

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR MEMBERS OF THE CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES

Approved by the Committee on the Rules of Procedure at its meeting of 12 April

2016

I

(General principles)

In the performance of their functions, Members of the Chamber of Deputies shall act with discipline and honour as representatives of the Nation, observe principles of moral integrity, transparency, diligence, honesty and accountability, and defend the good reputation of the Chamber of Deputies. They shall neither receive nor seek any direct or indirect financial advantage or other benefits.

In the event of a conflict of interest, *i.e.* when a specific private interest might impinge upon the proper performance of parliamentary duties, a Deputy must at once take all the necessary steps to remove the cause of the conflict, pursuant to the principles and rules of this Code of Conduct. In case of doubt, the Deputy may seek the advice of the Committee referred to in Section VI below.

II

(Deputies' duties)

Deputies shall, both under general legislation and pursuant to the Rules of Procedure of the Chamber, scrupulously and rigorously adhere to obligations of transparency and disclosure regarding their financial assets and interests, loans received and positions held in any organisation or company, whether public or private.

III

(Declarations of interests)

Within thirty days of the first sitting of the Chamber or of the date proclamation, or at any moment if so requested by the Elections Committee with respect to procedures under its competence, or by the Advisory Committee on the Conduct of Deputies (as defined in Section VI below) with respect to the application of this Code of Conduct, all Deputies shall apprise the President of the Chamber of positions or offices of any kind that they held on the date of submission of their candidacy for election, of any current office held in a public or private organisation, including international organisations, and of any business or professional activities in which they are engaged. If a Deputy accepts a new post or office subsequent to his or her proclamation, then he or she must report the fact within thirty days. Deputies must also declare all other professional activities they perform, all forms of self-employment, any work done as employees, and any private work. Law 441 of 1982 requires Deputies, within three months of their proclamation, to deposit the following documents with the Bureau of the Chamber:

- 1) a declaration of title to real estate assets and movable property entered in public registers, ownership of company shares and equity participations, and any company directorships or posts as internal company auditors. The declaration must be accompanied by the following standard avowal: "I affirm on my honour that this declaration is true";
- 2) a copy of their most recent personal income tax return;
- 3) a statement of the costs and debts incurred in the election campaign, or else a declaration that they availed themselves exclusively of electoral materials and

resources provided by the political party or movement for which they were elected. The declaration must be accompanied by the following standard avowal: "I affirm on my honour that this declaration is true".

The declaration must also be accompanied by the documentation of any loans or grants received, as defined by Law 659 of 1981, as well as by disclosures of donations in excess of €5,000 per year received directly or through political action committees set up under any name to support their campaigns.

The foregoing requirements also apply to the disclosure of the assets and tax returns of the Deputy's spouse (unless separated), of children and of relatives to the second degree of kinship, if these parties consent thereto.

Within the month following the deadline for the filing of personal income tax returns, Deputies are required to submit an attestation of any changes in their financial position during the previous year, along with a copy of their filed tax return. This requirement also extends to spouses, unless separated, and to children and relatives to the second degree of kinship, if these parties consent thereto.

Within three months of leaving office, Deputies are required to report any changes of financial position that have occurred since their last declaration. Within the month following the deadline for the submission of the above disclosure, Deputies are required to deposit a copy of their annual personal income tax return. This requirement also extends to spouses, unless separated, and to children and relatives to the second degree of kinship, if these parties consent thereto.

The data relating to the assets and income of Members of Parliament are published on the official website of the Italian Parliament, which also provides details of donations of more than €5,000 per year that MPs received either directly or through political action committees set up to support them.

IV

(Gifts)

In the performance of their duties, Deputies shall refrain from accepting gifts or similar benefits, unless the gifts have a value of less than €250 and are offered in accordance with protocols of official courtesy, or are received in accordance with protocols of official courtesy by Deputies acting in their capacity as official representatives of the Chamber.

The above rules do not apply to the reimbursement of Deputies' travel, accommodation and subsistence expenses, or to the direct defrayment of such expenses by third parties when Deputies have been invited to events organised by third parties and are participating in them in fulfilment of their official duties as Members of Parliament. For such cases, the Bureau shall take the necessary measures to ensure transparency.

V

(Disclosures)

The declarations of financial wealth and interests, of loans received and of positions held outside Parliament, which Deputies shall make pursuant to current laws, the Rules of Procedure and this Code of Conduct, are published on the website of the Chamber of Deputies.

VI

(Advisory Committee on the Conduct of Deputies)

At the commencement of a new Parliament, the Bureau sets up an Advisory Committee on the Conduct of Deputies. The Committee is made up of four members of the Bureau and six Deputies appointed by the President, who shall take into consideration their experience, seek to achieve the fairest political balance possible in the appointments, and ensure that the majority and opposition parties have equal representation. The Committee is chaired by a Deputy designated by the President of the Chamber.

Without prejudice to the powers of the Elections Committee, the Advisory Committee shall be responsible for issuing advice on the interpretation and enforcement of the rules set out in this Code of Conduct to any Deputy who so requests, and must do so within one month of the request.

At the request of the President of the Chamber of Deputies, the Advisory Committee shall also examine alleged violations of this Code of Conduct and report its findings back to the President, including for purposes of referral to the competent bodies. When conducting enquiries of this nature, the Advisory Committee shall take all necessary preliminary steps, which may include summoning the Deputy in question to appear before it, and, with the prior approval of the President of the Chamber, calling in expert opinion.

The Committee's advice concerning the interpretation and enforcement of the rules set out in this Code of Conduct, other than the advice under the second paragraph of

Section I above, shall be promptly published on the website of the Chamber of Deputies.

The Advisory Committee shall publish an annual report on its activities and make it available on the website of the Chamber of Deputies.

VII

(Disciplinary action)

Cases of non-compliance with the rules of this Code of Conduct, as ascertained by the Advisory Committee, shall be announced on the Floor of the House and disclosed on the website of the Chamber of Deputies.