and managers in the executive group regarding values and ethics**

In addition to their responsibilities as Parks Canada team members and as supervisors, members of the management team are responsible and accountable for the sound management of resources allocated to them by the Agency.

They ensure that their management decisions support the implementation of Parks Canada Values and Ethics within their areas of responsibility. They provide opportunities for Values and Ethics discussions and, if necessary, bring any resulting issues to the attention of the designated authorities within Parks Canada.

#### **4. Specific responsibilities of members of the Parks Canada Executive Management Committee regarding values and ethics**

The Executive Management Committee is responsible for establishing Parks Canada's strategic directions. The Committee members uphold Parks Canada Values and Ethics by incorporating them into the policies, guidelines, processes and standards under their responsibility.

## **5. Specific responsibilities of the Chief Executive Officer regarding values and ethics**

The Chief Executive Officer plays a lead role with respect to values and ethics. He/she has a legal obligation to establish the *Parks Canada Values and Ethics Code* and to ensure its application and implementation.

The Chief Executive Officer listens to the Parks Canada team members, seeks their input and provides his/her vision of the Values and behaviours required for the organization's success.

## **6. Specific responsibilities of the Parks Canada Ombudsman regarding values and ethics**

In addition to his/her responsibilities as a member of the Parks Canada team, as a supervisor and member of the Parks Canada management team, the Ombudsman serves as the director of the Centre for Values and Ethics.

Accordingly, the Ombudsman is called on to:

- foster and sustain dialogue on values and ethics;
- provide advice and guidance to all team members on ethical dilemmas, conflicts of interest and the application of the *Parks Canada Values and Ethics Code*;

- establish and implement an internal mechanism to deal with disclosures of wrongdoing under the *Public Servants Disclosure Protection Act*; and
- provide the necessary support and advice for the development of policies and guidelines.



## Links to existing documents

The Parks Canada Core Values provide a common framework for all sectors within the Agency. They support the tools that are already in place, including the *Human Resources Management Values and Operating Principles*, the *Leadership Attributes*, the *Park Warden Code of Conduct* and the *Quality Service Standards for our Visitors*.

Since Parks Canada is a federal government agency, its *Values and Ethics Code* is consistent with the *Values and Ethics Code for the Public Sector* of the Government of Canada.

The *Parks Canada Values and Ethics Code* came into effect in April 2014.