

# **Birmingham Stopper Ltd**

## **Anti-Bribery - Anti-corruption Policy and Ethics Escalations Policy**

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### **1. Introduction**

This document defines **Birmingham Stopper Ltd** policy on the avoidance of bribery, corruption and ethics escalation policies.

It has the endorsement of the **Birmingham Stopper Ltd** board of Directors and will be regularly reviewed by the Board to ensure that it reflects any changes in applicable laws and developments in acceptable standards for the conduct of business. Our company is committed to maintaining the highest ethical standards and vigorously enforces the integrity of its business practices wherever it operates.

The company and its employees will not engage in bribery or corruption and will respect the high ethical standards demanded by the directors.

Adherence to the clear guidelines set out in this policy will ensure that the company and its employees comply with anti-bribery and anti-corruption laws and governmental guidance. The policy reflects the Board's wish to embed a culture of best practice in anti-bribery and anti-corruption measures, and enforcement of the policy will reduce the risk that the company or any employee will incur any criminal liability or reputational damage.

**Birmingham Stopper Ltd** staff will be expected to use their judgement not just to avoid malpractice but to promote good practice.

### **2. Scope**

This policy applies to **Birmingham Stopper Ltd**.

### **3. Definitions**

*Business integrity* involves the application of the company's core values. The opposite of integrity is dishonest behaviour, including corruption that could undermine **Birmingham Stopper Ltd** reputation for fair dealing.

*Bribery*, in broad terms, is the receiving or offering of undue reward or anything of value and includes payments to secure a business advantage, financial or otherwise, to which the company is not entitled. Anything of value can be a bribe, including a gift in kind or some other favour such as an offer of employment to a relative of the person being bribed. It will involve the giver and the receiver in the improper performance of a personal, company or official responsibility.

*Corruption* can include graft, bribery, facilitation payments or other forms of improper business practice. It has the same attributes as set out under *Bribery* above. It can be summarised as the misuse of entrusted power or office, whether in the public or private sector, for private gain.

*Kickbacks* arise when suppliers or service providers pay part of their fees to the individuals who give them the contract or some other business advantage.

*Facilitation payments* are small bribes to officials with a view to speeding up routine governmental transactions to which the payer is already entitled. Examples include payments to speed up customs clearances and extra fees to officials to secure electricity connections.

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Collectively, the business ethics policies set out the highest standards of honesty, integrity and ethical behaviour applicable to Birmingham Stopper Ltd business and practices. All employees and directors are expected to comply with the Business Ethics Policies.

All questions relating to this Escalation Policy should be directed to the Managing Director.

#### **4. Policy**

##### **4.1 Bribes and kickbacks**

The company and its employees do not take part in acts of corruption, or pay bribes or receive kickbacks either *directly or indirectly*.

The company prohibits its employees from engaging in acts of corruption, and from paying bribes or kickbacks to, or accepting bribes or kickbacks from, *public officials* and *private individuals* such as the personnel of companies with which the company does business.

It is the responsibility of all employees who are involved at any time in engaging the services of external consultants, suppliers or advisers to ensure that such individuals are made aware of the content of the company's Anti-Bribery and Anti-Corruption policy at the outset of the relationship and on a regular basis thereafter.

##### **4.2 Facilitation payments**

The company and its employees will not make facilitation payments even if such payments are local practice or custom. The company accepts that refusal to make illicit payments may lead to commercial delays, for example, in the processing of government papers, and that there may be a commercial cost to the company attributable to this policy.

If company employees encounter a demand for a facilitation payment, or think they are likely to do so, they should report the situation to their line manager without delay. Line managers will then ensure that the Managing Director or Directors is informed at the earliest possible opportunity.

The company recognises that demands for facilitation payments are often backed by a form of extortion and that in exceptional circumstances resistance may not be feasible. Staff must report any incident where they feel forced to make a facilitation payment to their line manager at the earliest opportunity. The company will stand by employees who find themselves placed in exceptional situations provided that the employee has provided absolute transparency as to the circumstances surrounding a payment shortly after the incident has occurred.

##### **4.3 Public officials**

Bribing or corrupting a public official is a serious offence, can carry severe penalties and can cause significant reputational damage. This policy provides detailed guidelines on gifts and hospitality. Approval must be secured in advance in relation to gifts or benefits received from or offered to public officials, particularly the giving of anything of value to a public official. Offers of internships to government officials or employees of state-owned enterprises must be approved in advance by the Managing Director.

##### **4.4 Gifts, hospitality and expenses**

Company employees may not offer to, or accept from, third parties, gifts, hospitality, rewards, benefits or other incentives that could affect either party's impartiality, influence a business decision or lead to the improper performance of an official duty. Similarly, they may not offer or accept cash donations.

