

— To ensure the people’s trust in the public service —

Activities of the National Public Service Ethics Board

The National Public Service Ethics Board (the Ethics Board) is an agency established in the National Personnel Authority based on the National Public Service Act and the National Public Service Ethics Act (the Ethics Act). In order to fulfill the objective of the Ethics Act, which is to ensure the people’s trust in the public service, the Ethics Board has been given the authority to make certain that national public employees maintain ethical conduct with respect to their duties, and has responsibility over the various affairs concerned.



Standards for Ethical Conduct and Rules for Conduct and Reporting are stipulated in the National Public Service Ethics Code. This Code is a Cabinet Order enacted in compliance with the opinions submitted by the Ethics Board.

Organization and Responsibilities of the Ethics Board

- The Ethics Board is composed of five members comprising the President and four other members (one of the four members is to be appointed from among Commissioners of the NPA)

Main Responsibilities of the Ethics Board

- Submission of opinions regarding the enactment, revision or repeal of the Ethics Code;
- Research, study and planning of affairs about maintaining national public employees' ethical conduct;
- Overall planning and coordination of training courses to maintain national public employees' ethical conduct;
- Examination of mandatory reports;
- Establishment and revision of the criteria for disciplinary actions against violations of the Ethics Act or the Ethics Code;
- Investigation of suspicious acts that might be violations of the Ethics Act or the Ethics Code, implementation of disciplinary procedures against violations, and approval of disciplinary actions to be taken by each appointer against the violations;
- Provision of guidance and advice to the Cabinet Office and each Ministry, etc. and requesting them to take necessary measures.



Mr.Nakamura, Member Mr.Maeda, Member Mr.Ikeda, President Ms.Hanyu, Member Mr.Tachibana, Member
(a Commissioner of the NPA)

National Public Service Ethics Board

Outline of the Ethics Code

- The Ethics Code stipulates prohibited acts with interested parties for national public employees, determining the scope of interested parties, such as persons who have received an administrative permission or authorization and counterparts of contracts, etc.

Examples of prohibited acts with interested parties

- Acceptance of money, goods or other gifts
- Acceptance of hospitality
- Receipt of a loan
- Borrowing goods or accepting services without paying for them
- Receipt of unlisted stocks
- Playing games or golf or traveling together
- Having a third party carry out acts such as the above

Other prohibited acts

- Acceptance of hospitality, etc. from those who are not interested parties, beyond the level of general social norms
- Having someone (a business operator or an individual) that is not present pay for food, drink or other hospitality charges
- Receipt of remuneration for the compilation or editorial supervision of a book, etc. that is produced through accepting national subsidies or expenses, or that the majority of which is going to be purchased by the national government
- Sharing of benefits, knowing that those benefits are obtained by another national public employee in violation of the Ethics Code

Examples of permissible acts with interested parties

- Acceptance of advertisement goods or commemorative items that are widely distributed to the public
- Acceptance of condolence money or congratulatory gifts from a friend from schooldays[※]
- Having a small amount of modest food and drinks served at a meeting which a national public employee attends as part of his/her duties
- Having food and drinks served at a buffet-style party that many people attend

※ It is allowable only when it will not invite suspicion or distrust from the people, when taking into account the circumstances of the relation of interest and the private relationship, and the characteristics and mode of the act, etc.

National public employees may dine with interested parties if they pay their own expenses for the food and drink, or when a third party that is not an interested party pays the bill.

However, national public employees need to report in advance to the ethics supervisory officer when the expenses for the food and drink exceed 10,000 yen.

National public employees may not accept any hospitality beyond the level of general social norms, even from a third party.

For more details about the Ethics Code, please visit the web site of the Ethics Board.
(<http://www.jinji.go.jp/rinri/>)

In 2005, after five years from the enforcement of the Ethics Code, the Ethics Board submitted opinions regarding partial revision of the Code. The outline of the opinions is as follows:

