

For discussion on  
15 December 2008

## **LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL PANEL ON PUBLIC SERVICE**

### **Draft Civil Service Code**

#### **Purpose**

This paper seeks Members' views on the draft Civil Service Code ("the Code") and sets out the way forward for promulgating the Code.

#### **Background**

2. In connection with the development of the Political Appointment System, the Civil Service Bureau ("CSB") has committed to issuing a Civil Service Code that sets out the values and standards of conduct which civil servants are expected to uphold, and the framework within which civil servants are expected to work with politically appointed officials under the expanded Political Appointment System.

3. In putting together the draft Code, we have made reference to the guidelines set out in CSB Circular No. 8/2002 on "The Role and Responsibilities of Civil Servants in relation to Principal Officials appointed under the Accountability System", the Consultation Document on Further Development of the Political Appointment System published in July 2006, the Report on Further Development of the Political Appointment System published in October 2007, as well as similar codes issued by a number of overseas jurisdictions and international organisations.

#### **The draft Code**

4. The draft Code comprises a total of seven sections, covering the following major areas -

- (a) the core values which are central to the integrity and probity of the civil service (section 2);

- (b) the standards of conduct that are required to be upheld by civil servants (section 3);
- (c) the authority and the various regulations, rules and guidelines for ensuring adherence to the above-mentioned core values and standards of conduct expected of civil servants (section 4 and the Annex);
- (d) the role and responsibilities of civil servants in relation to politically appointed officials (section 5);
- (e) the working relationship between civil servants and different tiers of politically appointed officials (section 6); and
- (f) the communication/complaint/redress mechanism to address concerns from civil servants on directions from politically appointed officials (section 7).

A copy of the draft Code is at **Annex**.

## **Consultation**

5. We are now in the process of consulting politically appointed officials, the staff sides<sup>1</sup> and the Public Service Commission. We hope to receive their views in the first quarter of 2009. We have also posted the draft Code on CSB's homepage. All members of the civil service are welcome to convey their views and observations to us.

## **Way Forward**

6. We will finalise the draft Code in light of the views to be received from various parties concerned. We plan to promulgate the Code in the first half of next year.

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<sup>1</sup> Our established staff consultative mechanism comprises the four central consultative councils, namely, the Senior Civil Service Council, Police Force Council, Disciplined Services Consultative Council and Model Scale I Staff Council. In this exercise, we have expanded the consultation to the four major civil service-wide staff unions/associations as well, comprising the Government Employees Association, the Hong Kong Civil Servants General Union, the Hong Kong Federation of Civil Service Unions and the Government Disciplined Services General Union.

**Advice Sought**

7. Members are invited to offer their comments on the draft Code.

Civil Service Bureau  
December 2008

## CIVIL SERVICE CODE

### 1 Introduction

1.1 The Civil Service is the backbone of the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. It is responsible to the Chief Executive. It supports the Chief Executive and the Government of the day in formulating, explaining and implementing policies; conducting administrative affairs; delivering public services; and undertaking law enforcement and regulatory functions. It serves the community, and contributes to the effective governance and stability and prosperity of Hong Kong.

1.2 Article 99 of the Basic Law of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of The People's Republic of China (hereafter referred to as "the Basic Law") states "... Public servants must be dedicated to their duties and be responsible to the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region". Article 60 of the Basic Law states "The head of the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region shall be the Chief Executive of the Region...". Civil servants, being a key component of the public service, have the constitutional role to give their best in serving the Chief Executive and the Government of the day.

1.3 Civil servants are appointed, managed and promoted on the basis of merit and in accordance with the principles of openness and fairness and with the prevailing rules and regulations applicable to the Civil Service. They are subject to the prevailing disciplinary system for the Civil Service, under which allegations of misconduct against individual civil servants are determined through an impartial process based on consideration of factual evidence. The independent and statutory Public Service Commission advises the Chief Executive on the appointment, promotion, conduct and discipline of civil servants under the Public Service Commission Ordinance (Chapter 93 of the Laws of Hong Kong).

1.4 The *Civil Service Code* sets forth the core values and standards of conduct of civil servants. It also sets out the general responsibilities and duties of civil servants in relation to officials under the political appointment system. Civil servants should familiarise themselves with the contents of the *Code* and comply with it. Failure to comply with the *Code* may render a civil servant liable to disciplinary action.

