

improperly influenced. State officers and employees must avoid all situations where prejudice, bias, or opportunity for personal gain could influence their decisions. They must equally avoid circumstances suggesting that favoritism or personal gain is a motivating force in the conduct of State Government.

It is the intent of this Code to set forth the minimum ethical standards to be followed by officers and employees of the executive branch of the government. These standards are intended not only to require officers and employees to avoid activities that might result in using a public office or employment for private gain or the giving of favored treatment to any organization or person but also to maintain public confidence in the executive branch by prohibiting activities that might permit opportunity for personal gain or personal preference to influence decisions. The objectives are to maintain an impartial administration of the State government and to maintain public confidence in government.

Article II. Definitions

1. "Agency" means any principal department, agency, commission, bureau, authority, or other instrumentality of the executive branch of the State of Maryland whose officers or employees are covered by the provisions of this Code of Ethics pursuant to Article V hereof.

2. "Agency head" means the chairman or the chief executive officer or administrative officer of each of the State agencies.

3. "Assist" means to act, or offer to agree to act, in such a way as to help, aid, advise, furnish information to, or otherwise provide assistance to another person believing that such action is of help, aid, advice, or assistance to such a person and intending so to assist such person.

4. "Confidential information" means material or significant information received by an officer or employee by reason of or in the course of his relationship with an agency which is not intended at the time received to be made public and as to which the officer or employee is bound to act for the benefit of the agency and not for his own benefit.

5. "Entity" means any individual, partnership, association, corporation, firm, institute, trust, foundation, or other organization (other than the State or an agency thereof) whether or not operated for profit.