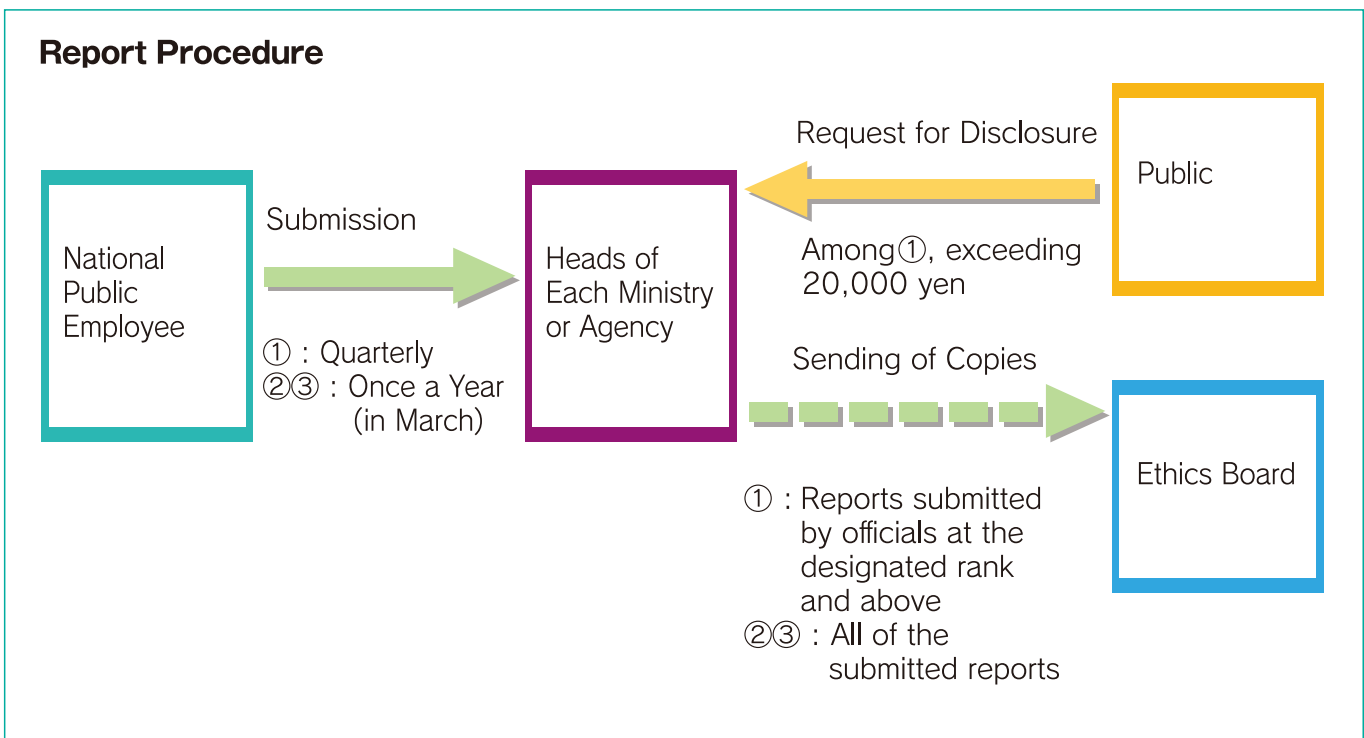
1) Prohibition of the receipt of remuneration for the compilation or editorial supervision of a specific book, etc.; 2) Prohibition of the acts that hinder national public employees' ethical conduct with respect to their duties; and 3) Simplification of the regulatory scheme.

In response to those opinions, the Ethics Code was partially revised and the revised Code was put into effect on April 1, 2005.

Examination of Mandatory Reports

■ The Ethics Act stipulates three types of mandatory reporting systems in order to promote a transparent relationship between national public employees and business operators, etc. The Ethics Board examines copies of the reports sent from each Ministry. The Ethics Board examines those copies with a viewpoint as to whether an inappropriate acceptance of gifts or an inappropriate exchange of stocks, etc., which could distort the fair execution of the national public service, has taken place, and whether the report has been properly submitted.