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1.5 The *Civil Service Code* is to be read in conjunction with the *Code for Officials under the Political Appointment System* which all officials under the political appointment system are required to comply with. In this context, officials under the political appointment system consist of principal officials under the Political Appointment System (i.e. Secretaries of Department and Directors of Bureau), Director of the Chief Executive's Office, under secretaries (i.e. Deputy Directors of Bureau) and political assistants. Secretary for the Civil Service, who is one of the principal officials, has a special role as explained in sections 3, 4, 6 and 7 below.

## **2 Core Values**

2.1 The Civil Service is a permanent, honest, meritocratic, professional and politically neutral institution. The core values set out below are central to the integrity and probity of the Civil Service. They underpin good governance and help the Civil Service gain and retain the respect and confidence of the public.

2.2 Civil servants are required to uphold the following core values, which are of equal importance –

- (a) commitment to the rule of law;
- (b) honesty and integrity;
- (c) objectivity and impartiality;
- (d) political neutrality;
- (e) accountability for decisions and actions; and
- (f) dedication, professionalism and diligence.

## **3 Standards of Conduct**

3.1 Based on the above core values, civil servants are required to follow the standards of conduct set out below.

3.2 *Commitment to the rule of law:* Civil servants shall uphold the rule of law and the administration of justice. They shall exercise executive powers in

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compliance with the Basic Law and the Laws of Hong Kong. When making decisions, they shall act within the scope of the power or discretion conferred on them, and within their delegated authority as relevant. They shall always observe due process. They shall report promptly to the Independent Commission Against Corruption any suspected corrupt act or to the Police other criminal act encountered in discharging their duties.

3.3 *Honesty*: Civil servants shall set out facts and relevant issues truthfully, and correct any errors as soon as possible. They shall use public resources only for the authorised purposes for which the resources are provided.

3.4 *Integrity*: Civil servants shall ensure that no actual, perceived or potential conflict of interest shall arise between their official duties and private interests. Where an actual, perceived or potential conflict of interest arises, they shall declare it to their supervisors so that the latter can determine how best to proceed or escalate the matter upwards for a determination as necessary. They shall not use their official position to further personal interests or the private interests of others. They shall not solicit or accept, directly or indirectly, any advantage or gift which would, or might reasonably be seen to, compromise their integrity or judgment or influence the discharge or non-discharge of their duties and responsibilities. They shall not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their official duties. They shall ensure that the views they express will not compromise their capacity to fulfil their official duties professionally, effectively and impartially. They shall use information gained by virtue of their official position for authorised purposes only. They shall not disclose document, information or knowledge received in confidence from others in the course of their duties or by virtue of their official position.

3.5 *Objectivity*: Civil servants shall provide information and advice on the basis of evidence, and accurately present the options and facts. They shall base decisions on rigorous analysis of the facts and the merits of the case. They shall take due account of expert and professional advice. They shall not ignore inconvenient facts or relevant considerations when providing advice or making decisions.

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3.6 *Impartiality*: Civil servants shall carry out their duties and responsibilities in accordance with the policies and decisions of the Government of the day and in a way that is fair, just and equitable. They shall act according to the merits of the case.

3.7 *Political neutrality*: Civil servants shall serve the Chief Executive and the Government of the day with total loyalty and to the best of their ability, no matter what their own political beliefs are. They shall not allow their own personal party political affiliation or party political beliefs to determine or influence the discharge of their official duties and responsibilities, including the advice they give and the decisions or actions they take. They shall bear in mind that party political considerations are for politically appointed officials to address. In their official capacity, they shall not engage in party political activities<sup>1</sup> or use public resources for party political purposes such as electioneering or fund-raising activities for political parties.

3.8 In joining political parties or participating in political party activities in their private personal capacity, civil servants shall comply with the relevant prevailing Civil Service Regulations, rules and guidelines. They shall refrain from political party activities that might lead to any actual, perceived or potential conflict of interest or bias with their official positions or with the discharge of their duties and responsibilities. They shall also ensure that their private participation in political party activities would not compromise, or might not reasonably be seen to compromise, their impartiality and political neutrality in their official capacity; or cause any embarrassment to the Government. They shall comply with any restrictions that have been laid down on participation in political party and/or electioneering activities.

