

Trinidad and Tobago Society of Planners

CODE OF ETHICS

Article 1. Spatial Planning

The practice of spatial planning embraces the totality of land use, including consideration of the adjacent seabed, to ensure the rational and sustainable utilization of land and related natural resources, and in pursuit of the integrated development of settlements and supporting networks which promote human well-being and environmental harmony, and which are aesthetically pleasing. The purpose of such planning is to make considered interventions in a course of action, based on the empirical analysis of information and data, in order to influence the achievement of a desired outcome.

Article 2. Registered Planner and Other Categories of Membership

Registered Planner, in respect of Article 1, is one who has successfully undergone professional education and training at an institution recognised by the Trinidad and Tobago Society of Planners (TTSP), and who has completed two years of post qualification professional practice to the satisfaction of the TTSP, and as may be verified by a currently registered planner of the TTSP or similar body recognised by the TTSP, and is accepted to practice as such within the jurisdiction of Trinidad and Tobago. A registered planner shall be assigned the Stamp of Seal of the Trinidad and Tobago Society of Planners and a registration number to be affixed, along with his or her name, as testimony to the professional proficiency of work executed under his/her responsibility.

Planners who have attained a professional degree may be considered for full membership with less than two years experience, providing that they were, prior to their formal studies, engaged in core planning activities as may be certified by a professional planner and recommended to the Accreditation Committee.

A registered planner, whether in the employ of the public service, private practice, academic or research endeavours, or in whatever capacity engaged as a planner, has a duty to the public, to his/her employer and clients, as well as to other members of the profession and thus seeks at all times to:

- (a) serve the public interest in a manner which upholds the integrity of the profession within the laws of Trinidad and Tobago;
- (b) uphold the reputation of the profession ;
- (c) conduct himself/herself in accordance with the highest standards of professional practice and integrity;
- (d) be of assistance in advancing the competency of junior planners and students.

Honorary Member: One upon whom, in the opinion of the Executive Committee, this title is conferred, in recognition of an outstanding contribution to planning. These members shall be entitled to use the designation of Hon. M.S.P. (T.T).

Affiliated Member: One who is a professional member of a planning organisation enjoying reciprocity with the TTSP and who applies to be registered to practice in Trinidad and Tobago and is granted permission so to do.

Persons not accepted as registered planners may be considered as follows:

Associate Member: One who holds professional membership in a related profession practice which may be performed in association with the professional planner in pursuit of integrated development planning. This may include aspects of architecture, urban design, relevant branches of engineering, social, economic or environmental planning and management, or such other endeavour as deemed appropriate by the TTSP. Candidates for associated membership must be recommended by a professional planner who testifies in written presentation to the TTSP that the candidate is considered worthy of such membership.

Provisional Member: One who, at the discretion of the TTSP, may qualify for full membership with additional training and experience as prescribed.

Corresponding Member: One who is fully qualified and has appropriate experience to be accepted as a full member but is resident and practising overseas, and who may be accepted to full membership for intended practice in Trinidad and Tobago.

Student Member: One who is attending full or part-time courses at a recognised institution leading to academic qualifications in planning.

Retired Member: A once Professional Member who has ceased to be in practice and has advised the TTSP accordingly.

Fellow: One who, in the opinion of the Executive, has contributed significantly to the advancement of the profession and practice but is not a professional planner.

A registered planner in good standing will have paid the annual membership dues of \$300.00, or as otherwise prescribed from time to time. Participating and Corresponding Members will have paid the annual fee of \$200.00. Student planners will have paid the annual fee of TT\$100.00

Refusal of registration may be addressed by the applicant to an Appeal Tribunal of the TTSP comprising at least three senior members of the Society duly constituted for this purpose and having as a member the sponsor of the candidate seeking registration.