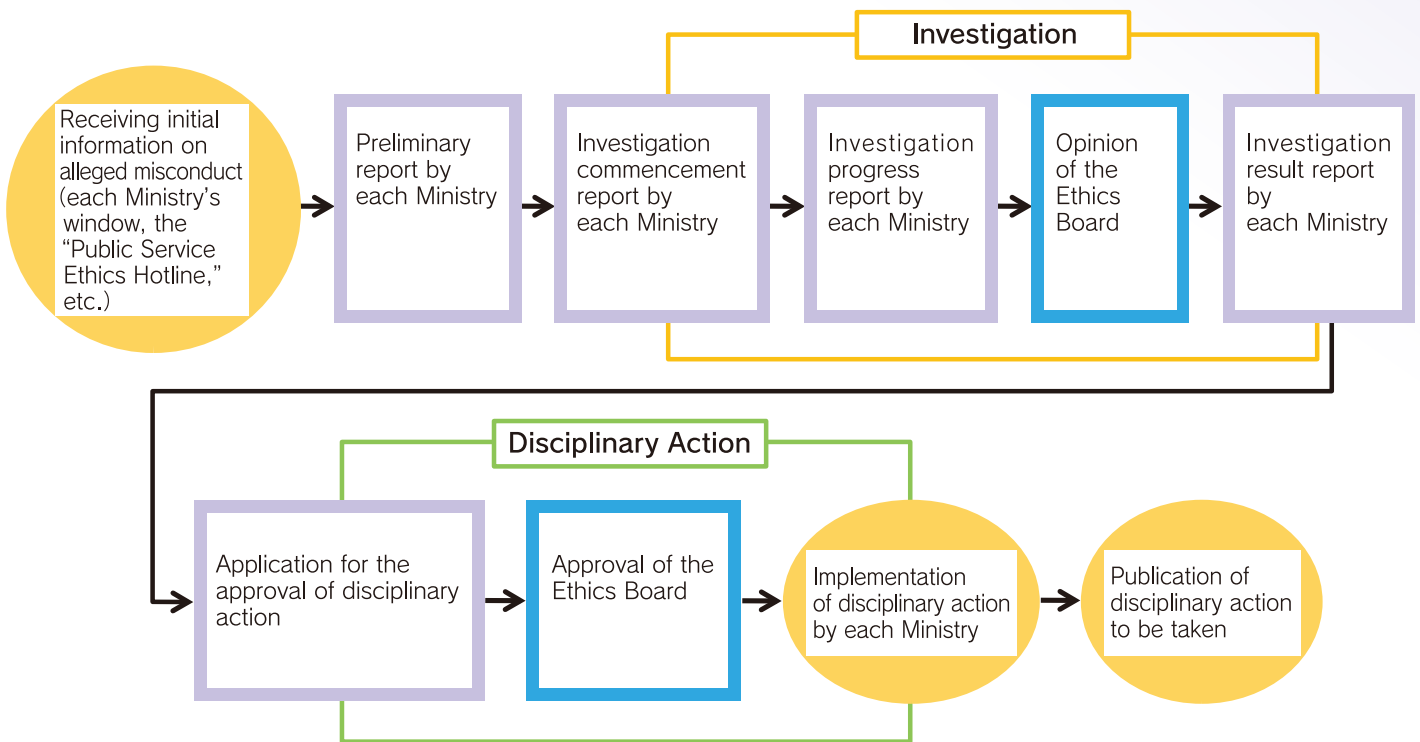
- ① Mandatory reports on the receipt of gifts, etc. (to be submitted by the officials at the rank of assistant director and above at the headquarters; when they accept gifts, food and drink, remuneration for a lecture, etc. and any other benefits from business operators, etc., which exceeds 5,000 yen)
- ② Mandatory reports on the exchange of stocks, etc. (to be submitted by the officials at the rank of deputy director general or above at the headquarters)
- ③ Mandatory reports on income, etc. (to be submitted by the officials at the rank of deputy director general or above at the headquarters throughout the previous year)