3.9 Civil servants are disqualified from being nominated as a candidate at an election of the Chief Executive, of the Legislative Council or of a District Council under the Chief Executive Election Ordinance (Chapter 569 of the Laws of Hong Kong), the Legislative Council Ordinance (Chapter 542 of the Laws of Hong Kong) and the District Councils Ordinance (Chapter 547 of the Laws of Hong Kong) respectively. They are also disqualified from being elected as an

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<sup>1</sup> For the avoidance of doubt, civil servants attending social functions of political parties upon invitation on a purely goodwill basis would not be regarded as engaging in party political activities. They should observe the principle of impartiality as stipulated in paragraph 3.6 above when handling such invitations from political parties. They should also observe the prevailing rules and regulations governing civil servants' participation in political activities.

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elected member of the Legislative Council or a District Council under the relevant ordinances. Civil servants who wish to stand for election of the Chief Executive, the Legislative Council or a District Council must retire – age permitting – or resign from the Civil Service.

3.10 Civil servants must retire – age permitting – or resign from the Civil Service before becoming a politically appointed official. The only exception to this is the civil servant appointed to serve as Secretary for the Civil Service.<sup>2</sup>

3.11 *Accountability for decisions and actions:* Civil servants are responsible for decisions and actions taken in their official capacity and for the use of public resources. They are accountable for the exercise of various statutory powers conferred on them under the Laws of Hong Kong. Civil servants appointed as controlling officers under the Public Finance Ordinance (Chapter 2 of the Laws of Hong Kong) are accountable for all public moneys, property and expenditure under their charge, and the use of such resources in compliance with the directions and decisions made by their principal officials<sup>3</sup>. They are responsible for the efficient and effective use of resources under their charge. They are required to ensure compliance with all the regulations made and directions or instructions given by the Financial Secretary under the Public Finance Ordinance.

3.12 *Dedication, professionalism and diligence:* Civil servants shall act with a spirit of service to the community and in a professional manner. They shall conduct themselves in a way that instils and retains the confidence of all those whom they have official dealings with. They shall fulfil their duties and obligations responsibly. They shall deal with the public and their affairs fairly, efficiently, promptly, effectively and sensibly, to the best of their ability. Where necessary, the Government has a prior call at all times on the abilities, energies and attention of civil servants.

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<sup>2</sup> Under the present arrangement, the person filling the position of Secretary for the Civil Service under the Political Appointment System is to be drawn from the body of serving civil servants. He is not obligated to resign or retire from the Civil Service before taking up the position. Age permitting, he may return to the Civil Service after leaving the position of Secretary for the Civil Service.

<sup>3</sup> The *Code for Officials under the Political Appointment System* (paragraph 2.24 and 2.25) provides that politically appointed officials shall note that controlling officers designated under the Public Finance Ordinance are responsible and accountable for all expenditure of the policy bureaux or departments or agencies falling within their purview, and that controlling officers are required to obey all regulations made and directions or instructions given by the Financial Secretary for the safety, economy and advantage of public moneys and Government property. It also states that politically appointed officials have a duty to give fair consideration and due weight to honest, informed and impartial advice from the controlling officers.



#### **4 Authority**

4.1 Secretary for the Civil Service is responsible to the Chief Executive for policies and management of the Civil Service. One of the Secretary's major tasks is to safeguard the core values and define the standards of conduct of the Civil Service. In the performance of this role, the Secretary may issue regulations, rules and guidelines governing, among other subjects, avoidance of conflict of interest by civil servants, acceptance of advantages and entertainment, declaration of private investments, participation in political party or group activities, use of information obtained in a civil servant's official capacity, and outside work during service and for a specified period after leaving service. The Secretary may also revise existing regulations, rules and guidelines from time to time in the light of changing circumstances and needs. Civil servants are required to adhere to these regulations, rules and guidelines. Attached at **Annex** is a list of the currently in force Civil Service Regulations, Civil Service Bureau's circulars and circular memoranda that are relevant to the core values and standards of conduct of the Civil Service. Civil servants are also required to comply with all the Laws of Hong Kong, including the Prevention of Bribery Ordinance (Chapter 201 of the Laws of Hong Kong) and the Official Secrets Ordinance (Chapter 521 of the Laws of Hong Kong).

