

**ADVANCING A HEALTHIER WISCONSIN ENDOWMENT  
RESEARCH AND EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**POLICY ON CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

1. Background. In light of its unique structure, the Advancing a Healthier Wisconsin Endowment Research and Education Advisory Committee (REAC) has adopted this policy on conflicts of interest to facilitate the proper discharge of its special oversight in its advisory role. The REAC was designed to have each member represent a specific interest. By design, each member is an “interested member” insofar as he or she represents the specific area of expertise, which he or she has been appointed or nominated by or charged with representing. Thus, it follows that a REAC member cannot be deemed to have a conflict of interest as discussed in this policy, with respect to any matter which impacts:
  - a. the entity (i.e. MCW) or individual (i.e. the Dean) which appointed him or her;
  - b. the area of expertise for which he or she is identified as a representative.

Because each member openly represents a certain type of interest related to their appointment to the REAC, and the other members are aware of these facts, it is presumed for purposes of this policy, that the REAC is aware of these matters and that such representation does not create a conflict of interest.

2. Definitions.

- a. **Conflict of Interest**

Conflicts arise when a REAC member has a personal financial interest in a proposal under review by the REAC. This interest can occur directly, as when the member is personally involved in or funded by a proposal under review, or indirectly, as when a family member is personally involved in or funded by a proposal under review by the REAC.

Conflicts may also arise in situations where a member receives no monetary or other tangible benefit from a proposal under review by the REAC. For example, access to information which could be used for individual advantage might put a REAC member in conflict with the REAC.

Members also need to be sensitive to the possibility that service or a relationship with another entity may create the potential for a conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict (for example, if the other entity is a sub-awardee on a proposal). Even if a member does not have a financial relationship with the other entity, his or her

obligations to the other entity can create a conflict of interest when that entity has a proposal under review by the REAC.

- b. **Family Members** include spouses, children, siblings, parents, in-laws and step-relatives.
3. Policy. It is the duty of the REAC's members to exercise their powers strictly in the interests of the REAC's oversight and advisory role, and not in their own interests or in the interests of another person, constituency, or entity (except for those persons, constituencies or entities which have caused their appointment to the REAC). Members of the REAC have a duty, at all times, to exercise the utmost good faith in discharging their responsibilities as REAC members. In their dealings with and on behalf of the REAC, they shall be held to a strict rule of honest and fair dealing. REAC members will at all times be alert and sensitive to any interest they may have that might be considered to conflict with the interests of the REAC.
  4. Procedures.
    - a. Disclosure of Interests. Any possible conflict of interest, as defined above, on the part of any member shall be promptly and fully disclosed to the REAC. Any member who has an interest in a matter presented to the REAC for consideration or approval shall make a prompt and full disclosure of his/her interest to the REAC prior to its acting on the matter. A member who plans not to attend a meeting at which he or she has reason to believe that the REAC or a committee will act on a matter in which the person has a conflict of interest shall disclose to the REAC Chair all facts material to the conflict of interest. The REAC Chair shall report the disclosure at the meeting and the disclosure shall be reflected in the minutes of the meeting.
    - b. When Duty to Disclose Arises. The duty to disclose the existence of conflicting interests arises without regard to whether the proposal is an approvable one or whether the member urges or opposes the proposal. In all cases, a disclosure shall be made in the following circumstances:
      - i. where the REAC member (*or a family member of a REAC member*) is a principal investigator on a proposal; or
      - ii. where the REAC member (*or a family member of a REAC member*) is funded by, or a contributor or collaborator to, a proposal; or
      - iii. where the principal investigator on a proposal reports directly to the REAC member (*or a family member of the REAC member*); or
      - iv. where the REAC member (*or a family member of the REAC member*) has recently been or is currently a supervisor or a formal mentor for a principal investigator on a proposal.

It is not possible to describe all situations in which a conflict of interest may arise. Therefore, if a REAC member has any question about whether a disclosure should be

made, that REAC member should disclose and recuse themselves as provided in the next paragraph.

- c. Procedure After Disclosure. Once a REAC member has disclosed the conflicting situation as described above, he or she will leave the meeting, not participate in any vote on the proposal in question and return to the room only when action on that proposal has been completed. If a majority of the other members present at a meeting of the REAC at which a quorum is present determines that the proposal should be approved and votes to approve the proposal, then such proposal shall be deemed approved. The REAC member with the conflict of interest may be counted in determining whether a quorum is present at the meeting as a whole, but may not vote or be counted as voting on the matter or in calculating the majority of the quorum necessary to carry the vote.

In the unlikely event that a REAC member declines to recuse him or herself when recusal is required by this policy, the REAC will table the proposal in question.

- d. Minutes of Meeting. Whenever this process of disclosure occurs, the minutes of the meeting shall reflect the disclosure that was made, the names of the REAC members who were present for discussions and votes relating to the matter, the abstention from voting, the quorum situation, and the REAC's determination.
- e. Failure to Disclose. If the REAC has reasonable cause to believe that a REAC member has failed to disclose actual or possible conflicts of interest, it shall inform the REAC members of the basis for such belief and afford him or her an opportunity to explain the alleged failure to disclose. If, after hearing the response and making such further investigation as may be warranted in the circumstances, the REAC determines that the REAC member has in fact failed to disclose an actual or possible conflict of interest, it shall take whatever corrective action may be appropriate.
- f. Certification. Each REAC member shall complete a certification (attached) agreeing to abide by and comply with this policy.

Effective Date: 1/1/2016

Supersedes Prior Policy dated: not applicable

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**CONFLICTS OF INTEREST CERTIFICATION**

This certification has been adopted by the Advancing a Healthier Wisconsin (AHW) Endowment Research and Education Advisory Committee (REAC) as part of the implementation of the REAC's Conflict of Interest Policy.

I, \_\_\_\_\_, the undersigned REAC member hereby acknowledge that I am familiar with and agree to abide by the Policy on Conflicts of Interest adopted by the REAC, and understand and agree that I have a duty of confidentiality and a duty of loyalty to the REAC in all matters which affect the REAC's interests.

I agree that if any matter in which I have a conflict of interest (as defined in the Policy) is discussed or presented for approval, I shall make prompt and full disclosure of my interest.

In the event that a conflict of interest does in fact exist, or may appear to exist, I agree that I shall disclose the actual or potential conflict, recuse myself and leave the room for any discussion and vote, and abstain from decisions regarding the matter, and further agree to refrain from any action with reference to the matter that would have any adverse impact on the REAC.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_