



In order to reduce the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Government of Québec has announced a number of measures for enterprises that find themselves in a precarious situation or are experiencing temporary difficulties due to COVID-19. In this regard, a number of enterprises that do not usually have contracts with the Government or a department or public body may need to take advantage of the new programs put in place to ensure their survival.

As certain rules of conduct govern the interests held in enterprises that have contracts with the Government or a department or public body,¹ the Ethics Commissioner wishes to inform and assist Members of the National Assembly (hereinafter “Members”) as well as their staff in this particular context.

The Ethics Commissioner is of the opinion that the application of rules on the holding of interests in enterprises that participate in contracts with the Government must take into account this extraordinary situation, much like in a case of force majeure. The Ethics Commissioner must, however, review the specific aspects of each situation to be able to properly assist Members and the political staff concerned.

Consequently, all Members and their staff, including the staff of the Cabinet ministers and House officers of the National Assembly, are invited to contact the Ethics Commissioner should an enterprise in which they have interests want to take advantage of the measures put in place by the Government to mitigate the impact of COVID-19. A Cabinet Minister whose spouse has interests in such an enterprise is also invited to contact the Ethics Commissioner.

Ethics Commissioner Mignolet recognizes the essential work carried out by Members and their staff on behalf of Québec citizens on a daily basis. The assistance they provide to people and organizations in their riding is all the more necessary in times of crisis. Their dedication and willingness to help are fully in line with the values outlined in the *Code of ethics and conduct of the Members of the National Assembly*.

¹ *Code of ethics and conduct of the Members of the National Assembly* (CQLR, chapter C-23.1), sections 18, 45 and 46; *Regulation respecting the rules of conduct applicable to the office staff of ministers* (CQLR, chapter C 23.1, r. 2), section 8; *Règles déontologiques applicables aux membres du personnel des députés et des cabinets de l'Assemblée nationale* (in French only) (Bureau de l'Assemblée nationale, décision n° 1690 du 21 mars 2013), article 7.