

Methodist Church of New Zealand
Te Hahi Weteriana o Aotearoa

Administration Division
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CHRISTCHURCH

Information Leaflet No. 109

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HANDLING
CONFLICTS OF
INTEREST

INTRODUCTION

As people undertake leadership roles within the Church by accepting positions on Meetings, Councils, Committees or Boards, inevitably a situation will arise where the person will have differing interest in a matter under discussion. By way of examples:

- a member of the District Property Committee reviewing a building proposal within the member's parish.
- a Parish Council member tendering for work to be undertaken on parish buildings such as painting or maintenance work.
- a professional person, on the Committee or Board, being engaged in their professional capacity for a fee.

The existence of a conflict should not in itself prohibit a member from participating in the discussion in regard to the particular matter. However, it is important for the integrity and wellbeing of any committee that practice principles are adopted and followed in carrying out the business of the committee.

PRACTICE PRINCIPLES

1. Any conflicts of interest must be disclosed at the outset before discussion on the issue has commenced. If a person thinks or believes there may be a conflict then they need to declare it immediately the issue arises.
2. Where a member, or an immediate associate of that member, may make personal financial or other gain from the decision that member should consider if it is more appropriate for them to withdraw from the discussion. That member must not participate in the decision making process.
3. No member should use information gained from their position on a Committee or Board to obtain personal gain or advantage from their knowledge of that information.
4. The confidentiality of information gained from membership of a Committee or Board must be respected and disclosure made only where authorised or legally mandated.
5. All members of a Committee or Board are jointly responsible to ensure compliance with any laws and regulations

SEEKING ADVICE

If any member of a committee has concerns over a possible conflict, then they should discuss this with the Chair of the committee. If that is either not appropriate or it does not resolve the matter, then you should contact the Connexional Office who will ensure that expert advice is made available.