



# Code of Conduct for Lok Sabha MPs

## Why in News

The **Lok Sabha Ethics Committee** is all set to **form a code of conduct** for the Members of Parliament (MPs) in the Lok Sabha.

- In the backdrop of recent incidents, it has become necessary that the MPs follow certain decorum in speaking inside the House as well as outside.
- A Code of Conduct is also necessary because of advancements of new technologies in the communication sector. The remarks on the floor of the House spread fast, even if they are expunged from the records.

## Code of Conduct: Evolution

- A **code for Union ministers was adopted in 1964**, and state governments were advised to adopt it as well.
- In the case of MPs, the first step was the constitution of Parliamentary Standing Committees on Ethics in both the Houses.
  - The **Committee in Rajya Sabha was inaugurated in 1997** to oversee the moral and ethical conduct of the Members and to examine the cases referred to it with reference to ethical and other misconduct of Members.
  - The **first Ethics Committee in Lok Sabha was constituted in the year 2000**.

## Code of Conduct in Rajya Sabha

- A 14-point Code of Conduct for members of the House has been in force since 2005. These include:
  - Private interests are subordinate to the duty of the public office.
  - Public interest is not jeopardised.
  - Members should never expect or accept any fee, remuneration or benefit for a vote given or not given by them on the floor of the House, for introducing a Bill, etc.
  - Members must not do anything that brings disrepute to the Parliament and affects their credibility.
  - Members must utilise their position as Members of Parliament to advance general well-being of the people.
  - Members should not be disrespectful to any religion and work for the promotion of secular values.
  - Members should keep uppermost in their minds the fundamental duties listed in part IVA of the Constitution.
  - Members are expected to maintain high standards of morality, dignity, decency and values in public life.
- A **'Register of Member's Interests'** maintained under the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Council of States states is available to Members for inspection on request. The Register is also accessible to ordinary citizens under the **Right To Information (RTI) Act, 2005**.

## Code of Conduct in Lok Sabha

- The Ethics Committee has been **constituted for every newly elected Lok Sabha** (since 13<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha) .
- The Ethics Committee was **mandated in August 2015** to formulate a code of conduct for Lok Sabha members and suggest amendments to the code from time to time.
- The Committee **examines every complaint relating to unethical conduct of a member** of Lok Sabha referred to it by the Speaker and make such recommendations as it may deem fit.

## International Practice

- In the **United Kingdom of Britain (UK)**, a code of conduct for MPs was “prepared pursuant to the Resolution of the House of 19 July 1995”
- The **Canadian** House of Commons has a Conflict of Interest and Ethics Commissioner with powers to examine violations of the Conflict of Interest Code at the request of another Member or by Resolution of the House or on his own initiative.
- **Germany** has had a Code of Conduct for members of the Bundestag since 1972;
- The **United States of America (USA)** has had a Code since 1968.
- **Pakistan** has a Code of Conduct for members of the Senate.

**Source: IE**

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