



The Liberian Institute of Architects

CODE OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT AND ETHICS FOR THE ARCHITECTURAL PROFESSION

This **Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics** for the Architectural Profession has been adopted by the ARB pursuant to promoting the practice of architecture in Liberia and in doing so protect public interest.

The Code states the guidelines for the conduct of members in the fulfilment of these obligations and is arranged in Principles, Rules and Guidance Notes. The Principles are those of universal application. The rules are specific mandatory injunctions, breach of which can lead to disciplinary action by the ARB. The Guidance Notes explain or amplify particular applications of a Principle or Rule.

Architects are by virtue of being LIA members licensed and registered by the ARB obligated and mandated to uphold all of the provisions of this Code. Contravention of any section of the Code is liable to reprimand, suspension, expulsion or any other sanction in accordance with the stipulations of the ARB and LIA Bylaws.

Principle 1: Professional Integrity

1.1 Honesty, Integrity, Faithfulness, Impartiality and Responsibility

Members shall be honest in all their dealings, act with impartiality and responsibility and uphold the credibility and dignity of the profession at all times in their professional and business activities:

1.1.1 Members shall not make misleading, false or deceptive claims or statements about their professional qualifications and experience which are capable of implying or taking credit for work(s) which they did not do or participate in.

1.1.2 Members shall not participate in juror or external examination for any Architecture program in any institution in Liberia not recognized by ARB as this could lead to making misleading, false or deceptive claims or statements about the professional status of



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such a program which are capable of implying that it is a program recognized by ARB. This is gross misconduct.

1.1.3 Members shall not affix LIA/ARB stamp or seal on drawings, or sign specifications, reports or other professional work(s) for which they do not have control or a degree of knowledge and supervision enough for a professional duty of care for such work(s).

1.1.4 Members shall not affix LIA/ARB stamp or seal on drawings, or sign specifications, reports or other professional work(s) bearing business names in which they are not a principal or partner or director or which are unregistered by ARB or work(s) they have not directly reviewed and coordinated its preparation or work(s) they do not intend to take responsibility for its adequacy or otherwise.

1.1.5 Members shall not deliberately or carelessly mislead clients about the results that can be achieved through the use of the members' services by means that may be tantamount to the violation of any subsisting law and/or code of practice.

1.1.6 Members shall not collude, conspire with or assist a client in conduct that the Architect knows or reasonably should know is fraudulent, or legal or unethical.

1.1.7 Members shall act impartially in all cases in which they are acting between client, contractor and any other parties. They must interpret the conditions of a contract with entire fairness and firmness and diligently care out the services outlined herein.

1.1.8 Members are at liberty to engage in any activity, whether as Proprietor, Director, Principal, Partner, Manager, Superintendent, Team Leader, Supervisor, Salaried Employee of, or consultant to, anybody, corporate or unincorporated or in any other capacity provided that their conduct complies with the provision of this code.

1.1.9 A member who is convicted for abuse of office, dishonesty, misappropriation or general misconduct by any court of competent jurisdiction or indicted by a judicial Commission of Inquiry or Tribunal (whose decision has not been altered by a higher court through the process of appeal) in carrying his duties shall be deemed to have contravened the provisions of this Code.



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1.2 Conflict of Interest.

Members shall not allow themselves to be improperly influenced by their own or other's self-interest. Members must declare to any prospective client any relevant business interests as they arise, which if not so declared, could raise doubts about their integrity.

1.2.1 Members who risk a breach of professional integrity shall, as the circumstances may require, either withdraw from the situation or remove the source of conflict or declare it and obtain the agreement of the parties concerned to the continuance of their engagement.

1.2.2 Members providing contracting services shall inform the client of his or her right to appoint another member to act as his agent and professional to advise on project control with respect to time, quality and budget.

1.3 Financial Misconduct

Members shall observe appropriate financial probity in connection with their professional and business activities.

1.3.1 Members shall not offer or accept commissions or gifts as an inducement to show favor to any person or body; nor shall they recommend or allow their names to be used as recommending any service or product in advertisements relating to their professional activities.

1.3.2 This Principle does not prevent members who are contractors from accepting the trade and cash discounts customarily allowed by manufacturers or suppliers.

1.4 Confidentiality

Members shall respect the privacy and confidentiality of others.

1.5 Client's Account.

Payments made by client for other services consultants, through members, is client's account in trust. Members therefore shall not thwart, divert, discount or delay remittance (beyond reasonable banking clearance time frame) to respective beneficiaries.



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1.6 Architect's Payment Certificates

Architect's payment certificates shall be issued and signed by an authorized partner in an ARB registered architectural firm whose authorization shall be confirmed in writing at the beginning of each project and jointly signed by the partner(s). This responsibility may be delegated to another fully registered architect with the firm with a written authorization similarly signed.

