

Institutional Handbook of Operating Procedures
Policy 06.05.06

Section: Compliance	Responsible Vice President: Chief Compliance Officer
Subject: General Compliance	Responsible Entity: Office of Institutional Compliance

I. Title
Code of Ethics

II. Policy

This policy is designed to establish a code of ethics for all UTMB employees, contractors and students and is a basis for professionalism. A culture of professionalism is rooted in the trust placed in those who deliver patient care, conduct research, educate future health care professionals, provide administrative support, maintain a supportive environment and strive to learn.

It is integral to acting with integrity, compassion and respect toward one another and those we serve. An important part of developing a Code of Ethics is recognizing conflicts of interest. A conflict of interest exists when a person owes an obligation to UTMB that is or might be compromised by the pursuit of outside interests. Outside interests, such as professional activities, personal financial interests, or the acceptance of gifts from third parties, can create conflicts between the interest of individual employees and the interests of UTMB. These conflicts may prevent employees from making decisions that are in the best interest of UTMB. Even if outside interests do not actually impair an employee’s ability to act in the best interest of UTMB, it may appear to the public that the employee’s independence of judgment has been affected. As a result, employees, contractors and students of UTMB may not have a direct or indirect interest, financial or otherwise, of any nature that is in conflict with the proper discharge of the employee’s, contractor’s, or student’s duties. Employees, contractors, and students shall timely furnish such written disclosures as may be required by state and federal authorities, by UT System requirement, and/or by UTMB institutional policies. All employees, contractors and students of UTMB shall adhere to the following standards of conduct.

III. Standards of Conduct

1. No employee shall accept or solicit any gift, favor, or service that might reasonably tend to influence the employee in the discharge of his or her official duties or that the employee knows or should know is being offered with the intent to influence his or her official conduct.
2. No employee shall intentionally or knowingly solicit, accept, or agree to accept any benefit for having exercised his or her official powers or performed his or her official duties in favor of another.
3. No employee shall use their position at or association with UTMB to further a non-UTMB interest. This includes, but is not limited to, using or referencing one’s position at or association with UTMB to: solicit business or donations for an outside activity, market products or services for an outside activity, or imply any sort of connection between an outside activity and UTMB.

4. No employee shall accept employment or engage in any business or professional activity which the employee might reasonably expect would require or induce the employee to disclose confidential information acquired by reason of his/her official position.
5. No employee shall disclose confidential information gained by reason of his/her official position, or otherwise use such information for his/her personal gain or benefit.
6. No employee shall transact any business in his/her official capacity with any business entity of which the employee is an officer, agent, or member, or in which the employee owns a substantial interest.
7. No employee shall make personal investments which could reasonably be expected to create a substantial conflict between the employee's private interest and the public interest.
8. No employee shall accept other employment or compensation which could reasonably be expected to impair the employee's independence of judgment in the performance of the employee's public duties.
9. Sexual harassment and sexual misconduct are unacceptable behaviors. Such unacceptable behavior includes verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Incidents of sexual harassment or sexual misconduct should be reported in accordance with IHOP Policy 3.2.4, *Sexual Harassment and Misconduct*.

IV. Other Information on Ethical Behavior

Other ethical issues, such as issues related to the use of government resources, sexual harassment, political activities, legislative lobbying, and the use of confidential information, are addressed in other UTMB policies and are discussed in the UTMB Standards of Conduct Guide. Additional information may be found on the website of the [UT System Office of General Counsel](#).

V. Violations

There are consequences for failing to comply with conflict of interest laws, rules, or policies. State law requires that appropriated money may not be used to compensate an employee who violates the standards of conduct. Failure to comply with the standards of conduct discussed above is grounds for disciplinary action by UTMB, up to and including termination of employment. Additionally, civil and criminal penalties may apply under certain circumstances.

VI. Relevant Federal and State Statutes

- [Texas Government Code § 572.051](#)

VII. Related UTMB Policies and Procedures

- [IHOP - 06.05.05 – Gifts, Fundraising, Honoraria, and Other Activities](#)
- [UTMB Standards of Conduct Guide](#)
- UTMB's *Ethics and The University of Texas Medical Branch* brochure.

VIII. Dates Approved or Amended

<i>Originated: 11/01/1995</i>	
<i>Reviewed with Changes</i>	<i>Reviewed without Changes</i>
03/15/2013	02/19/2014
	02/12/2015
	03/07/2017

IX. Contact Information

Conflicts of Interest Office

Office of Institutional Compliance

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