

**CODE OF CONDUCT  
FOR  
EXTERNAL DEBT  
COLLECTION AGENCIES**

## **CODE OF CONDUCT**

This Code of Conduct has been drafted based on the Customer Charter guidelines issued by The Central Bank of Sri Lanka (CBSL) together with the rules set out herein shall apply to all Employees / Collectors of the Service Provider and shall also observe any additional rules to which they may be subject to.

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### **Introduction – The Bank and the Agency**

#### ***The Bank***

The Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corporation hereto referred as the “Bank”, shall in its discretion employ services of an external Debt Collection agency to facilitate recovery of overdue payments emanating from bad debts in its books.

#### ***The Service Provider***

An External Debt Collection Agency dully registered under the company act of Sri Lanka and approved for its services rendered by the Bank may carry out External Debt Collection activities.

### **Conduct and Decorum of a Debt Recovery Agent**

As a representative of the debt collection agency, an agent thus appointed is deemed to bear and exercise specific tasks related to the process of External Debt Collections.

- To demonstrate a higher degree of honesty, integrity and professionalism in his /her conduct.

- To never - under any circumstance - act / behave in such a way that causes embarrassment / harassment to the customer / any party involved.
- To understand your role as not only as a collector but also as a financial advisor to the customer.
- To be fluent in the language used, so that you clearly understand what is being communicated and refrain from using abusive language at all times.
- To possess a broad and updated knowledge of the subject matter of recovery.
- Be proficient and up-skilled in successful negotiation and convincing skills.
- To protect the integrity and the sensitivity of information of the customers in the process of obtaining information from Third Parties. Must maintain composure even in the face of rudeness and resistance from the customer.
- To be conscious of recovery process and resort not to harass verbally or physically in any form whatsoever in the process of debt recovery or obtaining information.
- Should be dressed in professional attire during all collection visits. The said attire should include,
  - Official employee ID displayed prominently.
  - Visiting card identifying the agent to be a representative of an authorized collection agency.
  - At no time the agent should introduce themselves as staff of HSBC or its group offices
- Must not accept any commission, gift pecuniary or other benefit from a customer or any other individual
- Agents should act according to the law; refrain from action prejudicial to the business, integrity, reputation or goodwill to the Bank. Agents should strictly adhere to the following minimum requirements to be observed in the course of discharging their duties.
  - Should not resort to intimidation or violence (physical/verbal) against any persons in their debt recovery actions

- Information pertaining to the “nearest relative” (also referred as referee/third party) mentioned at the point of account assignment by the bank should only be used as a tool to obtain assistance to trace the primary debtor. Such parties are in no way responsible for the debt and no demand can be made to them.

Confidential information such as the outstanding balance / account numbers should not be disclosed to these parties at any cost.

- Not to employ harassment/improper tactics such as making phone calls at un-reasonable hours, pestering Default Customers with persistent phone calls, pestering family members, nearest relatives (also referred as referee/third party), friends to locate the debtor, making anonymous calls, making false or misleading representation with the intent to induce the debtor to make a payment etc.

### **Oath of secrecy**

The debt collection agency is bound and obliged to safeguard any information deemed sensitive in the process of debt recovery to the best of the conduct and knowledge of the agents deployed to exercise such duties.

In conjunction of the above a debt collection agent shall abide by the following aspects pertaining to the process;

- Shall not discuss, promote, print or publish by means whatsoever any information pertaining to any customer details.

Any information not included in this documentation and any adherence to be complied with relation to the Code of Conduct should be simultaneously referred along with the Initial Agreement signed and verified by the External Debt Collections Agency with the Bank.