Principle 2: Professional Competence

2.1 Proficiency, Knowledge and Care

Members are expected to apply a high degree of skill, knowledge and care in all their works, and must also apply their informed and impartial judgment in reaching any decision whatever the circumstances are.

2.1.1 Members shall continuously improve their knowledge, skill and professional abilities through Continuing Professional Development Program (CPDP).

2.2 Adequacy of Resources

Members shall realistically appraise their eligibility and capability to undertake and achieve any proposed work; otherwise they shall not quote for, or accept the work.

2.3 Clarity of Terms, Scopes and Responsibilities

Members shall ensure that their terms of commission, the scope and extent of their responsibilities are clearly spelt out and recorded in writing and shall explain to their clients the implications of any of the conditions of engagement as minimum standard and how their fees are to be calculated and charged.

2.3.1 **The ARB Conditions Of Engagement, Charges And Consultancy Agreement For Professional Architecture And Project Management Services** is the minimum standard for engaging in the delivery of professional services and members proposing or making an agreement shall make use of the ARB Conditions of Engagement, Charges and Consultancy agreement to define the terms of the Engagement, Charges and Consultancy agreement where applicable.



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2.3.2 Members shall not sub-commission or sub-let work without the prior consent of their client(s) and or without defining the charges in the responsibilities of those concerned.

2.4 Progress Reporting

Members shall keep their clients informed of the progress of a project and obtain client's approval before key decisions are made on the client's behalf.

2.5 Adherence to Time, Cost and Quality

Members shall use their best endeavors to meet the client's agreed time, cost and quality requirements for the projects.

2.6 Quality of Partners/Directors and Staff

Members shall not have or take as Partner or Co-director in their firm any person who is disqualified for registration by reason of the ARB or any applicable law of the Republic of Liberia. This also applies to any person disqualified for registration by another regulatory professional body by reason of expulsion under the relevant disciplinary regulations and or who has been struck out of the ARB register.

2.6.1 Registered Architectural firms/Members shall arrange that the work of their offices and any branch office in-so-far as it relates to Architecture is under the control of a fully Registered Architect.

Principle 3: General Ethics And Obligations

3.1 General Obligations

Members and Architectural firms shall uphold all the provisions of the Constitution of the Republic of Liberia, and endeavor to conserve the nation's natural resources and cultural heritage, while striving to improve the environment and quality of life within it.

3.1.1 Members/Architectural firms shall not discriminate in their professional activities on the basis of age, gender, race, tribe and/or religion.

3.1.2 Members/Architectural firms shall respect the provisions of the Liberian Copyright law in relation to designs and works executed by them or by other professionals. The



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Copyright in all designs shall remain the property of the architect, unless otherwise agreed.

3.2 Obligation to the Profession

Members/Architectural firms shall ensure that they are financially up to date in respect of subscriptions to ARB.

3.3 Obligation to Public

Members shall uphold and comply with the spirit and letter of the law governing their professional affairs, including provisions of the Conditions of Engagement, Charges and Consultancy Agreement for Professional Architectural and Project Management Services (CECCA-PAPMS), the National Building Code 9NBC) and Planning Regulations, in the discharge of their professional duties and business activities.

- A. Members/Architectural firms shall ensure that all Architectural projects/designs are signed by an ARB registered and licensed Architect before submission for planning and implementation approvals.
- B. The non-compliance with the provisions of the Conditions of Engagement, Charges and Consultancy Agreement for Professional Architectural and Project Management Services shall be deemed a breach of the provisions of this Code.

3.3.1 If, in the course of their rendering services on a project, members become aware of a decision taken by their employer or client which violates any law or regulation which will, in the Members' judgment, materially affect adversely the safety of the public of the finished project, members shall:

- A. Advise their employer or client against the decision
- B. Refuse to consent to the decision, and
- C. Report the decision to ARB for further action

3.3.2 Members/Architectural Firms are encouraged to render public interest professional services including those rendered for the needy, after disaster or in other emergencies without expecting compensation.



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3.3.3 Members/Architectural Firms shall be involved in civic activities as citizens and as professionals and shall strive to improve public appreciation and understanding of architecture and the functions and responsibilities of architects.

3.3.4 A Member/Architectural firm may make his/her availability and experience known by means of direct approaches to individuals and organizations provided that the information given is in substance and in presentation factual, relevant and neither misleading nor unfair to others nor otherwise discreditable to the profession.

3.3.5 Members/Architectural Firms shall not advertise except as described and permitted in the practice guidance notes.

3.4 Obligation to Colleagues and Other Professionals

3.4.1 Respect and Recognition of colleagues: Members/Architectural Firms shall respect the rights and acknowledge the professional aspirations and contributions of their colleagues.