4.2 Individual heads of policy bureaux, departments and agencies may issue their own mission and value statements provided they are in conformity with the *Civil Service Code*. Concerned civil servants are required to uphold and comply with these supplementary statements and guidelines as well.

#### **5 Role and Responsibilities of Civil Servants in relation to Politically Appointed Officials<sup>4</sup>**

5.1 Principal officials under the political appointment system are responsible for their respective portfolios designated to them by the Chief Executive and for the policy bureaux, departments and agencies within their respective portfolios. They are responsible primarily for strategic direction, policy formulation, policy decisions and public advocacy of policy proposals. While they may assign specific policy areas or projects to under secretaries to

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<sup>4</sup> As stated in paragraph 1.5 above, the *Civil Service Code* is to be read in conjunction with the *Code for Officials under the Political Appointment System*. Further details of the role and responsibilities of politically appointed officials are set out in the latter *Code* and the Report on Further Development of the Political Appointment System issued in October 2007.

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take charge of or require under secretaries to deputise for them when necessary, they remain accountable to the Chief Executive for all policies and matters falling within their respective portfolios. The Director of the Chief Executive's Office works with principal officials on, amongst other things, policy formulation and priority setting to ensure full implementation of the Chief Executive's agenda and decisions.

5.2 Principal officials have a duty to represent the Government and to transact business at meetings of the Legislative Council, and as necessary its committees, subcommittees and panels, e.g. to explain policy proposals, defend government policies, introduce bills or motions, present papers, make statements, answer questions, take part in debates, and secure funding and other resources required for their respective portfolios. They also have a duty to canvass support for government policies, decisions and actions from the Legislative Council, District Councils, the community, stakeholders, political parties, the media, etc.

5.3 Under secretaries are responsible primarily to assist principal officials in undertaking the full range of political work, including the handling of Legislative Council business, maintaining regular liaison with Members of the Legislative Council; attending public forums and other functions to explain and defend government proposals and decisions; maintaining close contact with the media and other stakeholders such as District Councils, political parties and groups, community organisations, etc.; and nurturing and securing community-wide support on government policies and decisions. They are also responsible to deputise for principal officials during the latter's temporary absence. They also have to take up any specific policy areas or projects assigned by principal officials.

5.4 Political assistants render support to principal officials and under secretaries. They are mainly responsible to provide political support and input, monitor views from interest groups and the general public on policy issues, and assess political implications. They are also responsible, at the instruction of principal officials and under secretaries, to liaise with political parties and groups, District Councils and other stakeholders and the media; and to draft speeches and media statements.

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5.5 Civil servants support politically appointed officials in formulating policies. They are responsible for executing policies, carrying out executive tasks, managing and delivering services to the public, and undertaking law enforcement and regulatory functions, in accordance with the decisions of the Government of the day and directions of principal officials. Permanent secretaries, the most senior echelon in the Civil Service, are responsible to their principal officials for the operation, and full range of policy areas under the purview, of their respective policy bureaux. Civil servants who are heads of departments or agencies are responsible, through permanent secretaries where relevant, to their principal officials for the operation of their departments or agencies.

5.6 Civil servants, particularly the more senior ones, are responsible to develop policy options or proposals and assess their full implications, including the financial and manpower implications and the possible consequences of adopting or not adopting a particular policy option or course of action, based on intellectual rigour, objective research, professional knowledge and expertise. They are to attend before the Executive Council as necessary to assist politically appointed officials in explaining proposed policy initiatives or government policies. They are to assist, as necessary, politically appointed officials in presenting and explaining proposed policy initiatives or policies of the Government of the day to the Legislative Council, District Councils, the community, stakeholders, political parties, the media, etc. They are also to assist, as necessary, politically appointed officials in justifying requests, and securing the approval of the Legislative Council, for funding and other resources.

5.7 Questions may sometimes arise as to whether politically appointed officials or civil servants should take the lead in handling certain duty or task. In such circumstances, the principal official concerned should, in consultation with the relevant permanent secretary and under secretary, critically consider the political sensitivity involved in the duty or task and decide who should take the lead.

