University of Colorado
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BOARD OF REGENTS

8. CONDUCT OF MEMBERS OF THE UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY

Policy 8.A: Principles of Ethical Behavior

The Laws of the Regents, Article 8, Part A, makes members of the university community, including regents, officers, faculty, and staff, responsible for understanding and upholding the highest standards of legal and ethical conduct. The Principles of Ethical Behavior as outlined in this policy are not intended to be a comprehensive catalogue of all university rules and policies. Rather, these principles set forth the underlying expectations regarding the conduct and activities of the university community.

8.A.1 Responsible Conduct

Members of the university community are expected to conduct themselves ethically, and in compliance with all applicable laws, regulations, and university policies. Members of the university community are expected to practice and model ethical and responsible behavior in all aspects of their work. Expected conduct includes conducting fair and principled business transactions; acting in good faith; being personally accountable for individual actions; conscientiously fulfilling obligations towards others; and demonstrating ethical standards of conduct.

8.A.2 Respect for Others

The University of Colorado recognizes that people are the most important resource in accomplishing its mission. The University of Colorado values academic freedom, diversity, and respect for all persons. The university is committed to the principle of non-discrimination and does not tolerate harassment on any basis, including race, color, national origin, sex, pregnancy, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, veteran status, marital status, political affiliation, or political philosophy. Members of the university community are expected to treat colleagues, co-workers, and students with respect, professionalism, and dignity in all interactions and communications.

8.A.3. Conflicts of Interest

As a state institution, it is imperative for both legal and ethical reasons that members of the university community do not improperly benefit from their positions at the university. Members of the university community are expected to avoid actual and perceived conflicts of interest related to their work and position. Actual or potential conflicts must be appropriately disclosed in accordance with university conflict of interest and conflict of commitment policies so that such conflicts may be reviewed, and as appropriate, managed or eliminated. Members of the university community are responsible for identifying potential conflicts and seeking appropriate guidance.

Conflicts of interest may also arise in the context of gifts, travel, and entertainment. Members of the university community are expected to conduct themselves so as to ensure that their positions are not misused for private gain with respect to the acceptance of gifts per the state law. Members of the university community may not solicit, accept, or agree to accept any benefit that is intended to influence the employee in the performance of their university duties.

8.A.4 Research and Academic Integrity

Members of the university community have significant responsibility to ensure that research and academic work is conducted with the highest integrity, and in compliance with federal and state laws, and university policies. Academic freedom can flourish only in a community that values intellectual integrity. University of Colorado researchers and scholars are expected to follow campus policies when conducting research with human or animal subjects; and follow and demonstrate accountability for sponsors and regulatory body requirements. In addition, researchers and scholars are to ensure originality of work, accurately and fairly publish information, and fairly assign authorship credit on the basis of intellectual contributions.

8.A.5 Stewardship of University Property

The university is committed to responsible stewardship of university resources, and members of the university community are expected to ensure that university property, funds, and technology are used appropriately. These responsibilities include using university property, equipment, and resources only for legitimate university purposes; promoting efficient operations; following sound financial practices; and engaging in appropriate accounting and monitoring.

University property includes the university seal, name, and logo. The university regulates the use of its seal, name and related trademarks and logos in order to protect the university's reputation and to ensure that their use is related to the university's educational, research, community service, and patient care missions.

8.A.6 Contributing to a Safe Workplace

The University of Colorado is committed to protecting the health and safety of the university community and creating a safe working and learning environment. Safe workplace practices include participating in applicable training sessions, using appropriate personal safety equipment, and reporting accidents, injuries, and unsafe situations. Members of the university community are expected to conduct their activities in an environmentally responsible manner. This includes carefully handling chemical, radioactive and biological waste, and disposing of hazardous waste and other potentially harmful agents in an environmentally safe manner.

The illegal use and possession of controlled substances and the possession of firearms, explosives, and other weapons on university premises compromises the safety of the university community. The University of Colorado prohibits the unlawful manufacture, distribution, possession, or use of controlled substances and the unlawful possession of weapons in or on any premises or property owned or controlled by the University of Colorado.

8.A.7 Privacy and Confidentiality

Members of the university community are the creators and custodians of many types of information. Such information may relate to students, employees, alumni, donors, research sponsors, patients and others. Members of the university community are expected to comply with applicable legal, contractual, and policy obligations to maintain the confidentiality of such information, protect it from improper disclosure, and protect the privacy interests of individuals. To meet these responsibilities, members of the university community are expected to follow document preservation and retention guidelines, and maintain data security using electronic and physical safeguards.

