

## **POLICY ON CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

### **1. Introduction**

SEBI vide its circular no. CIR/MIRSD/5/2013 dated August 27, 2013 issued a *General Guidelines for dealing with Conflicts of Interest of Intermediaries, Recognised Stock Exchanges, Recognised Clearing Corporations, Depositories and their Associated Persons in Securities Market*. SEBI decided to put in place comprehensive guidelines to collectively cover such entities and their associated persons, for elimination / avoidance of their conflict of interest and educating the Associated Persons as defined in Securities and Exchange Board of India (Certification of Associated Persons in the Securities Markets) Regulations, 2007 for the compliance of the guidelines. SEBI advised to lay down, with active involvement of senior management, policies and internal procedures to identify and avoid or to deal or manage actual or potential conflict of interest, develop an internal code of conduct governing operations and formulate standards of appropriate conduct in the performance of their activities, and ensure to communicate such policies, procedures and code to all concerned.

SEBI guidelines intends Intermediaries and their Associated Persons to comply with the following -

- high standards of integrity in the conduct of business;
- fair treatment of clients and no discrimination amongst them;
- avoidance of conflict of personal interest with the client and primacy of clients' interest;
- appropriate disclosure to the clients of possible source or potential areas of conflict of interest;
- reducing the opportunities for conflict through prescriptive measures;
- appropriate restrictions on transactions in securities while handling a mandate of issuer or client in respect of such security;
- not to deal in securities while in possession of material non published information;
- not to communicate the material non published information while dealing in securities on behalf of others
- not to manipulate the demand for or supply of or to influence prices of, securities.
- not to have an incentive structure that encourages sale of products not suiting the risk profile of the clients;
- not to share client information for the personal interest;

This document sets out the Policy on management of Conflict of Interest for **Woodstock Broking Pvt. Ltd. (WBPL)**, with intent to define a policy and procedure for dealing with Conflict

of Interest and to effectively manage any conflicts of interest that may arise in carrying out its business. Senior Management is responsible for ensuring that the Company's systems, controls and procedures are adequate to identify and manage conflicts of interest.

## **2. Policies and Internal Procedures to Identify and avoid or to deal or manage actual or potential Conflict of Interest**

In order to strive for achieving management of conflict of interests, **WBPL** shall endeavor-

- To promote high standards of integrity in the conduct of business **Woodstock Broking Pvt. Ltd.**
- To ensure fairness of dealing with clients.
- To guide for identification, elimination or management of conflict of interest situations.
- To provide a mechanism for review and assessment of the policy(ies) on conflict of interests.

The conflict of interest policy aims to ensure that the Company's clients are treated fairly and at the highest level of integrity and that their interests are protected at all times. It also aims to identify conflicts of interest between:

- The Company and a Client
- Relevant Person and a Client
- A Company of the Group and a Client
- Two or more Clients of the Company in the course of providing services to these Clients
- A Company service provider and a Client

In addition it aims to prevent conflicts of interest from adversely affecting the interest of its Client. **WBPL** Conflicts of Interest Policy sets out how:

- The Company will identify circumstances which may give rise to conflicts of interest entailing a material risk of damage to our Clients' interests;
- The Company has established appropriate mechanisms and systems to manage those conflicts;
- The Company maintains systems designed to prevent damage to our Clients' interests through identified conflicts.

### **"Intermediary" and "Associated Person"**

Securities and Exchange Board of India (Certification of Associated Persons in the Securities Markets) Regulations, 2007 defines the term "intermediaries" and "associated persons". Accordingly, "intermediary" means an entity registered under SEBI Act and includes any person

required to obtain any membership or approval from a stock exchange or a self-regulatory organization; and "associated person" means a principal or employee of an intermediary or an agent or distributor or other natural person engaged in the securities business and includes an employee of a foreign institutional investor or a foreign venture capital investor working in India;

#### **"Conflict of Interest"**

Conflicts of Interest can be defined in many ways, including any situation in which an individual or corporation (either private or governmental) is in a position to exploit a professional or official capacity in some way for their personal or corporate benefit. A conflict of interest is a manifestation of the moral hazard problem, particularly when a financial institution provides multiple services and the potentially competing interests of those services may lead to a concealment of information or dissemination of misleading information. A conflict of interest exists when a party to a transaction could potentially make gain from taking actions that are detrimental to the other party in the transaction.

#### **"Potential Conflict of Interest"**

In order to avoid, manage or deal with conflict of interest with the intermediary or the Associated Persons, it is important to identify the possible areas of conflict of interest. **WBPL** lists out the following potential conflict of interest that may affect the company.