5.8 Civil servants shall support and implement policies and take actions, once decided by the Government of the day, fully and faithfully irrespective of their personal views. They shall ensure that their involvement in, or contribution to, any public debate or discussion on public matters is in accordance with the policies of the Government of the day and is appropriate to the official positions they hold. They shall not seek to obstruct or frustrate a

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policy or decision taken by politically appointed officials, or delay its implementation. They shall maintain confidentiality of the advice and views that they or other civil servants have given to politically appointed officials. They shall not suggest for public consumption any alternative to a policy proposed, or decided, by the Government or a politically appointed official.

5.9 Civil servants who serve as controlling officers have a particular responsibility to see that appropriate advice is tendered to politically appointed officials on all matters of financial propriety and regularity and more broadly as to all considerations of prudent and economical administration, efficiency and effectiveness and value for money.

5.10 The division of role and responsibilities between politically appointed officials and civil servants relies on a good working relationship, and the maintenance of mutual trust and confidence. Civil servants shall strive to work in effective partnership with politically appointed officials.

## **6 Relationship with Politically Appointed Officials**

6.1 Civil servants shall serve the Government of the day with integrity and to the best of their ability. They shall follow the directives and work priorities determined by principal officials. They shall provide politically appointed officials their full, honest and impartial advice, without fear or favour, and whether or not the advice accords with the views of politically appointed officials. To uphold their integrity and professionalism, they shall endeavour to provide politically appointed officials with the best advice they believe they can give and all relevant information they have access to. They shall work together with politically appointed officials in the spirit of partnership and foster mutual trust and confidence.

6.2 Under the *Code for Officials under the Political Appointment System*, politically appointed officials are required at all times to actively uphold and promote a permanent, honest, meritocratic, professional and politically neutral Civil Service; and, in particular, to uphold and promote the core values of the Civil Service as set out in section 2 above. In their dealings with civil servants, they are to have due regard to the *Civil Service Code*. They shall not require or influence civil servants directly or indirectly to act in any way which is illegal, improper or in conflict with the core values of the Civil Service; or is in conflict with their role as civil servants; or is in breach of any government regulations

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including Civil Service Regulations; or may involve possible maladministration. They are required to give due weight to honest, informed and impartial advice from civil servants, including those designated as controlling officers under the Public Finance Ordinance.

6.3 Permanent secretaries and those civil servants directly underpinning principal officials (as stated in paragraph 6.6 below) have unlimited and direct access to principal officials. In general, other civil servants have access to principal officials through permanent secretaries. They may also have direct access to principal officials where appropriate; and permanent secretaries and the appropriate civil servants in the relevant line of command are to be kept informed of such communication as far as possible.

6.4 Under secretaries may, on behalf of principal officials, convey to civil servants the views and work priorities of principal officials; request civil servants to prepare and provide information and data, including internal analyses and papers; and hold meetings with civil servants to discuss the advice being put to principal officials. Political assistants may, on behalf of principal officials or under secretaries, request civil servants to prepare and provide information and data. Such working contact does not constitute, and should not be perceived as constituting, a supervising or subordinating relationship between the under secretaries/political assistants and civil servants. Permanent secretaries and the appropriate civil servants in the relevant line of command are to be kept informed of communication between under secretaries/ political assistants and civil servants concerned as far as possible.

6.5 Permanent secretaries report direct to principal officials. Their performance is appraised by principal officials. Under secretaries have no direct line of command vis-à-vis permanent secretaries; and they do not, and should not be asked, to comment on the performance of permanent secretaries. For those civil servants with close working relationship with under secretaries, their supervisors in the Civil Service may seek the views of under secretaries as an input for the performance appraisals of the concerned civil servants. Such solicitation of views does not constitute, and should not be perceived as constituting, a supervising or subordinating relationship between the concerned under secretaries and civil servants.

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6.6 Those civil servants assigned to provide support to principal officials (e.g. Administrative Assistants, Press Secretaries, Personal Secretaries, Drivers) and those assigned to provide support to other politically appointed officials (e.g. Personal Secretaries) report direct to the politically appointed officials concerned and their performance is appraised by them. Where appropriate, permanent secretaries or other senior civil servants may provide input on the performance appraisal of the civil servants concerned.

6.7 Other than Secretary for the Civil Service, politically appointed officials are generally not involved in issues affecting civil servants' careers, such as appointment, promotion and discipline.