8.A.8 Open and Effective Communication

Except as limited by section 8.A.7 of this policy, the University of Colorado is committed to open communication and an environment of transparency. Communicating openly with both internal and external constituents improves relationships and allows the university to operate more effectively. Members of the university community who have questions about a policy, decision, or activity are encouraged to discuss the issue with the individual(s) directly involved before discussing it with others. Supervisors are expected to respond in a timely manner to concerns and communicate with all individuals involved in the matter. The university is committed to providing the community with accurate information regarding the business and affairs of the university. For this reason, and in order to provide a coordinated, accurate, and timely response, all media and legislative inquiries should be directed to the Office of University Relations.

In furtherance of this principle, no employee of the university shall suffer punishment or prejudice in employment because of communications with members of the Board of Regents.

8.A.9. Reporting Suspected Misconduct (Whistleblower Policy)

The University of Colorado is committed to meeting federal and state legal requirements and fostering a culture of compliance. Members of the university community are expected to report known and suspected violations of university policies, as well as violations of applicable laws and regulations to appropriate offices. The university provides several options for reporting violations. Unless reporting is required to an appropriate office, members of the university community are encouraged to first report any known or suspected violations to their direct supervisor. Fraud, theft, embezzlement, abuse, or waste may be reported to the University Department of Internal Audit. The university's Ethics Hotline allows individuals to anonymously report concerns involving a possible violation of law, regulation, or policy. All members of the university community who act in good faith in reporting known or suspected violations of law or university policy are protected from retaliation.

History:

- Adopted: February 11, 2010, as Policy 1.C: Principles of Ethical Behavior.
- Revised: June 18, 2020, and moved to Policy 8.A: Principles of Ethical Behavior; September 8, 2023 (added “marital status” to section 8.A.2 to comply with state law).
- Last Reviewed: June 18, 2020.

- Non-substantive Changes: July 30, 2025 (Conforming amendments made for renumbering of regent laws and policies: Reference to article 8.B changed to article 8.A).

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8. CONDUCT OF MEMBERS OF THE UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY

Policy 8.B: Professional Employee Conduct – University Staff

8.B.1 Conflict of Interest

(A) Obligations of University Staff

With the acceptance of a full- or part-time appointment at the University of Colorado, a university staff person agrees to conduct their affairs so that they shall not derive private gain from their association with the university, except as permitted by regent or university policies after appropriate disclosure to an appropriate official. University staff shall act in the best interest of the university, and arrange outside obligations, financial interests, and activities so as to not compromise their overriding commitment to the university.

(B) Officer Disclosure of Outside Interests

Officers shall submit an annual written disclosure of material outside interests and activities and the supervising authorities shall review such disclosures for possible conflicts of interest. The president of the University of Colorado shall establish a materiality threshold for such disclosures, and shall periodically review that threshold.

8.B.2 Outside Consulting and Service on External Boards

(A) Consulting and service on external boards that occur during a university staff's normal working hours, for which no vacation leave is taken, is subject to approval by the employee's supervising authority. Supervising authorities may authorize such service as long as such services advance the interest of the university and do not unduly conflict with the employee's university employment responsibilities.

(B) Any compensation received for consulting and service on external boards occurring during the university staff's normal working hours must be remitted to the university unless the employee is on authorized vacation or unpaid leave.

(C) University staff providing consulting and service on external boards for organizations that do business with the university shall disclose their involvement with the external organization to their supervising authority, even if the service occurs outside of the working hours. The supervising authority shall conduct an appropriate conflict of interest review under board and university policy.

(D) University staff who receive compensation or other remuneration from an external organization for consulting and service on external boards shall not make or influence university decisions with respect to any business relations and decisions that involve the external organization.

- For Officers of University and Officers of the Administration, the consulting and service on external boards are disclosed to and are subject to the approval of the individual with personnel action authority as described in Regent Policy 2.K.

History:

- Adopted: April 26, 1974, as Policy 3.B: Conflict of Interest--Officer and Exempt Professional and June 2, 2004, as Policy 3.C: Outside Consulting and Service on External Boards.
- Revised: June 18, 2020, and consolidated as regent policy 8.B: Professional Employee Conduct – University Staff.
- Last Reviewed: June 18, 2020.