- i. Directorships or other employment;
- ii. interests in business enterprises or professional practices;
- iii. Share ownership;
- iv. Beneficial interests in trusts;
- v. Personal Account Trading;
- vi. Professional associations or relationships with other organizations;
- vii. Personal associations with other groups or organizations, or family relationships;
- viii. Front running;
- ix. Rebates;
- x. Kickbacks;
- xi. Commission;
- xii. Where the company carries on the same business as a client;
- xiii. Where the company designs, markets or recommends a product or service without properly considering all our other products and services and the interest of all our clients;

- xiv. Where the company has a financial or other incentive to favour the interest of another client or group of clients over the interests of a client;
- xv. Where the company has an interest in the outcome of a service provided to, or of a transaction carried out on behalf of, a client which is distinct from that client's interest in that outcome;
- xvi. Where the company is likely to make a financial gain or avoid a financial loss at the expense of a client; and
- xvii. Where the company receives, or will receive, from the person other than a client an inducement in relation to the service provided to that client in the form of monies, goods or services, other than the standard commission or fee for that service;

Measures to avoid or to deal or manage actual or potential Conflict of Interests Should a conflict of interest arise, it needs to be managed promptly and fairly. The Company puts in place following arrangements to ensure that:

- i. There is a clear distinction between the different departments' operations;
- ii. No single person will gather conflicting information, thus counterfeiting or hiding information from investors is minimized;
- iii. The Company's employees are prohibited from investing in a financial instrument for which they have access to non-public or confidential information;
- iv. Transactions by the Company's employees are neither performed nor executed by themselves.
- v. Employees sign a contract of employment including confidentiality clauses. No associated person may disclose inside information to others, except disclosures made in accordance with the Company's policies and procedures, to other Company personnel or persons outside the Company who have a valid business reason for receiving such information;
- vi. Each department will control the flow of information where, otherwise, the risk of conflict of interest may harm the interest of a Client;
- vii. Relevant information is recorded promptly in a secure environment to enable identification and management of conflicts of interests;
- viii. Adequate records are maintained of the services and activities of the Company where a conflict of interest has been identified;
- ix. In certain jurisdictions appropriate disclosure may be made to the Client in a clear, fair and not misleading manner to enable the Client to make an informed decision;
- x. There is a periodic review of the adequacy of the Company's systems and controls.
- xi. Employees are required to avoid conflicts of interest with activities they undertake outside WBPL.

Disclosure to clients of possible source or potential areas of conflict of interest (COI):

- i. WBPL or its associated persons should, in writing, disclose to a client any COI in respect of that client including -
  - a. Measures taken to avoid or mitigate the conflict;
  - b. Any ownership interest or financial interest that the provider or representative may be or become eligible for;
  - c. The nature of the relationship or arrangements with a third party that gives rise to a COI in sufficient detail to enable the client to understand the exact nature of the COI.
- ii. WBPL will inform clients of the policy on Management of Conflict of Interest and how it may be accessed.
- iii. Intimation of an actual or potential COI should be made to a person with responsibility for the issue or area, such as the relevant management team, head of the department or key individual.
- iv. In accordance with an employee's obligation to act in the best interest of WBPL, it is not permissible for employees to engage in conduct that would amount to a COI with WBPL.
- v. Staff that fail to disclose a potential or actual COI in accordance with this policy may be liable to disciplinary procedures.
- vi. Where a conflict arises WBPL or its Associated Persons will, if it is aware of it, disclose it to a client prior to undertaking trading activity for that client or, if the company does not believe that disclosure is appropriate, to manage the conflict, the company may opt not to proceed with the transaction or matter giving rise to the conflict.
- vii. Where there is no other way of managing a conflict, or where the measures in place do not sufficiently protect Clients' interests, the conflict will be disclosed to allow the Client to make an informed decision on whether to continue using our service in the situation concerned.
- viii. WBPL may decline to act for a Client in cases where we believe a conflict of interest cannot be managed in any other way.

#### **Policies and procedures**

The Company has developed and implemented policies and procedures throughout its business to prevent or manage potential conflicts of interest. Our employees receive guidance and training in these policies and procedures, and they are subject to monitoring and review processes.

#### **Procedure to comply with the policy**

- i. Every staff member must have a copy of the Policy on management of Conflicts of Interest.
- ii. If a potential COI arises, the transaction must first be discussed with management before entering into the transaction.
- iii. All new employees shall be required to declare their outside interests when they join the firm.
- iv. All staff maintaining personal trading accounts outside of the company are required to instruct their broker to send copy contract notes and periodic statements to the company for reconciliation purposes.
- v. The company Conflict of Interest Policy is located on the website [www.easternfinanciers.com](http://www.easternfinanciers.com) and is subject to annual review.

#### **Consequences of non-compliance with the policy**

- Non-compliance with this policy and the procedures described in it may be considered to be misconduct and may be subject to disciplinary action

#### **3. Internal code of conduct governing operations**

WBPL and Associated Persons shall abide by the Code of Conduct contained in the Schedule II of the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Stock-Brokers and Sub-Brokers) Regulations, 1992, as amended, for accomplishment of the objectives of the SEBI Code.

#### **4. Communication of policies, procedures and code to all concerned**

This Policy on management of Conflict of Interest offers general guidance in addition to WBPL policies and procedures and is not meant to replace any of those policies or procedures and shall be made available through WBPL website [www.easternfinanciers.com](http://www.easternfinanciers.com) or by sending a request in writing. WBPL expects all its Associated persons, employees, to adhere to this policy. The Board of Directors of Woodstock Broking Pvt. Ltd. reserves the right to amend, supplement or discontinue this policy and the matters addressed herein, without prior notice, at any time.

#### **5. Implementation and Review of policy of management on Conflict of Interest**

This policy shall come into effect from the date of approval of the Board of Directors of the company for its implementation so as to provide necessary guidance enabling identification, elimination or management of conflict of interest situations and that the same shall be reviewed and assessed annually by the company management Policy passed by the Board of Directors at their meeting held on 11.09.2013.