- A. Members/Architectural firms shall neither maliciously nor unfairly seek to damage another member's reputation or practice.
- B. Members/Architectural firms shall not insult or disparage colleagues or anyone on social media platforms, nor post offensive, discriminatory and inflammatory or false information and material on social media platforms, e.g. WhatsApp, Facebook, Twitter etc. The following shall be considered unacceptable:
 - i. Private information about any individual or organization, including architects and architects' practices
 - ii. Abusive or derogatory comments
 - iii. Insensitive, inappropriate or upsetting comments, contents or links
 - iv. False allegations, or defamatory or insulting comments about any named individual or organization
 - v. Rude or aggressive posts
 - vi. Spam
 - vii. References to specific investigations, ongoing hearings or litigation
 - viii. Anything which infringes or encourages infringement of the law, including the intellectual property or privacy rights of others



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ix. Anything which infringes the intellectual property or privacy rights of others.

x. In line with the goal of achieving equality, discrimination in any form against anyone on grounds of the following will not be tolerated:

- a. Age, gender or disability
- b. Being married or in about their family
- c. Being pregnant or having a child
- d. Race or tribe including color, nationality, ethnic or national origin
- e. Religion, belief or lack of religion/belief

- C. A Member/Architectural firm, on being approached or instructed to proceed with professional work upon which another Member/Architectural firm was previously engaged, shall notify the facts to the ARB and to the original Member/Architectural firm and confirm that the original Member/Architectural firm had been duly paid before they proceed to undertake such works. If the project is under construction, a joint meeting between the Member/Architectural firm, the client and the builder shall precede the change of hands.

3.4.2 Respect and Recognition of other Professionals: Members/Architectural firms shall respect and recognize the expertise of other professionals and acknowledge their contributions to their works.

3.4.3 Competitions: Architectural design competitions may be conducted with the approval and under direction of and utilizing the ARB approved guidelines for Architectural Design Competitions.

- A. Members/Architectural firms shall not take part in any competition that is not organized and implemented in accordance with the provisions of the ARB.
- B. Members/Architectural firms who have been involved in organizing or assessing a competition shall not be subsequently engaged as Project Architect for the same project.

3.4.4 Pupilage and Professional Development: Members/Architectural firms shall recognize and fulfil their obligation to nurture fellow professionals as they progress through all stages of their



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career, beginning with professional education in the schools, progressing through tutelage and continuing throughout their career.

3.4.5 Good Employment Practice: Members/Architectural firms shall provide their associates and employees with a suitable workable environment, facilitate their professional development and compensate them fairly as and when due.

- A. Members/Architectural firms shall ensure that all members under their employ attend activities of ARB and attain the minimum attendance required to maintain their practice licence.
- B. Members leaving an Architectural firm shall not, without permission of their employer or partner, take designs, drawings, data, notes, or other materials relating to the firm's work whether or not performed by the members.
- C. Members/Architectural firms shall not unreasonably withhold permission from a departing employee or partner to take copies of designs, drawings, data, report notes or other materials relating to work, materials performed by the employee or partner that are not confidential.

3.4.6 Procedures for Disputes and Complaints: All complaints and disputes between members shall first be referred to the LIA and ARB for arbitration.

3.5 Obligations for the Environment

Members/Architectural firms shall strive towards sustainable methods in design, development and practice of the profession.

3.6 Oaths of the Profession

Members/Architectural firms shall ensure adherence to the oaths sworn.

Guidance Notes

1. Advertisement:

A member is permitted to:

- (a) Send to architectural media principles and scripts about his/her own work or about architectural topics of general interest, and to allow his/her work to be displayed in exhibitions;



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- (b) Exhibit his name outside his office and on buildings in the course of construction, alteration or extension, provided that such exhibition of his name is done unostentatiously and complies with the specifications for lettering prescribed by the ARB.
- (d) Publish images/photos of buildings in documents prepared in responses to requests for proposals by potential clients, for which he/she completed normal services as described in the Conditions of Engagement or the Basic Services as described in the Architect's Agreement, provided that the publication is done truthfully and factually.
- (e) Respond to an advertisement addressed to architects by a prospective client, overseas or at home who wishes to hear from architects willing and able to undertake a particular project.
- (f) Apply or advertise for salaried employment;
- (g) Advertise for staff and the advertisement may include details of salaries and other rewards offered, qualifications and experience required and indications of the type of work available.
- (h) Notify of a new or change of address, formation of or changes in firms or partnerships by way of public media;
- (i) Pay for an entry in any business or purely architectural directory;