

# Conflict of Interest Policy

## 1 - Purpose

This policy is intended to define Conflict of Interest, describes instances where it may occur, and outline internal processes to deal with real or potential conflict of interest.

This policy will assist Board Trustees, other volunteers and employees of United Way Toronto (UWT) to identify and avoid conflicts of interest and to allow the same individuals to deal with conflicts of interest as they arise. This policy is created to ensure the highest standard of public trust and integrity in the work of UWT.

## 2 - Scope

This policy applies to all UWT Board Trustees, other volunteers, and all employees.

## 3 - Policy

Each employee, Board Trustee, or other volunteer of UWT is obligated to avoid conflicts of interest as they arise. They should also take care to avoid the potential for a conflict of interest or appearance of a conflict of interest at all times possible.

A conflict of interest is any situation where a UWT Board Trustee, other volunteer or employee, or a member of that person's family, has the ability to influence, directly or indirectly, a decision or action in his or her favour, or be in a competing interest with UWT. A "family member" shall include but not be limited to a spouse, partner, natural or adoptive parent, natural or adoptive child, brother or sister.

Conflicts of interest include, but are not limited to, situations involving:

- an interest, either real or perceived, that benefits the individual or the individual's family;
- organizations with which an individual has an official governing responsibility or which employ the individual or a member of his or her family;
- real or perceived potential to compromise the best interests of United Way.

To that end:

1. Individuals shall not receive services, materials or other compensation from individuals or organizations that are in a position to benefit financially from UWT, or from donors and agencies - other than incidental gifts, customary hospitality, and other benefits of nominal value.

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Examples of this include but are not limited to:

- Opportunities for personal gain through any other volunteer or freelance or part time employment opportunities should not conflict with the individual's responsibility on behalf of United Way;
  - Employees and volunteers must not use their UWT position to influence the employment, purchases from, or awarding of contracts in favour of a family member, or organization in which the individual or a family member has a financial interest.
  - Gifts, fees or honoraria received for speaking engagements in excess of token amounts should be declined where possible, but if accepted, the amount must be redirected as a donation to a not-for-profit organization of the recipient's choice.
  - Gifts, fees or honoraria given for the use and benefit of the UWT organization may only be accepted at the discretion of the President & Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and/or the Chair of the Board.
2. Individuals shall not use their UWT position or step out of their official UWT roles to assist other organizations or persons where this would result in giving preferential information or treatment that would conflict with UWT's interests.

Examples of this include but are not limited to:

- Individuals should not participate as a volunteer in situations where it will be challenging to maintain separation of UWT knowledge, decisions and interest from his/her duties and interests in another organization;
  - When volunteering for another organization, UWT donor practices, specific solicitation techniques and methodologies, and intellectual property are not to be shared with other organizations.
  - Individuals must not give confidential and preferential advice to an agency that would result in unfair advantage in a granting process;
  - Individuals must not advocate or in any way redirect or recommend the redirection of a donor's funding away from the community fund or consciously target our fundraising campaign as a vehicle for donor designation to non-member agencies.
  - Individuals must not identify and research donors on behalf of another organization using knowledge or any information gained from UWT.
3. To be a Board Trustee in good standing of UWT requires that the individual have no spousal or other family relationship with another Board Trustee or employee of UWT.
4. United Way employees may not be employed by any United Way member or funded agency, nor participate as a volunteer in any governance or fiduciary capacity with any United Way member or funded agency.

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5. Individuals who discover they are in a position of conflict of interest must take steps to disclose and restrain their participation in the conflict of interest.
  - Individuals who have a conflict of interest, in which they may derive personal financial benefit, either personally or through their families, shall at the first opportunity disclose the nature of that conflict of interest. A decision will be made on whether the conflict must be avoided or the declared conflict can continue where arrangements provide obvious benefits to UWT and where reasonable steps can be taken to ensure any other party cannot be advantaged to the detriment of UWT.
  - When individuals are in a real or perceived conflict of interest on a particular matter to be discussed and decided upon, they shall take all reasonable steps to remove themselves from the decision-making process as it relates to their official UWT roles and/or their roles in the community.
  - Even where a technical conflict of interest as defined in this policy does not exist, the possibility of the perception of a conflict of interest should be considered by all relevant parties, in consultation with the Chair (for Board) or one's supervisor (for employees). It may be advisable to take additional steps to avoid a perceived conflict of interest.

### 4 - Procedures

1. It is the responsibility of:
  - the Chair of the Board to ensure that *Board Trustees* understand and comply with this policy;
  - the CEO to ensure that *employees and other volunteers* understand and comply with the policy.
2. Where any employee, Board Trustee, or other volunteer feels that he or she may be in a conflict of interest, such individual shall immediately give notice of the potential conflict to the CEO or, if the CEO is involved, to the Chair of the Board. It is in the sole discretion of the CEO or the Chair of the Board to determine whether an exemption to this policy shall be granted. Should such a determination be made, a report shall be tabled at the next meeting of the Board of Trustees outlining the circumstances of the situation and the reasons for the granting of the exemption.

To protect the interest of those individuals giving notice to the CEO or Chair of the Board, confidentiality shall be maintained throughout the process to the extent practical and appropriate under the circumstances.

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3. If it is believed that a Board Trustee has not been in compliance with this policy, an investigation will be conducted under the auspices of the Chair of the Board or the Board Development Committee.
4. If it is believed that an employee or other volunteer has not been in compliance with this policy, the Vice President, the Chief Operating Officer (COO) or CEO may conduct an investigation. In the event of a disagreement, the COO or the CEO will determine the final resolution. If the matter involves the COO it will be escalated directly by the concerned party to the CEO. If the matter involves the CEO it will be referred to the Chair of the Board of Trustees for review.
5. The COO will establish the prevailing nominal amount that UWT considers to be acceptable for personal gifts from sponsors, donors, volunteers or suppliers. Currently, any gift in excess of \$50.00 is not permitted.
6. Any breach of this policy will be considered a serious matter and dealt with immediately. Any individual knowingly violating the Conflict of Interest Policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.