Company employees may offer and accept 'reasonable' and 'proportionate' gifts and entertainment, such as dinner, theatre parties or sporting events. In determining what is 'reasonable' and 'proportionate', employees should consider the value of the gift or benefit (see below), as well as the frequency with which the same or similar gift or benefit is offered. In all cases they must ensure that the gift or benefit:

- is being given as an expression of goodwill and not in expectation of a return favour (a gift designed to secure a return favour could be seen as a bribe).

- is commensurate with generally accepted standards for hospitality taking into account the norms for the industry/professional sector in which it is offered.
- is being provided openly and transparently, and is of a nature that will not cause the company embarrassment if publicly reported.
- complies with local laws and regulations, including the recipient's own rules (bearing in mind that government rules on offering and receiving gifts or benefit are often particularly tight).
- meets the value limits set by the company and has all required approvals. In cases of uncertainty, employees must seek advice from the Managing Director.

Employees must seek prior approval from Managing Director for all gifts or benefits received or offered with a value prior to final acceptance. All approvals must be given in writing, and records of gifts received, from whom and by whom, must be recorded in an office or function log established for such purpose.

If prior approval cannot be realistically obtained before the initial acceptance of a gift or hospitality, the employee must report and seek retrospective approval, or otherwise, at the required level as soon as possible after initial acceptance.

Spouses or partners may be included in an invitation to, for example, a sporting event or dinner, where this does not create or give the appearance of an inducement. The same approval limits apply in the case of joint invitations.

#### **4.5 Personal conflicts of interest**

Company employees must avoid situations or transactions in which their personal interests could conflict or might be seen to be in conflict with the interests of the company. This includes: acting on any client information gained through their employment with the company for personal gain; passing such information to a third party; or acting in any way that could be construed as insider trading.

Conflicts of interest can arise if individuals have a personal interest in business dealings involving the company.

Personal interest can be direct or indirect, and refers not only to personal interests but to those of family members and friends. If there is a potential for conflict, the interests of the company must take priority.

Employees must disclose any personal conflict of interest or perceived conflict to Managing Director.

#### **4.6 Charitable donations**

As part of its corporate citizenship activities, the company may support local charities or provide sponsorship, for example, to sporting or cultural events. Any such sponsorship must be transparent and properly documented. The company will only provide donations to organisations that serve a legitimate public purpose, and which are themselves subject to high standards of transparency and accountability. Appropriate due diligence must be conducted on the proposed recipient charity and a full understanding obtained as to its *bona fides*.

#### **4.7 Political activities**

The company has a policy of strict political neutrality; it does not make donations to any political parties, organisations, or individuals engaged in politics. The company will co-operate with governments and other official bodies in the development of policy and legislation that may affect its legitimate business interests, or where it has specialist expertise.

Employees are entitled to their own political views and activities, but they may not use company premises or equipment to promote those views or associate their views with those of the company.

#### **4.8 Business relationships**

The company expects its business partners to approach issues of bribery and corruption in a manner that is consistent with the principles set out in this policy. This requirement applies to agents, subcontractors and joint venture partners. In cases where the company is unable to ensure these standards, it will reconsider the business relationship.

#### **4.9 Business Ethics**

The basis for sustainable and successful business activity is to have integrity and transparent business practices. The company employees are expected to operate honestly and equitably throughout the supply chain in accordance with local law, including those laws pertaining to:

- Anti-Corruption
- Anti-competitive Business Practices
- Protection of Intellectual Property
- Respect for Company and Personal Data
- Export Controls
- Conflicts of Interest

#### **4.10 Working Conditions and Human Rights**

##### **Child Labour and Young Workers**

Child labour should not be tolerated, and the age of employment must be in accordance with local laws.

##### **Wages and Benefits**

Compensation and benefits should be competitive and comply with applicable laws, including those relating to minimum wages, overtime compensation, and legally mandated benefits.

##### **Working Hours**

Working hours, including overtime, should comply with applicable laws regulating hours of work.

##### **Forced Labour**

Any form of forced or compulsory labour, including human trafficking, should not be tolerated.

##### **Freedom of Association**

Workers should be able to communicate openly with management regarding working conditions without fear of reprisal, intimidation or harassment. Workers should have the right to associate freely, to join or not join labour unions, seek representation, and join workers' councils in accordance with laws.

##### **Health and Safety**

Workers should have a safe and healthy working environment that meets or exceeds applicable standards for safety and occupational health.

##### **Harassment and Discrimination**

Harassment or discrimination against employees in any form is not acceptable.

##### **Agents, representatives and sub-contractors**

This policy applies with particular force to commercial agents, representatives and subcontractors. In many reported international corruption cases, agents have passed on part of their commissions as bribes. The company prohibits such practices.

In order to maintain the highest standards of integrity, employees must ensure that:

- They are fully briefed on the background and reputation for integrity of agents, representatives and subcontractors before hiring them. The company will conduct due diligence enquiries to review the integrity records of agents, representatives and subcontractors before entering a commercial relationship with them.

