



ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY STATEMENT

Policy Title: University Trademarks, Trade Names and Service Marks

APS Number: 2026

APS Functional Area: **ADMINISTRATIVE/GENERAL**

Brief Description:	The University is the owner of certain valuable trademarks, trade names and service <i>marks</i> , and must manage those <i>marks</i> to protect the university's reputation and to ensure proper use.
Effective:	January 1, 2016
Approved by:	President Bruce D. Benson
Responsible University Officer:	Vice President, University Counsel and Secretary of the Board of Regents
Responsible Offices:	Office of University Counsel and the Boulder Campus Licensing Program Office
Policy Contacts:	Associate Director for Trademarks, Office of University Counsel and Boulder Campus Licensing Program Office, Boulder Athletics Department
Supersedes:	N/A
Last Reviewed/Updated:	January 1, 2016
Applies to:	Anyone utilizing university trademarks, trade names or service <i>marks</i> .

Reason for Policy: To implement part of [Regent Policy 1.C.5](#) related to the university regulating 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.

I. INTRODUCTION

The University is the owner of certain valuable trademarks, trade names and service *marks* (“*marks*”), and must manage those *marks* “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.” See [Regent Policy 1.C.5](#).

This Administrative Policy Statement governs the development, registration, commercialization and protection of *university marks*.

II. POLICY STATEMENT

A. Responsibility for the University’s Trademark Portfolio

All *university marks* are held in the name of the Regents of the University of Colorado, a body corporate. Oversight over the portfolio of *university marks* ultimately resides with the Secretary of the Board of Regents, and the university president, as principal executive officer, is responsible for maintenance, development and protection of the portfolio, as well as the licensing and commercialization of *university marks*, which authority is jointly delegated by this policy to the Associate Director for Trademarks (“the Associate Director”), Office of University Counsel and Boulder Campus Licensing Program Office (“the Boulder Licensing Program”), Boulder Athletics

Department¹.

B. Registration and Protection of *University Marks*

1. Registration of *University Marks*

The university has registered many *marks* with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO), some of which are valuable assets for the university. Any university unit that wishes to register a new *university mark* shall consult with the Associate Director to discuss the value and necessity of federally registering such *mark*. The University Branding Committee shall consider whether a particular *mark* complies with the University Brand Identity Standards, before the unit proceeds with a trademark application.

Among the factors that should be considered before registering a new *mark* are:

- a. The cost of registration;
- b. The value of the *mark* and of federal registration thereof;
- c. The possibility of confusion with another entity's *marks*;
- d. Enforceability of the *mark*;
- e. The consistency of the *mark* with the university's Branding Guidelines.

The Associate Director is responsible for initial trademark registration with USPTO, including any necessary engagement with outside counsel and making any required filings. Generally, where a university unit decides to proceed with federal registration, that unit shall be responsible for costs associated with registration.

2. Maintenance of the Portfolio of *University Marks*

The Associate Director is responsible for maintenance of the portfolio of *university marks*.

3. Enforcement of the University's Rights in *University Marks*

All use of *university marks* must comply with the terms of this Administrative Policy Statement and non-university parties shall not use *university marks* without express permission of either the university or its authorized *licensing agent*. Use of the *university's marks* for commercial purposes without the prior written consent of the university may constitute trademark infringement, trademark dilution and unfair competition in violation of federal and state laws.

Upon discovery of an unauthorized usage of a *university mark*, the Associate Director shall work with either the Office of University Counsel or the Boulder Licensing Program to notify the unauthorized user that it must cease and desist in the unauthorized usage of the *university's marks*. Should the unauthorized use not be discontinued, the University shall consider all appropriate legal action.

4. Claims Regarding *Marks*

All disputes about use or enforcement of the *marks*, or claims regarding the University's use of another party's marks, shall be directed to the Vice President, University Counsel and Secretary of the Board of Regents.

C. Commercialization of the *University's Marks*

In entering licensing agreements governing its *marks*, the university's primary objectives are to safeguard the *marks* and to enhance the image of the university through the approved use of the *marks* by licensees who adhere to university standards.

¹ Regent Policy 14.A designates the University's official seal, and vests the Secretary of the Board of Regents as custodian of the official seal. See Regent Policy 14.A. Unlike other *marks* that are subject to the shared authority described in this APS, the Secretary has exclusive authority over the official seal.

The university shall collect a fair and competitive royalty for any licensed *university marks*.

Any licensing agreements shall require licensees, and their contractors, vendors, and manufacturers, to adhere to ethical business practices as well as standards related to quality, reliability and cost. Licensing agreements shall incorporate mechanisms to enforce compliance with those standards.

University units may only purchase goods incorporating *university marks* from authorized vendors who have received appropriate approval from the university's *licensing agent*. The University should not be required to pay itself for purchases of services or products it makes for its own use to fulfill the educational mission of the university. Goods and services purchased by university departments for their use within the institution are exempt from royalties but such goods must be purchased from licensed manufacturers and service providers.

D. Use of *University Marks* by Student Organizations

Each campus shall adopt a policy or implement a process to govern review and approval of student organization requests to use *university marks* identified with that campus.

Student organizations seeking to use a *university mark* identified with the system as a whole (e.g., the unofficial seal or the interlocking CU) shall seek approval from the Associate Director.

E. Use of *University Marks* for Promotions

[Regent Policy 14.B](#) prohibits the use of the university's name in advertising that involves product endorsement.

The authority to approve the use of the university's name in other advertising is hereby delegated to the Boulder Licensing Program, which may delegate all or part of that authority to the Associate Director.

III. DEFINITIONS

A. *Italicized terms* used in this Administrative Policy Statement are defined in the Administrative Policy Statement [Glossary of Terms](#) or, if specific to this policy, are defined below:

1. *University Marks*: Trademarks, trade names and service marks owned by the University of Colorado, whether or not federally registered.
2. *Licensing Agent*: A third-party company which has contractually agreed to handle trademark licensing and vendor relations on behalf of the university.

IV. RELATED POLICIES, PROCEDURES, FORMS, GUIDELINES, AND OTHER RESOURCES

A. Administrative Policy Statements (APS) and Other Policies

1. [Regent Policy 1.C.5](#)
2. [APS 2025 - University Brand Identity and Logo Usage](#)
3. [CU Boulder Campus Licensing Policy](#)

V. HISTORY

Initial Policy: January 1, 2016

VI. Keywords