

# Framework for Ethical Decision-Making

Case #: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Is there an ethical issue, problem, or dilemma?

Yes     No

If yes, briefly state the ethical issue, problem, or dilemma.

2. Are there any laws, regulations, policies and procedures, or ethical codes relevant to the situation?

Yes     No

If yes, identify and briefly describe the contents of the relevant sections, policies and procedures, or ethical codes.

3. What ethical values are relevant to the situation? Check each ethical value that applies. You may want to use a + for those values that are upheld or respected, a - for those values that are violated or compromised, and leave blank the boxes beside those values that play little part in the situation. Remember you are concerned to achieve a positive or neutral balance among values in the situation. If the balance is in the negative direction you may want to be very vigilant in deciding on a course of action.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Integrity       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• give precedence to ethical considerations</li><li>• accept responsibility for actions</li></ul>   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Courage         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• face danger and take life-threatening risks as duty requires</li><li>• show determination to abide by ethical values and obligations</li><li>• follow the correct ethical course regardless of the personal or professional implications</li></ul>  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Compassion      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• consider and protect the welfare of others regardless of their social, economic, or legal status</li></ul>  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Respect         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• show regard for the worth, dignity, feelings, and interests of other people</li><li>• safeguard the rights of others</li><li>• comply with the rule of law</li><li>• use the minimal amount of force required</li><li>• treat everyone equally in accordance with the law regardless of their ethnicity, colour, religion, sex, age, mental or physical disability, marital status, or sexual orientation</li></ul> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Transparency    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• are clear and straightforward about decisions and actions taken</li><li>• behave in a manner that is open to public scrutiny and accountability, except as restricted by law</li></ul>  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Trustworthiness | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• are honest in communication and behaviour (allowing for officially approved exceptions)</li><li>• are reliable and fulfill duties and responsibilities as required</li><li>• are loyal to the public trust</li><li>• maintain confidentiality of information, except as required by law</li></ul>   |

4. Identify the stakeholders who will be affected by the decision. Enter the stakeholders in addition to yourself along the top of the Risk–Benefit Worksheet. Use additional pages if required.
5. Identify the alternative courses of action. Enter the alternative courses of action in the first column of the Risk–Benefit Worksheet.
6. Review each course of action, and identify and consider the potential risks and benefits for each stakeholder. Enter the risks and benefits in the appropriate cell on the Risk–Benefit Worksheet.
7. Review the Risk–Benefit Worksheet and select a course of action after carefully considering the proportionality of the ethical values you identified in step 3, as well as your reliance upon any ethical theories that may have influenced you. Indicate your preferred course of action.

8. Consider the justification for your selected course of action, in terms of the public trust, by answering the following questions.

a. Are you comfortable with the course of action you have chosen?

Yes     No

b. Do you think you would choose the same course of action again?

Yes     No

c. Will you be able to explain your selected course of action within your agency?

Yes     No

d. Assuming that such disclosure is allowed, will you be comfortable telling your family, friends, and/or neighbours about the course of action you have selected?

Yes     No

e. Will your selected course of action stand up to publicity?

Yes     No

f. Can your selected course of action be defended in court?

Yes     No

9. Identify the steps required to implement your course of action.

10. Indicate how you will evaluate the impact of your course of action.

**RISK – BENEFIT WORKSHEET**

Course of Action #1:					
	Stakeholders				
	1. You	2.	3.	4.	5.
Risks					
Benefits					
Course of Action #2:					
	1. You	2.	3.	4.	5.
Risks					
Benefits					

**RISK – BENEFIT WORKSHEET (Cont.)**

<b>Course of Action #3:</b>					
	Stakeholders				
	1. You	2.	3.	4.	5.
Risks					
Benefits					
<b>Course of Action #4:</b>					
	1. You	2.	3.	4.	5.
Risks					
Benefits					

**RISK-BENEFIT WORKSHEET (Cont.)**

Course of Action #5:					
	Stakeholders				
	1. You	2.	3.	4.	5.
Risks					
Benefits					
Course of Action #6:					
	1. You	2.	3.	4.	5.
Risks					
Benefits					