Article 3. Unprofessional Conduct

Without prejudice to the generality of Article 2, any cases of alleged unprofessional conduct which are not specifically covered by the under mentioned numbered articles which detail the requirements of this Code, will be dealt with having regard to the particular circumstances of the case. Circumstances of unprofessional conduct by registered planners will be dealt with by the TTSP through a sub-committee of senior professional members constituted for this purpose. After due investigation and consideration of reports of unprofessional conduct the Disciplinary Sub-Committee will recommend to the Executive a course of disciplinary action should the reports be substantiated. The Executive may concur with the recommendation or seek further clarification and consideration of any relevant matter before instituting the recommended disciplinary action. Such action may include a fine, suspension or debarment from practice and consequently expulsion from the TTSP. Appeals against disciplinary action may be addressed first and foremost to an Appeals Tribunal of the TTSP, and, if necessary, thereafter to the Supreme Court.

Article 4. Concepts of Planning

The scope of the planner's professional responsibilities includes, inter alia, the following concepts:

- (a) that land is a finite resource, particularly in a small island State, and must be utilised in a most judicious manner;
- (b) that planning is concerned with the need to protect the integrity of the natural environment;
- (c) that planning is problem solving and involves an inter-sectoral analytical process of choices which require the balancing of competing interests;
- (d) that planning is concerned with the long range consequences of present actions;
- (e) that the public must be permitted meaningful and informed participation in the process and consideration of available choices under consideration;
- (f) that planning is concerned with the social, economic, physical, as well as political issues underlying land use and spatial development;
- (g) that planning is concerned about the rights and privileges of individuals within the context of the Constitution and relevant legislative instruments;
- (h) that planning is concerned with the pursuit of excellence of design, whether in the natural or built environment;
- (i) that planning is about public advocacy;
- (j) that planning is about the monitoring and evaluation of plan implementation;

Responsibility to the Public-

A registered planner shall:

Article 5.

affix his/her profession seal and signature to only those plans, specifications and reports actually prepared by him/her or under his/her direct supervision and vetted accordingly;

Article 6.

- (a) endeavour to extend public understanding of planning and its place in society;
- (b) endeavour at all times to enhance the public regard for, and its understanding of, his/her profession by extending the public knowledge thereof and discouraging untrue and exaggerated statements with respect to professional planning, and,
- (c) not give opinion or make statements on professional planning projects connected with public policy where such statements are inspired or paid for by private interest, unless he/she clearly discloses on whose behalf he/she is giving the opinions or making the statements.

Article 7.

- (a) not be associated with enterprises contrary to the public interest or sponsored by persons of questionable integrity, or persons who do not conform to the basic principles of this Code, and
- (b) shall not sanction the dissemination or use of his/her work in part or in whole in a manner calculated to mislead and, if it comes to his/her knowledge that it is so published, shall take immediate steps to correct and false impressions so given.

Article 8

- (a) have proper regard for the safety, health and welfare of the public in the performance of his/her professional duties, and
- (b) shall complete, sign and stamp only those plans and other documents which reflect proper regard for the safety, health and welfare of the public.

Article 9

- (a) conduct himself/herself in such a manner as not to prejudice his professional status or the reputation of the profession and, without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing, shall, in particular, comply at all times with this Code.

Responsibility to the Employer and Client

A registered planner must:

Article 10

- (a) not solicit prospective clients or employment through the use of false or misleading claims, harassment or duress;
- (b) not sell, or offer for sale, services by stating or implying an ability to influence decisions by improper means;
- (c) not offer to pay, or accept, either directly or indirectly, any commission, political contribution, gift or other consideration in order to secure or execute planning work;
- (d) not accept, or continue to perform, work which cannot be performed with the promptness required by the prospective client or employer, or which is required by the circumstances of the assignment; and,
- (e) where he/she finds the he/she is not able to do any portion of work for which he/she is engaged, either recommend to his/her client suitably qualified professionals, or engage the services of another registered planner or related professional who is suitably qualified to perform the type of work required.

Article 11

- (a) accept the decisions of a client or employer regarding the objectives and nature of the professional services to be performed, notwithstanding observations made to the client or employer during briefing, unless the course of action to be pursued involves conduct which is illegal or contrary to the Code;
- (b) provide diligent, creative, independent and competent performance of work in pursuit of the client or employer's interest, consistent with dedicated service to the public interest; and,
- (c) exercise independent professional judgement on behalf of clients and employers.