### **7 Communication, Complaint and Redress Mechanism**

7.1 There may be occasions where a civil servant feels that he<sup>5</sup> has been directed to act in a way which he considers is illegal. In such circumstances, he should follow the guidelines set out in CSB Circular No. 20/79.

7.2 There may be occasions where a civil servant feels that he has been directed to act in a way which he considers –

- (a) is improper or in conflict with the core values of the Civil Service;
- (b) is in breach of any government regulations including Civil Service Regulations and regulations governing the use of public money;
- (c) would conflict with his role as a civil servant; or
- (d) may involve possible maladministration.

7.3 In such circumstances, the civil servant concerned is encouraged to first discuss the matter with his immediate supervisor or with the officer who issued the direction. If for any reason he would find this difficult, he should discuss with another officer in his line management chain. He must not do anything to circumvent or undermine the policy which the direction flows from. It is important to cultivate and nurture a culture of open communication between supervisors and subordinates. Open communication works positively towards

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<sup>5</sup> Words importing the masculine gender shall include the feminine gender.

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building mutual trust and loyalty. It is possible that many situations which may lead to misunderstanding will be addressed by the civil servants concerned discussing the matter with their supervisors or with officers whose directions have given rise to the concerns in the first place.

7.4 If a civil servant remains concerned following a candid airing of his concerns before his immediate supervisor or the officer giving the direction or another officer in his line management chain, he should report the matter in accordance with the complaint procedures laid down by his policy bureau or department or agency. A civil servant will not be penalised for lodging a complaint which is made in good faith. The policy bureau or department or agency concerned shall follow up on the complaint in accordance with laid down procedures.

7.5 If the matter giving rise to the concerns of a civil servant originates from a direction or action taken by a politically appointed official at under secretary or below level, the civil servant is encouraged to discuss and resolve the matter with the concerned politically appointed official. He may also bring the matter to the personal attention of the relevant permanent secretary, who shall consider all the relevant information, discuss with the concerned civil servant and politically appointed official with a view to resolving the matter. If the matter cannot be resolved, the permanent secretary shall bring it to the personal attention of the relevant principal official for resolution. If the matter remains unresolved, it shall be brought to the attention of Secretary for the Civil Service for resolution.

7.6 If the matter giving rise to the concerns of a civil servant originates from a direction or action taken by a principal official other than Secretary for the Civil Service<sup>6</sup>, the civil servant is encouraged to discuss and resolve the matter with the concerned principal official. He may also bring the matter to the personal attention of the relevant permanent secretary, who shall discuss and resolve the matter with the principal official concerned. If the matter cannot be resolved, the relevant permanent secretary shall bring it to the personal attention of Secretary for the Civil Service, who shall consider all the relevant information, discuss with the concerned civil servant and principal official and other officers as necessary, before taking a view.

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<sup>6</sup> A “principal official other than Secretary for the Civil Service” includes Director of the Chief Executive’s Office.

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7.7 Under the *Code for Officials Under the Political Appointment System*, politically appointed officials are to cooperate fully with Secretary for the Civil Service to follow up on concerns from civil servants relating to their role or to the core values of the Civil Service.

7.8 If the matter giving rise to concerns from a civil servant remains unresolved after escalation to Secretary for the Civil Service, the latter shall bring it to the personal attention of the Chief Secretary for Administration or the Financial Secretary as appropriate for resolution.

7.9 If the matter giving rise to concerns from a civil servant originates from a direction or action taken by Secretary for the Civil Service, the civil servant is encouraged to discuss and resolve the matter with the said Secretary. He may also bring the matter to the personal attention of the relevant permanent secretary who is encouraged to discuss and resolve the matter with Secretary for the Civil Service. If the matter cannot be resolved, the permanent secretary concerned shall bring it to the personal attention of the Chief Secretary for Administration for resolution.

7.10 If, pursuant to the procedures set out above, the matter still remains unresolved after escalation to the Chief Secretary for Administration or the Financial Secretary as appropriate, the matter shall be brought to the attention of the Chief Executive. The Chief Executive may refer representations to the Public Service Commission on matters which fall under its purview and the Commission shall tender its advice to the Chief Executive under section 6(1) of the Public Service Commission Ordinance. If the Chief Executive decides to uphold the complaint, the principal official or the politically appointed official concerned must implement the decision of the Chief Executive. If the Chief Executive is satisfied that there is no question of impropriety and upholds the direction or action taken by the principal official or politically appointed official concerned, the civil servant concerned must faithfully carry out the instruction as directed.

