



A Caring Institution

# Early Childhood Care and Education Authority

## Anti-Corruption Policy

### 1.0 Introduction

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The Early Childhood Care and Education Authority (ECCEA) recognises that the risk of corruption is present and may occur in the organisation. It is committed to maintain the highest level of integrity in the conduct of its affairs through the adoption of corruption prevention strategies in the organisation.

This anti-corruption policy sets out the full commitment of the ECCEA for the deterrence and detection of corruption and for adherence to a culture of integrity.

### 2.0 Statement of Intent

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The ECCEA will not tolerate corruption in the administration of its responsibilities, whether from inside or outside. It expects the highest standards of conduct from Staff, Board Members and those who deal with the organisation including stakeholders and the general public. It is committed to ensuring that the risks of corruption and the potential losses that might result are minimized.

### 3.0 Policy Statement

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The ECCEA is committed to promoting and adhering to the highest standards of probity, transparency and accountability in the operations and management of the organisation. Through this policy, ECCEA engages itself to fully and unequivocally adopt a zero-tolerance stance towards corruption and other malpractices and shall ensure compliance with the anti-corruption legislation.

## **4.0 Anti-corruption Commitment**

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The ECCEA has committed itself to use all available means and resources at its disposal to combat corruption in all its forms at all times including the application of appropriate prevention and detection control measures.

For the purpose of ensuring sound implementation of this policy, the ECCEA will ensure that:

- Employees have sufficient knowledge concerning the anti-corruption policy and that it is applied to all undertakings.
- Adequate controls to counteract corruption are known and used within the organisation.
- There are clear procedures and systems for handling suspected cases of corruption.
- The anti-corruption policy can be consulted on the ECCEA Website.

The main objective of this anti-corruption policy is to strengthen and sustain an integrity culture within the ECCEA. This will be achieved through:

- The setting-up of effective processes characterized by broad participation and transparency.
- Regular evaluation of corruption risks, systems and procedures.
- Ensuring that projects have clear formulated goals, expected results as well as monitoring procedures and follow-ups.
- Learning from experience and continually improving organisational performance and the corporate image.

## **5.0 Scope and Applicability**

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This policy covers measures and practices of the ECCEA on preventing and combating corrupt, fraudulent, collusive or coercive practices in its activities and operations. This policy applies to Board Members, staff at management level, employees, educators as well as, consultants, suppliers, contractors, outside agencies doing business, and or any other parties having a business relationship with ECCEA

## **6.0 Definitions**

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For the purpose of this policy, corruption is defined as per section 2 of the Prevention of Corruption Act as amended.

**"Act of corruption" -**

- (a) means an act which constitutes a corruption offence; and
- (b) includes -
  - (i) any conduct whereby, in return for a gratification, a person does or neglects from doing an act in contravention of his public duties;
  - (ii) the offer, promise, soliciting or receipt of a gratification as an inducement or reward to a person to do or not to do any act, with a corrupt intention;
  - (iii) the abuse of a public or private office for private gain;
  - (iv) an agreement between 2 or more persons to act or refrain from acting in violation of a person's duties in the private or public sector for profit or gain;
  - (v) any conduct whereby a person accepts or obtains, or agrees to accept or attempts to obtain, from any person, for himself or for any other person, any gratification for inducing a public official, by corrupt or illegal means, or by the exercise of personal influence, to do or abstain from doing an act in the exercise of his duties to show favour or disfavour to any person.

All the sections of the law penalizing corruption offences are described in sections 4 to 17 of the Prevention of Corruption Act 2002 as amended. These include bribery by public official, bribery of public official, taking gratification to screen an offender from punishment, public official using his office for gratification, traffic d'influence and conflict of interest.

## **7.0 Responsibilities for implementing the policy**

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The responsibility to develop and coordinate the implementation of the policy shall rest upon the Early Childhood Care and Education Authority Anti-Corruption Committee (ECCEAACC) established for the purpose. The ECCEAACC shall set priorities, provide advice when ethical issues arise and communicate the policy to all levels of management and staff.

