



Guide on Ethics and Conduct for local agents in Delegations

Without prejudice to local legislation, the local agent undertakes:

1. to carry out his/her duties and conduct himself/herself with objectivity and solely with the interest of the European Union in mind and to behave in a way which will not reflect negatively on the European Union;
2. to be responsible for the performance of the duties assigned to him/her;
3. to ensure that any conflict of interest which arises between his/her individual, private interests (including family or financial interests) and the public interest of the European Union is handled properly, including during periods of unpaid leave or after termination of employment. If, while performing his/her duties and responsibilities, the local agent becomes aware of any potential or actual conflict such as may impair his/her independence, he/she shall promptly inform the employer, who will adopt the appropriate measures. Some examples of potential conflict:
 - gainful activity of the spouse incompatible with his/her functions (also, spouses employed in the same delegation should not work under a direct hierarchical line);
 - gifts, decorations or payments received from governments or other external entities;
 - intention to stand for public office;
 - publications or speeches on subject-matters relating to his/her duties.
4. not to be involved in any external occupation performed during working hours or on any premises of the institution and not to accept any other external activity, whether paid or not, which could interfere with the performance of the local agent's duties or which is incompatible with the interests of the EU. A local agent may only engage in such an external activity after express authorisation by his/her superiors.
5. to refrain from discussing professional issues linked to specific files he/she may be in charge of, when outside the working environment, and to refrain from any unauthorised disclosure of information received in the line of duty unless that information has already been made public by the EU. This duty of discretion shall subsist after termination of employment;
6. to accept that all work produced for the employer by the local agent, and the right to the copyright in all such work, is to be the sole property of the employer;

7. to refrain from any form of psychological or sexual harassment;
8. to use provided work equipment and materials correctly and according to their intended purpose. In particular, the local agent shall ensure that at all times his/her use of the IT facilities at work meets the ethical and social standards of the workplace;
9. to inform without delay the employer if he/she becomes aware of facts which give rise to a presumption of possible illegal activity, in the course of or in connection with the performance of his/her duties;
10. to take reasonable care for his/her own health and safety and for the health and safety of anyone else who may be affected by his/her acts or omissions at the workplace;
11. to abstain from consuming alcohol and narcotic substances at the workplace and to refrain from going to work under the influence of such substances;
12. to give his/her consent to the employer to monitor and process personal information concerning his/her administrative status and all reports relating to his/her ability, efficiency and conduct.

This list is not exhaustive. Failure to abide by these instructions shall make the local agent liable to a disciplinary measure.

Additional Guidance:

1. Document Management

CONFIDENTIAL EU documents and documents with a higher classification require security clearance for all persons handling them. Local staff shall not be granted security clearance for this level of documents.

In line with the EEAS security policies, local agents should only be granted access to Documents classified as RESTREINT UE on a 'need to know' basis. The decision to grant this access shall be taken by the relevant Head of Section or the Head of Delegation.

The handling and storing of documents inside the delegation should be organised in a way to ensure the respect of these rules.

2. Publications and speeches

Local agents enjoy the right to freedom of expression. However, this freedom is subject to the following conditions by virtue of their employment with the EU:

- local agents shall show restraint and caution in expressing opinions, especially when obviously diverging from known policies of the EU;
- publications or opinions regarding EU policies must be expressed with moderation and under the sole and personal responsibility of the local agent (including disclaimers where necessary);

- local agents shall abide by their duty of discretion.

If the local agent wishes to publish or to have published, either alone or with other parties, a document on anything dealing with the functions of the EU, he must request prior authorisation from the Authority Empowered to Conclude Contracts (AECC) - the same AECC as for an external activity. Such a request shall include all relevant information, including a copy (in electronic form) of the document he/she intends to publish, accompanied by a summary in one of the EU's working languages. Where the AECC considers that the matter is liable to prejudice seriously the legitimate interests of the EU, it shall reject the authorisation.

These rules apply to any form of public or private communication outside the scope of the duties of the local agent, including publications on social media / blogs.

The above-mentioned guidelines constitute a formal instruction. Failure to abide by these instructions shall make the local agent liable to a disciplinary measure.

An electronic version of the guidelines can be consulted on the dedicated page in the EU DELIGATION'S GUIDE.