Article 12

- (a) when pursuing planning work on behalf of one client, avoid undertaking work for and on behalf of any other client, if by so doing the interests of either client would be in any way prejudiced or the registered planner's ability to act wholly in the interest of either client would be in any way impaired;
- (b) if his/her interest is likely to be affected by the decision of his/her client or employer on any matter whatsoever, shall in writing disclose to his/her client or employer the nature of his interest immediately after the relevant facts have come to his/her knowledge; and,
- (c) in the absence of full disclosure of any actual, apparent or reasonably foreseeable conflict between interests of client or employer and the personal or financial interests of the registered planner or of another past or present employer, must refuse or discontinue the performance of such work without compensation for any part thereof.

Article 13

- (a) refrain from disclosing confidential information pertaining to the interests of his/her clients or employers without their consent, except when:
 - (i) required by process of law;
 - (ii) require to prevent a clear violation of law, or
 - (iii) required to prevent a substantial injury to the public; and
- (b) avoid the use of information obtained confidentially in the course of his/her assignment as a means of making personal gain, except with the knowledge and written consent of his/her client or employer as the case may be.

When in the Employ of the Public Service:

A Registered Planner Must:

Article 14

When advising or acting for a public authority in the discharge of any statutory planning function, employ his/her professional skills with the sole concern for the proper discharge of that function, irrespective of any other interests of the authority that may be involved.

Article 15

Except by the expressed permission of the authority concerned, when employed by or acting as a consultant to a central government department or local authority or other public service agency, avoid undertaking any private planning work or engage in any private dealings in land or buildings in that area if and for so long as he/she is in a position, in the course of his employment or consultancy to grant or refuse or recommend the granting of refusal or any form of statutory or other approval or permission relating to the development or use of land or to make or recommend the making of any other planning decision materially affecting the development or use of land. The provision of this clause shall not operate to prevent a registered planner:

- (i) designing, building, acquiring or applying for planning permission or other consent related to a dwelling house occupied or for occupation by himself or members of his family, or disposing of such a dwelling house for letting, managing or disposing of properly inherited by him or in respect of which he is executor or administrator, provided that before applying for planning permission or other consent as aforementioned he/she gives notice in writing to the body employing him/her or to which he/she acts as consultant; or,
- (ii) giving planning advice free of charge to the public as part of his employment or management.

Article 16

Avoid using the power of one's office to seek or obtain a special advantage that is not in the public interest, or to gain a special advantage that is not a matter of public knowledge.

Article 17

Refrain from divulging any confidential findings resulting from studies or actions of any commission or board of which he/she is a member, or for which he/she is acting without the consent of the respective body.

Article 18

While serving as a witness before a court, commission or other tribunal, refrain from expressing opinions on professional planning matters that are not founded on adequate knowledge and honest conviction.

Self Responsibility

Article 19

The registered planner owes it to himself/herself to

- (a) be faithful to public needs;
- (b) be fair and loyal to his associates, employers, clients, subordinates and employees;
- (c) strive for high standards of professional competence;
- (d) not commit a deliberately wrongful act which reflects adversely on the planning profession;
- (e) respect the rights of others and, in particular, must not improperly discriminate against any person;
- (f) strive to contribute time and effort to groups lacking in adequate planning resources and to voluntary professional activities.
- (g) seek to maintain his/her professional competence throughout his/her professional life,
- (h) contribute to the development of the profession from his/her experience and research,
- (i) seek to accurately represent the professional qualifications, education and affiliations of himself and other members of the profession; and,
- (j) without fear or favour, expose unprofessional or dishonest conduct by any other registered planner.

Miscellaneous

Article 20

The registered planner must not misrepresent his qualifications and/or experience and must undertake only such work as he/she is competent to perform by virtue of his/her training and experience.

Advertising

Article 21

Always employ circumspect in advertising to announce his/her practice and availability and shall ensure that any such advertisement is neither excessive nor misleading to the public, nor such as to prejudice his/her professional status or the

reputation of the profession. In particular, no advertisement of planning services shall contain:

- (i) an inaccurate statement of fact;
- (ii) an explicit comparison between the services offered the member advertising and the service offered by other registered planners; or,
- (iii) an endorsement of a commercial product.

In considering what is excessive it will be borne in mind that the purpose of the advertisement is to draw attention to the services available and not to suggest that the registered planner can offer superior services or solve all problems.

Rev. 1. Jan. 2007