

Augusta University

Policy Library

Ethics Policy

Policy Owner: Office of Compliance and Risk Management

POLICY STATEMENT

Augusta University is committed to the highest standards of ethics and integrity. Ethical conduct and compliance is a personal responsibility, and every workforce member will be held accountable for his or her conduct. All Augusta University officers, faculty, employees, staff, temporaries, and volunteers are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the following Code of Ethics.

The reason for this policy is to communicate to all Augusta University workforce members an expectation and requirement of ethical conduct and compliance with all applicable laws, policies, rules and regulations.

AFFECTED STAKEHOLDERS

Indicate all entities and persons within the Enterprise that are affected by this policy:

- Alumni Faculty Graduate Students Health Professional Students
 Staff Undergraduate Students Vendors/Contractors Visitors
 Other:

DEFINITIONS

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PROCESS & PROCEDURES

Augusta University operates according to the following Code of Ethics:

Official Duties. We will carry out our official duties for the benefit of our institution and the public. Our duty as faculty and staff at Augusta University is to serve our students, our patients and the public. We will not use our office, title, or institutional influence for unofficial purposes. We will adhere to the laws, rules, regulations, and policies that apply to us.

Conflict of Interest. We will avoid actual and apparent conflicts of interest between our official obligations and our personal interests. We will not allow our official duties to be compromised by personal interests, and we will not allow even the mere appearance of a conflict to cause others to question our integrity. We will not use Augusta University resources for personal gain nor will we exploit students or employees for private benefit. More specific guidelines regarding conflict of interest follow:

1. As a general rule, Georgia law prohibits state employees and their families from transacting business with the agency that employs them (e.g., a faculty member's spouse may not serve as a contractor for Augusta University).

Office of Compliance and Enterprise Risk Management Use Only

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Policy Sponsor: Type the title of the Executive Leader of the department.

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2. One's personal investments can also cause conflicts with official duties; for instance, if an employee owns part of a company that does business with Augusta University, or if an employee owns land whose value can be affected by institutional decisions, then a conflict of interest exists.
3. Accepting additional employment may create a conflict if the other employer is a competitor or a contractor with Augusta University.
4. Paid service on an outside board of directors should only be undertaken if it does not create a conflict of interest with official duties and if the necessary Outside Activity approval has been obtained; board service for a vendor or competitor of Augusta University would create a conflict of interest.

Disclosure. We will disclose conflicts of interest, both actual and apparent; they must be properly managed. We will disclose the existence of any actual or apparent conflict of interest to our chain of command and to any other interested party, such as the chair of a search committee or procurement bidding panel. Proper management of the conflict may include recusing oneself from the official decision affected by the conflict, limiting or divesting the outside interest, or pursuing other measures that ensure the integrity of our official roles. Conflict management plans will be agreed upon in writing. No member of the Augusta University community will participate in a decision, including employment and purchasing decisions, if a conflict of interest exists that has not been appropriately managed.

- **NOTE:** Research conflicts of interest are addressed in Augusta University's Research Conflicts of Interest Policy (see Related Documents at the end of this policy)

Gifts and Favors. We will not accept improper gifts and favors that may influence how we carry out our official duties. Improper gifts and favors will not be received by our family members. Gifts (including meals) from vendors, patients, students, lobbyists, and other parties must not exceed \$100 in fair market value.

Confidentiality. We will maintain the confidentiality of all sensitive information. In the course of our duties, we may have access to information concerning patients, students, employees, research subjects, proprietary intellectual materials, and other sensitive data. We will not disclose such sensitive information unless our official duties require it, and we will actively protect such sensitive information.

Values. We will treat everyone with respect and dignity. Augusta University does not tolerate harassment or discrimination. We will be honest at all times. In addition to requiring that all of our statements be truthful, honesty requires us to be forthcoming. We will strive in all actions to demonstrate Augusta University's values of leadership, social responsibility, compassion, diversity, professionalism, partnership, and ethics.

Human Resources will introduce the Ethics Policy to employees as part of orientation for new hires. As a condition of employment, each employee must sign the Ethics Policy Acknowledgment Form (linked below) that states awareness of, and agreement to work in accordance with, the expectations and policy requirements. The Division of Human Resources will notify department contacts of missing signed acknowledgment forms.

Violations of this policy, particularly the code of ethics, should be reported through appropriate chain of command. Anonymous concerns may be shared through the Augusta University Compliance Hotline at 1-800-576-6623. Violations may also be reported to the Office of Legal Affairs (706-721-4018, or legal@gru.edu) and the Office of Compliance and Enterprise Risk Management (706-721-0900, or compliance@gru.edu).

REFERENCES & SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

Ethics Policy Acknowledgment Form

RELATED POLICIES

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APPROVED BY:

President, Augusta University and CEO, AU Health System Date: 06/19/2017