Civil Service Bureau  
December 2008



**Civil Service Regulations, Civil Service Bureau Circulars and  
Circular Memoranda relating to Conduct and Integrity**

***Conflict of Interest***

- (1) CSB Circular No. 2/2004 on “Conflict of interest”

***Acceptance of Advantages and Entertainment***

- (2) CSB Circular No.3/2007 on “Acceptance of advantages offered to an officer in his private capacity”
- (3) CSB Circular No. 4/2007 on “Advantages/entertainment offered to an officer in his official capacity and gifts and donations to a department for the benefit of staff”
- (4) CSB Circular No. 11/2007(C) on “Sponsored Visits”
- (5) CSRs 431-435 on “Acceptance of entertainment”
- (6) CSR 444 on “Acceptance of advantages”
- (7) CSR 448 on “Retirement gifts”

***Investments***

- (8) CSB Circular No. 8/2006 on “Declaration of investments by civil servants”
- (9) CSB Circular Memorandum No. 14/2008 on “Revised declaration and report forms”
- (10) CSRs 461-466 on “Investments”

***Outside Work***

- (11) CSB Circular No. 13/95 on “Acceptance of outside appointments after retirement”

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- (12) CSB Circular Memorandum No. 50/96 on “Outside appointments during pre-retirement leave and after retirement”
- (13) CSB Circular No. 3/97 on “Permission to take up outside appointment on completion of agreement”
- (14) CSB Circular No. 10/2005 on “Taking up outside work by directorate civil servants after ceasing active service”
- (15) CSRs 397-398 on “Taking up outside work after ceasing active service”
- (16) CSRs 550-564 on “Outside work”

### ***Indebtedness***

- (17) CSB Circular No. 4/2002 on “Managing personal finance and management measures on staff indebtedness in the Civil Service”
- (18) CSRs 455-459 on “Insolvency and bankruptcy”
- (19) CSRs 480-482 on “Lending money and borrowing money at interest”
- (20) CSR 483 on “Use of subordinates as guarantors”

### ***Reporting Crime and Corruption***

- (21) CSB Circular No. 20/79 on “Reporting of criminal offences”
- (22) CSB Circular No. 10/80 on “Reporting of attempted bribes”
- (23) CSB Circular No. 9/94 on “Allegations of corruption against civil servants”

### ***Production by Government Officers of Publications Containing Paid Advertisements***

- (24) CSB Circular No. 6/77 on “Production by government officers of publications containing paid advertisements – CSR 530”
- (25) CSB Circular No. 23/77 on “Production by government officers of publications containing paid advertisements – CSR 530”
- (26) CSR 530 on “Publications”

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### ***Public Communications by Officers***

- (27) CSRs 520-525 on “Public communications by officers”

### ***Public Donations***

- (28) CSR 531 on “Public donations”

### ***Participation in Political Activities by Civil Servants***

- (29) CSB Circular No. 26/90 on “Civil servants joining political organisations and participating in political activities”
- (30) CSB Circular No. 15/97 on “Civil servants standing for elections and participating in electioneering activities”
- (31) CSB Circular No. 6/2003 on “Civil servants standing as candidates in village representative elections”
- (32) CSB Circular No. 4/2005 on “Civil Servants Standing for the Election Committee Subsector Elections and Participating in Electioneering Activities for the Chief Executive Election”
- (33) Civil Service Circular Memorandum No. 20/2007 on “Civil servants participating in electioneering activities for the District Council elections”
- (34) Civil Service Circular Memorandum No. 2/2008 on “Civil servants standing for elections and participating in electioneering activities”
- (35) CSB Circular No. 6/2008 on “Civil servants participating in electioneering activities for the Legislative Council elections”

### ***Avenues for Complaint/Seeking Redress***

- (36) CSB Circular No. 20/91 on “Staff complaints procedure”
- (37) CSR 486 on “Representation to the Chief Executive”
- (38) Section 20 of the Public Service (Administration) Order - Representations by officers