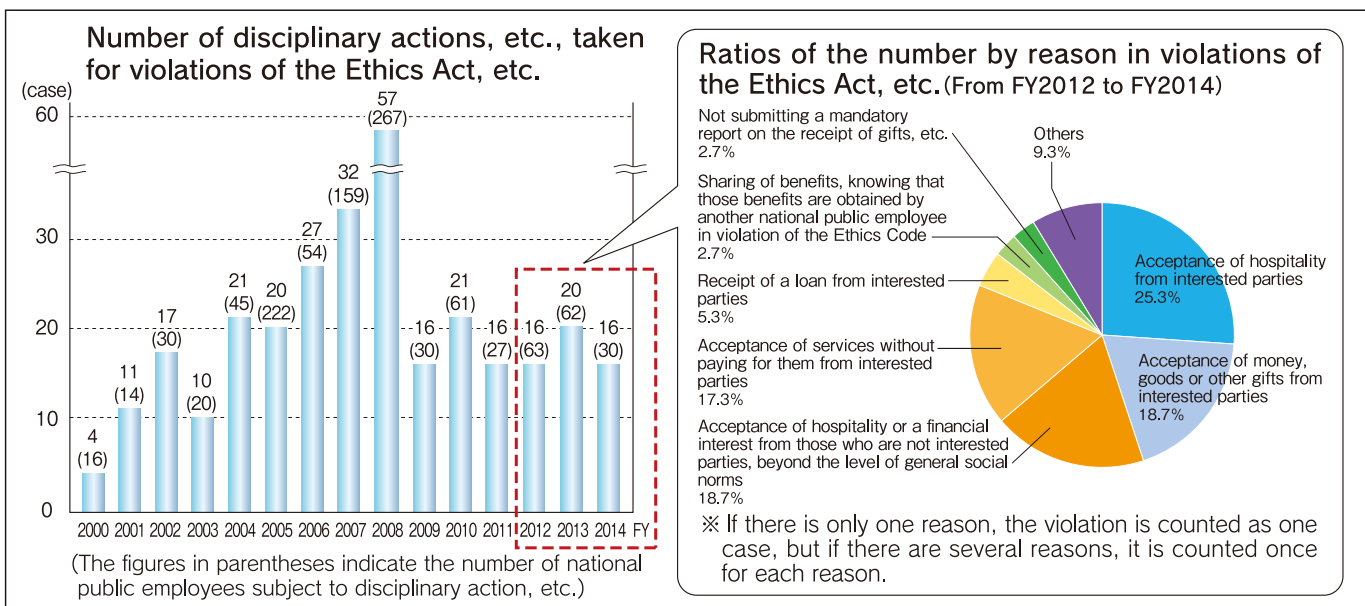
Investigation and Disciplinary Action against Violations

- The Ethics Board and each Ministry, including the Cabinet Office (each appointer), respectively has the authority to investigate a case of possible violation of the Ethics Act or the Ethics Code, and to execute the disciplinary procedure against the offenders. Each Ministry has to report on investigation to the Ethics Board and ask for its approval for a disciplinary action. Furthermore, the Ethics Board guides each Ministry to take appropriate measures for preventing future occurrences of similar kinds of violations.

Process of investigation and disciplinary action by each Ministry



Status of disciplinary actions, etc. against violations of the Ethics Act or the Ethics Code



Publicity and Training, etc.

■ For a better understanding of the Ethics Act and the Ethics Code, the Ethics Board carries out activities concerning public relations and training.

“National Public Employees’ Ethics Week” and “Public Service Ethics Seminar”



The Ethics Board carries out educational campaigns every year during the week from December 1 to 7, which is named “National Public Employees’ Ethics Week.”



The Ethics Board holds “Public Service Ethics Seminar” in a local city every year for National public employees, etc. working there.

Production of various study materials, etc.

To raise awareness of the Ethics Act and the Ethics Code, the Ethics Board produces “Textbook on the Ethics of National Public Employees,” “Ethics Card of National Public Employees,” DVDs for case studies, case examples and self-teaching material for national public employees.

Publicity



The Ethics Board produces a variety of brochures that contain a simple explanation on the outline of the ethical regulation system, and carries out activities concerning public relations about the ethical regulation system for business organizations, private companies or local governments, etc.

Study material for training and brochures, etc. produced by the Ethics Board

・ ・ ・ Public Service Ethics Hotline ・ ・ ・

■ For early detection and prevention of conduct that violates the Ethics Act, etc., the Ethics Board has set up the “Public Service Ethics Hotline” and accepts the information widely. If you find a suspicious act that might be a violation of the Ethics Act or the Ethics Code, please inform us on the “Public Service Ethics Hotline.” We take all possible measures to protect whistleblowers from receiving disadvantageous treatment, such as maintaining confidentiality and not disclosing whistleblowers’ names, etc.

Public Service Ethics Hotline TEL: +81-3-3581-5344 E-mail: rinrimail@jinji.go.jp

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