*The Anti-Corruption Committee* - The committee shall comprise of members from both operational and support departments of the ECCEA.

The person identified by the ECCEA and approved by the ECCEA Board shall lead the project and chair all meetings. The ECCEAACC shall be responsible for coordinating and implementing the anti-corruption policy. It shall develop a time-bound programme with clear and precise deliverables and related budget and execute it once approved by the ECCEA Board. The ECCEA shall designate an officer to act as Secretary to the Committee.



The committee shall meet on a regular basis, preferably every month or as decided by the Chairperson of the ECCEAACC. The Chair shall decide upon the setting up of sub-committees to assist the ECCEAACC in the implementation of any initiatives decided by the ECCEAACC.

**Role of Management** - It is the responsibility of the ECCEA Board Members and Officers at Management level to promote the anti-corruption policy within their areas of operation. Heads of Departments/ Units are expected to actively deter, prevent and detect corruption by maintaining effective control systems and ensuring that their staff are familiar with the policy.

**Role of Employees** – Each employee shall read, be familiar with and strictly comply with the policy. The ECCEA shall ensure that each employee is provided with a copy of this policy or otherwise has on-line access.

**Role of Internal Audit** – The ECCEA shall have an Internal Auditor who will be responsible to ensure the effectiveness and adequacy of the Internal Control System in place. It should ensure that the system is subject to regular audit to provide assurance of its effectiveness in countering corruption practices.

## **8.0 Risk Assessment**

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The ECCEA is conscious that the risk of corruption may occur in any sphere of its activities and may evolve in the light of changing circumstances and working environment. In its endeavour to proactively address risks of corruption, the ECCEA shall ensure that a proper risk management process is in place. Risk assessment should focus on a thorough analysis of the functional activities in close collaboration with officers involved in the process with a view to identifying potential or actual corruption risk areas. With respect to risk identified, necessary corruption prevention measures including policies and procedures should be developed to address the risks. The responsibility to plan, coordinate and monitor the risk management process rests with the ECCEAACC. The measures proposed in the risk assessment exercise will be published in the Annual Report.

## **9.0 Handling and reporting corruption**

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**Reporting suspected cases of corruption** - Notwithstanding Section 44(1) of the Prevention of Corruption Act 2002 as amended which provides that where an officer of a public body suspects that an act of corruption has been committed within or in relation to that public body, he **shall** forthwith make a written report to the ICAC. The organisation shall put in place measures that shall facilitate the reporting of suspected cases.

S 45 of the PoCA as amended provides that where in the exercise of his functions, the chief executive of a public body is of the opinion that an act of corruption may have occurred, he may refer to the ICAC for investigation.

The ECCEA may set up a committee to assist the Director in determining whether there is reasonable doubt for suspicion of corruption prior to referral of the case to the ICAC for investigation.

**Confidentiality** - Information pertaining to complaints shall not be disclosed to any unauthorised party.

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## **10.0 Protection of whistleblowers**

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There will be no reprisal by management against the individual who in good faith reports an act of corruption or malpractice or suspected illegal and dishonest activity or any activity that he/she has witnessed. However, disciplinary actions may be taken against any person who knowingly makes false allegations.

## **11.0 Disciplinary measures**

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The ECCEA is committed to ensuring that this policy is duly implemented within the organisation.

Disciplinary measures in accordance with established procedures will be taken against any staff who is found guilty of a breach of the provisions contained in this policy.

## **12.0 Training and Communications**

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The ECCEA recognises that the success and credibility of this policy depends on effective training, communications and the awareness of all its staff. Management should ensure that the anti-corruption policy is clearly disseminated to all staff and that its contents are understood.

## **13.0 Review of policy**

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This policy will be reviewed annually or earlier if necessary or in the event of any changes in the laws and regulations that are relevant to the ECCEA. The Director of ECCEA should recommend the review to the Board.

14.0 Approval

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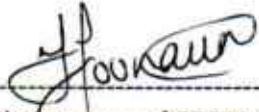
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Director of ECCEA

15/7/2022

Date



Chairperson of ECCEA Board

15/7/2022

Date