



GCC Board of Directors: Code of Conduct

Introduction

The German Chamber of Commerce, Hong Kong (“**the Chamber**”) is dedicated to maintaining the highest standards of ethics, integrity and governance. This Code of Conduct serves as a guide for the Board of Directors, outlining the principles and standards of behaviour expected to ensure compliance, prevent corruption and cronyism and to uphold the Chamber’s reputation.

1. Purpose

The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to:

1. provide clear guidance on the ethical standards and behaviour expected from each member of the Board of Directors;
2. promote transparency, accountability and integrity in all decision-making processes;
3. prevent conflicts of interest, corruption and cronyism within the Chamber; and
4. ensure that all actions comply with the relevant laws and regulations.

2. Scope

This Code of Conduct applies to all members of the Board of Directors of the Chamber, including the President, Vice Presidents and Treasurer. In this context, the terms “Directors” and “members of the Board” are used interchangeably.

3. Principles of Conduct

3.1 Integrity and Honesty

Directors are expected to act with integrity and honesty in all their professional interactions and decisions. They should avoid actions that could bring the Chamber into disrepute or compromise its ethical standards. This includes being truthful and straightforward in communications and maintaining the highest level of professional integrity.



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3.2 Compliance with Laws and Regulations

Directors must comply with all applicable laws, regulations, and internal policies. They should stay informed about legal and regulatory developments that impact the Chamber's operations. Any actions taken on behalf of the Chamber must be within the legal framework governing such actions.

3.3 Transparency and Accountability

Directors should ensure transparency in the decision-making processes by providing clear, accurate and timely information to stakeholders. They are accountable for their actions and decisions and should be prepared to explain and justify them to the Board, stakeholders, and relevant authorities.

3.4 Confidentiality

Directors are entrusted with sensitive information and must maintain its confidentiality. They should not disclose any non-public information obtained through their position for personal gain or to the detriment of the Chamber. This duty of confidentiality continues even after the end of their tenure.

3.5 Conflict of Interest

Subject to the Articles of Association of the Chamber, directors must avoid conflicts of interest between their personal or business interests outside of the Chamber and their duties to the Chamber. They should disclose any potential conflicts of interest promptly and recuse themselves from decision-making processes where a conflict exists. This ensures that decisions are made in the best interests of the Chamber and its stakeholders.

3.6 Fairness and Impartiality

Directors should act fairly and impartially in all their dealings. They should avoid favouritism and ensure that all stakeholders are treated equitably. Decisions should be based on merit and objective criteria, rather than on personal relationships or biases.

3.7 Respect and Professionalism

Directors should treat colleagues, employees and stakeholders with respect and professionalism. They should foster a culture of inclusivity, diversity, and mutual respect. Professional conduct should be maintained in all interactions, both within and outside the Chamber.

4. Prevention of Corruption and Cronyism

4.1 Gifts and Hospitality

Directors should not accept or offer gifts, hospitality or other benefits that could influence their decision-making. Any gifts or hospitality received as part of their role should be reported and reviewed in accordance with the Chamber's policies to ensure they do not compromise the integrity of the decision-making process.



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4.2 Bribery and Corruption

Directors must not engage in any form of bribery or corruption. They should avoid any conduct that could be perceived as corrupt and report any suspected incidents of bribery or corruption immediately to the Chamber's appointed Reporting Officer. The Chamber has a zero-tolerance policy towards bribery and corruption.

4.3 Nepotism and Cronyism

Directors should not show preferential treatment to family members, friends, or associates in hiring, promotion or any other business decisions. All appointments, contracts, and business decisions should be based on merit and conducted through transparent and objective processes.

5. Compliance and Enforcement

5.1 Reporting Violations

Directors have a duty to report any violations of this Code of Conduct to the designated Reporting Officer. Any report of violations will be treated confidentially and investigated promptly. The Chamber encourages a culture of openness where individuals feel comfortable reporting concerns without fear of retaliation.

5.2 Disciplinary Actions

Any Director found to be in violation of this Code of Conduct may face disciplinary action, including warnings, suspension or removal from the Board. Any disciplinary action will be determined by the Board in consultation with legal counsel, ensuring fairness and due process.

6. Review and Amendments

6.1 Review

This Code of Conduct will be reviewed from time to time to ensure its relevance and effectiveness. The Board will consider any changes in laws, regulations and best practices during the review process. Input from stakeholders may also be considered to improve the Code.

6.2 Amendments

Any amendments to this Code of Conduct must be approved by the Board of Directors. Once approved, all Directors will be informed of the changes and are expected to comply with the updated Code. The updated Code will be made available to all stakeholders.



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7. Acknowledgment

All members of the Board of Directors are required to sign an acknowledgment confirming their understanding and acceptance of this Code of Conduct. This acknowledgment will be renewed annually or whenever significant amendments to the Code are made.

8. Contact Information

For any questions or concerns regarding this Code of Conduct, please contact the Reporting Officer:

Jennifer Wu-Scharsig

Solicitor

E: jws@jwslawyer.com

T: +852 2153 9718

By adhering to this Code of Conduct, the Board of Directors of the German Chamber of Commerce in Hong Kong commits to upholding the highest standards of governance, ensuring ethical conduct, and fostering trust among all stakeholders. This Code reflects our dedication to integrity, transparency, and accountability in all our endeavours.