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- The engagement process is fully documented; and that final approval of the selection of agents, representatives and subcontractors is made by Managing Director.
- Agents, representatives and subcontractors are fully briefed on the company's Anti-Bribery and Anti-Corruption policy, and have made a formal commitment in writing to abide by it.
- Fees and commissions agreed will be appropriate and justifiable remuneration for legitimate services rendered.

Once agreements have been signed, the company will continue to monitor its relationships with agents, representatives and subcontractors to ensure that there are no infringements of its Anti-Bribery and Anti-Corruption policy. Contractual agreements will include appropriate wording making it possible to withdraw from the relationship if agents, representatives or subcontractors fail to abide by this policy.

When deemed necessary, internal investigations procedures for managing relationships with subcontractors will be authorised by Managing Director.

#### **Joint venture partners**

The need for documentation and careful reviews of the company's partners' integrity records applies equally to the process of setting up and managing joint ventures. The company will use its influence to ensure that joint ventures meet high integrity standards. Where the company has majority control, it will ensure that the joint venture adopts the concepts and approach to bribery and corruption as set out in this policy.

#### **Suppliers and contractors**

The company will ensure that the procurement procedure for appointing suppliers and contractors is open, fair and transparent. The selection of contractors will be based on an evaluation of professional merit, and not on personal recommendations.

The company will communicate its Anti-Bribery and Anti-Corruption policy to its suppliers and contractors, and it will expect them to abide by the principles set out in the policy when working on the company's behalf. If those principles are breached, the company will reserve the right to terminate the contract.

When deemed necessary, internal investigations procedures for managing relationships with suppliers and contractors will be authorised by Managing Director.

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#### **5. Accounts and Audits**

**Birmingham Stopper Ltd** policies require employees to keep accurate accounts throughout the company's operations. In no circumstances will **Birmingham Stopper Ltd** keep parallel accounts.

**Birmingham Stopper Ltd** regular auditing procedures will include a review of the local circumstances that may make company or department vulnerable to corruption, and the defences and strategies that are in place to mitigate such risks.

#### **6. Training**

The company will make this policy available to all employees.

Employees must read to confirm that he/she will comply with this policy when the employee joining the company.

Regular training will be made available to employees in relation to anti-bribery and anti-corruption measures, and the details of the company's whistleblowing procedures will be disseminated throughout the company on a regular basis.

#### **7. Authority and Responsibility**

##### **Managing Director**

If in any doubt about the application of this policy refer to the Managing Director.

##### **Department heads**

If in any doubt about the application of this policy refer to Managing Director.

##### **Employees**

Seek advice from their line manager in cases of uncertainty about how to apply this policy.

Consult their line manager if they suspect that a company employee is engaged in bribery, corruption, fraud or any other unacceptable or unethical conduct.

Consult Managing Director in confidence if they suspect that a company employee is engaged in bribery, corruption, fraud or any other unacceptable or unethical conduct and are unable to speak to their line manager.

#### **8. Non-Compliance**

##### **Company**

Failure to ensure compliance with this policy could lead to the following consequences for the company:

- Criminal or civil liabilities for the company including unlimited fines and imprisonment;
- Serious reputational damage including media comment;
- Debarment from tendering for public sector contracts, and
- The unenforceability of contracts entered into as a result of acts of bribery, fraud or other illegality

##### **Employees**

Failure to ensure compliance with this policy could lead to the following consequences for employees:

- Personal criminal liability followed by fines or imprisonment;
- Disciplinary action initiated by the company, including dismissal;
- Personal reputational damage.

#### **8. Monitoring**

Managing Director will, at regular intervals, make arrangements for audit of compliance with this policy on an office and function basis, and will include the results of such audits in reports to Board.

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#### **9. Relevant legislation**

All national laws relating to bribery and corruption, especially such laws that are in place in jurisdictions where the company has an office(s) or carries out its work, are of importance to the company. In setting out the principles included in this policy particular attention has been paid to the requirements of:

The UK Bribery Act 2010 which entered into effect on 1 July 2011 and which has extra-territorial reach. The holding company for the Group is registered in the UK, and this law has particular relevance to the manner in which the company conducts itself.

#### **10. Synopsis**

The company and its employees are:

- Prohibited from offering, promising or paying a bribe of any kind;
- Prohibited from soliciting, accepting or receiving a bribe of any kind;
- Prohibited from giving or offering anything of value to a public official;
- Required to comply with the company's guidelines and authorisation levels in relation to the giving and receipt of gifts and hospitality;
- Prohibited from making facilitation payments; and
- Required to complete due diligence into all agents, representatives, suppliers, contractors, joint venture partners and all those with whom a business relationship is established in order to enable the company to offer its services to its clients.



Signed for and on behalf of the Board:

Roger Varley  
Managing Director  
Birmingham Stopper Ltd

Date: 29<sup>th</sup> September 2020