

Code of Ethical Conduct

Members of the Board of Examiners (members) for the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award pledge to uphold their professional principles in the fulfillment of their responsibilities as defined in the administration of Public Law 100-107, the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Improvement Act of 1987. The Board of Examiners Code of Ethical Conduct establishes accountability for these principles.

Four principles are the foundation of the Code of Ethical Conduct. These principles are intended to protect the interests of all key stakeholders, including applicants, examiners, judges, and the program, creating a safe and empowering environment for all to engage, share, learn, and improve. Known violations should be reported as soon as practical to the BPEP Director, who will not release the source of the information without permission.

Principle 1: Protect the Integrity of Baldrige

Members will make sound decisions related to conflicting or competing interests, as well as do their part to ensure that all organizations are evaluated consistently for the Baldrige Award and other Baldrige assessments. Violations of this principle include, but are not limited to, the following examples:

- Representing conflicting or competing interests or placing themselves in such a position where their interest may be in conflict—or appear to be in conflict—with the purposes and administration of the Baldrige Award or other Baldrige assessments. This includes being employed by, being a supplier or customer of, having a financial interest in, or having a consulting arrangement with a competitor or competing interest, present or future.
- Approaching an organization they have evaluated or reviewed in another examiner role on behalf of the Baldrige Program (e.g., technical editor or external site visit monitor) for personal gain or accepting employment from an organization they have evaluated within five years of the evaluation
- Using information gained from sources other than the award applicant or organization being assessed, such as information gathered from the press, websites, social media, examiners, or any other outside sources
- Intentionally communicating false or misleading information that may compromise the integrity of the Baldrige Program, award process, or decisions therein

Principle 2: Exhibit Professional Conduct at All Times

Members will conduct themselves professionally, guided by truth, accuracy, fairness, respect, thoughtfulness, and responsibility in all their interactions. Violations of this principle include, but are not limited to, the following examples:

- Failing to respect the climate, culture, and values of organizations being evaluated when participating in site visits
- Failing to demonstrate respect for all individuals involved with the Baldrige Program or award process. Examples of this violation are subjecting individuals to harassment, degradation, intimidation, or humiliation.
- Independently giving feedback to applicants regarding scoring or overall performance
- Sharing their number of years of service as an examiner or promoting/advertising their services *while performing as an examiner*
- Using Baldrige Program/Award logos in advertising or promotion. Note: Upon completion of the Examiner Preparation Course, examiners may use the following designation for one year, except on business cards: Examiner, Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award (MBNQA).

Principle 3: Protect the Promise of Confidentiality

Members will safeguard the confidences of all parties involved in the judging or examination of present or former applicants so that the integrity of the Baldrige Award or award process is not compromised. Violations of this principle include, but are not limited, to the following examples:

- Disclosing the identity of or other information about the applicant to anyone other than the examiner’s team, the judge involved in the examination, or the Baldrige staff members involved in the examination during or at any time after the review process.
- Copying applicant information of any kind. Note: Copying information from inside the Baldrige Program’s encrypted, secure database to other documents within the database is permitted as necessary.
- Retaining applicant information beyond the Consensus Review (or Site Visit Review, if applicable)
- Communicating applicant identity or other applicant information through e-mail, social media, or any other electronic or written means outside of the Baldrige Program’s secure database
- Communicating applicant identity or other information via cell phone, VOIP, or wireless devices unless authorized by the applicant
- Using or adapting applicant information subsequent to the review process, unless the information is publicly released by the applicant
- Communicating with the applicant during Independent Review and/or Consensus Review, unless the examiner is a designated participant of the official Independent Review call with the applicant
- Communicating directly with the applicant during site visits about matters other than verifying and clarifying information in the consensus scorebook, unless the examiner is the team leader or backup team leader
- Requesting/reviewing *individual* customer, stakeholder, or workforce member data and information during the Site Visit Review process

Principle 4: Protect the Program’s Intellectual Property

Members will make sound decisions related to the use of Baldrige Program materials, trademarks, logos, and information contained within the program’s website. Violations of this principle include, but are not limited to, the following examples:

- Establishing links from their own website to the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) or Baldrige Performance Excellence Program (BPEP) website without making it clear that users will be taken to official NIST websites
- Failing to acknowledge the use of trademarks owned by NIST, including those for NIST, the Quest for Excellence, and the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award, along with the statement indicating the trademark is registered by NIST
- Making or sharing unauthorized copies of the Baldrige Excellence Framework or any other Baldrige Program publications

Furthermore, board members enhance and advance the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award as it serves to stimulate U.S. organizations to improve overall performance. All board members pledge to abide by this Code of Ethical Conduct.

Print Your Name

Signature

Date