Ethics & Morality · GS - IV

The ‘Code of Conduct’ and ‘Code of Ethics’ are the sources of guidance in public administration. There is code of conduct already in operation, whereas code of ethics is not yet put in place. Suggest a suitable model for code of ethics to maintain integrity, probity and transparency in governance.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
2024	GS - IV	Ethics & Morality

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

Code of Ethics, public administration, integrity, probity, transparency, impartiality, accountability, conflict of interest, public interest

Model Answer

Introduction

A Code of Conduct primarily prescribes what public servants must or must not do, whereas a Code of Ethics establishes broader values that guide judgement in situations not specifically covered by rules.

Body

A suitable **Public Service Code of Ethics** may be based on the following principles:

Public interest: Public office must be exercised exclusively for constitutional objectives and citizen welfare.

Integrity and honesty: Officials should demonstrate truthfulness and reject bribery, undue influence and misuse of office.

Impartiality: Decisions should remain free from political, personal, caste, religious or financial bias.

Objectivity: Decisions should rely on evidence and legitimate public-policy considerations.

Transparency: Reasons for decisions and use of public resources should be open to lawful scrutiny.

Accountability: Officials should accept responsibility for decisions and facilitate audits and grievance redressal.

Conflict of interest: Officials should disclose and appropriately manage personal, financial or familial interests.

Confidentiality with responsibility: Sensitive information should be protected while preventing secrecy from becoming a means of concealing wrongdoing.

Compassion: Administration should remain sensitive to vulnerable citizens.

Conclusion

An effective Code of Ethics should be **principle-based, enforceable through institutional mechanisms and supported by ethical training and leadership by example**. It would complement the existing Code of Conduct and strengthen integrity, probity and public trust.

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