

POLICY TYPE: Human Resources

POLICY TITLE: Code of Ethics

Responsible Administrator: Vice President of Human Resources

Location of Related Procedures: Office of Vice President of Human Resources

In keeping with the Madison Area Technical College's (hereinafter the "College") goals to develop quality educational programs consistent with its philosophy and objectives, this code of ethics is promulgated to prevent activities which cause, or tend to cause, a conflict of interest for employees of the College. It shall be the duty of all College employees to comply with Wisconsin Statutes with respect to the proper and appropriate conduct of their positions.

1. The observance of high moral and ethical standards by its employees is essential to the conduct of the College. The employee holds his/her position as a public trust, and any effort to realize personal gain through official conduct is a violation of that trust.
 - a. The ethical standards set forth in this policy for employees in the performance of their official duties are intended to eliminate conflicts of interest, improve standards of public service and promote and strengthen the faith and confidence of the people of this College in their employees.
 - b. Nothing in this policy shall deny the rights of an employee under the constitutions of the United States of America and of this state, the Wisconsin statutes or any other laws of this state, or under any labor agreement.
2. It is recognized that:
 - a. employees retain their rights as citizens to interests of a personal or economic nature;
 - b. standards of ethical conduct for employees need to distinguish between those minor and inconsequential conflicts that are unavoidable in a free society, and those conflicts that are substantial and material; and,
 - c. employees may need to engage in employment, other than official duties, or may need to maintain investments, but no employee shall engage in any employment or maintain any investment if the employment or investment conflicts with the specific provisions of this policy.
3. The President shall cooperate and coordinate with the District Board in the administration of this policy.

4. Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action.

Outside Employment

1. This policy shall not prevent an employee from accepting outside employment or following a pursuit which in no way interferes or conflicts with the full and faithful discharge of his/her duties to this College. An employee shall provide written notice to the President prior to accepting outside employment if he/she believes that the potential for a conflict of interest exists.
2. The College must, by necessity, specifically prohibit those activities that will cause a conflict of interest to the employee or to the College. Therefore, no employee shall:
 - a. use the College's time, facilities, equipment, supplies, prestige, or influence of position for his/her private gain or advantage;
 - b. accept for his/her private gain or advantage money or anything of value from a business for the performance of an act required as part of his/her official duties; or,
 - c. accept employment with a business that is subject to direct or indirect control, review, audit or enforcement by the College unless specifically approved by the District Board.

Acceptance of Gifts or Favors

1. No person may offer or give to an employee or his/her immediate family, and no employee or his/her immediate family may solicit or receive anything of value from any person pursuant to any understanding that such employee's official actions, judgments, decisions, or manner of performing his/her duties would be influenced.
2. No employee who is assigned or acts as an official representative of the College in the presentation of papers, talks, demonstrations or making appearances shall solicit or accept fees, honoraria or reimbursement of expenses for personal gain. Any fees, honoraria or reimbursement of expenses which may be offered in connection therewith shall be paid to the College providing the College is reimbursing the individual for his/her expenses. The prohibition of accepting honorariums and fees does not apply when the individual involved is, by virtue of vacation or other reason, performing the services on his/her own time.
3. Fees and honoraria paid for papers, talks, demonstrations or appearances made by an employee on his/her own time and not directly part of his/her official duties shall not be a violation of this rule. Employees shall notify the College prior to accepting fees and honoraria for papers, talks, demonstrations, or appearances if it appears that a conflict of interest may exist.

Use of Confidential Information

No employee may use confidential information gained in the course of, or by reason of, his/her position or official activities for any purpose other than to discharge his/her official duties.

Use of College Property

No College employee shall use, or allow the use of, College property and/or equipment, including property and/or equipment leased by this College, for his/her private gain.

Political Activities

Individual college employees may engage in lawful political activities. However, such activity, like any other personal, non-official undertaking, must be done on the employee's own time, must not interfere with college duties, and must not involve the use of College resources for partisan political activities.

Conflict of Interest

1. No employee may use his/her position to obtain personal financial gain or financial gain for a member of his/her immediate family, or for any business in which he/she has a significant financial interest or relationship. Any salary or other compensation received by the employee from this College for services performed does not constitute "financial gain" as used in this section.
2. An employee who has a financial interest or relationship in a business that proposes a contract with the College where funds are to be paid in whole or in part by the College shall notify the college President in writing relative to this potential conflict of interest. The awarding of this contract shall be through public notice, competitive bidding or any process as provided for by law.
3. No employee nor business in which an employee owns or controls, directly or indirectly, at least 10 percent interest may enter into a lease of real property with this College, except that the District Board, upon request, may waive this prohibition where it is in the best interests of the College.

Action to Avoid Possible Conflict

1. If, in the discharge of an employee's official duties, an employee is required to take an action that is, or may be, prohibited by this policy, such employee shall:
 - a. refrain from taking such action; and,
 - b. develop and deliver a written statement to his/her supervisor or other appropriate administrator describing the matter requiring action or decision, and the nature of the possible conflict of interest.

2. Upon receipt of such a statement, the supervisor or administrator shall:
 - a. determine that the activity in question is not prohibited and serves the best interest of the College;
 - b. relieve the employee from responsibility for the assignment, and if appropriate, assign the matter to another staff member for whom the matter does not create a conflict; or,
 - c. take other appropriate action.
3. The supervisor or administrator may on his/her own initiative or at the request of the employee request an advisory opinion from the College President or District Board.

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