

# **Nonprofit Governance and Management, Third Edition**

## **APPENDIX 2**

### **INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE (IRS) SAMPLE CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY AND SAMPLE BYLAWS PROVISION ON CONFLICT OF INTEREST PROCEDURES**

#### **Document 1**

##### **Sample Conflict of Interest Policy**

***Practical Advice Note:** The sample conflict of interest policy below is provided by the IRS as guidance for organizations seeking to obtain tax-exempt status by completing IRS Form 1023. The sample may be useful for existing nonprofits to consider as well. Note that the reference to “Schedule C” in the bracketed language directed to hospitals refers to a schedule in the Form 1023.<sup>1</sup>*

##### **IRS Sample Conflict of Interest Policy**

Note: Items marked *Hospital insert* – for hospitals that complete Schedule C are intended to be adopted by hospitals.

##### **Article I Purpose**

The purpose of the conflict of interest policy is to protect this tax-exempt organization’s (Organization) interest when it is contemplating entering into a transaction or arrangement that might benefit the private interest of an officer or director of the Organization or might result in a possible excess benefit transaction. This policy is intended to supplement but not replace any applicable state and federal laws governing conflict of interest applicable to nonprofit and charitable organizations.

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<sup>1</sup>This sample conflict of interest policy is available at Appendix A to Instructions For IRS Form 1023 (Application for Recognition of Exemption Under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code). Form 1023 is updated periodically. Check the Internal Revenue Service website for the most up-to-date version. [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov)

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## **Article II Definitions**

### **1. Interested Person**

Any director, principal officer, or member of a committee with governing board delegated powers, who has a direct or indirect financial interest, as defined below, is an interested person.

*[Hospital Insert—for hospitals that complete Schedule C*

*If a person is an interested person with respect to any entity in the health care system of which the organization is a part, he or she is an interested person with respect to all entities in the health care system.]*

### **2. Financial Interest**

A person has a financial interest if the person has, directly or indirectly, through business, investment, or family:

- a. An ownership or investment interest in any entity with which the Organization has a transaction or arrangement,
- b. A compensation arrangement with the Organization or with any entity or individual with which the Organization has a transaction or arrangement, or
- c. A potential ownership or investment interest in, or compensation arrangement with, any entity or individual with which the Organization is negotiating a transaction or arrangement. Compensation includes direct and indirect remuneration as well as gifts or favors that are not insubstantial. A financial interest is not necessarily a conflict of interest. Under Article III, Section 2, a person who has a financial interest may have a conflict of interest only if the appropriate governing board or committee decides that a conflict of interest exists.

## **Article III Procedures**

### **1. Duty to Disclose**

In connection with any actual or possible conflict of interest, an interested person must disclose the existence of the financial interest and be given the opportunity to disclose all

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material facts to the directors and members of committees with governing board delegated powers considering the proposed transaction or arrangement.

### **2. Determining Whether a Conflict of Interest Exists**

After disclosure of the financial interest and all material facts, and after any discussion with the interested person, he/she shall leave the governing board or committee meeting while the determination of a conflict of interest is discussed and voted upon. The remaining board or committee members shall decide if a conflict of interest exists.

### **3. Procedures for Addressing the Conflict of Interest**

- a. An interested person may make a presentation at the governing board or committee meeting, but after the presentation, he/she shall leave the meeting during the discussion of, and the vote on, the transaction or arrangement involving the possible conflict of interest.
- b. The chairperson of the governing board or committee shall, if appropriate, appoint a disinterested person or committee to investigate alternatives to the proposed transaction or arrangement.
- c. After exercising due diligence, the governing board or committee shall determine whether the Organization can obtain with reasonable efforts a more advantageous transaction or arrangement from a person or entity that would not give rise to a conflict of interest.
- d. If a more advantageous transaction or arrangement is not reasonably possible under circumstances not producing a conflict of interest, the governing board or committee shall determine by a majority vote of the disinterested directors whether the transaction or arrangement is in the Organization's best interest, for its own benefit, and whether it is fair and reasonable. In conformity with the above determination it shall make its decision as to whether to enter into the transaction or arrangement.

### **4. Violations of the Conflicts of Interest Policy**

- a. If the governing board or committee has reasonable cause to believe a member has failed to disclose actual or possible conflicts of interest, it shall inform the member of the basis for such belief and afford the member an opportunity to explain the alleged failure to disclose.
- b. If, after hearing the member's response and after making further investigation as warranted by the circumstances, the governing board or committee determines the member has failed to disclose an actual or possible conflict of interest, it shall take appropriate disciplinary and corrective action.

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## **Article IV Records of Proceedings**

The minutes of the governing board and all committees with board delegated powers shall contain:

- a. The names of the persons who disclosed or otherwise were found to have a financial interest in connection with an actual or possible conflict of interest, the nature of the financial interest, any action taken to determine whether a conflict of interest was present, and the governing board's or committee's decision as to whether a conflict of interest in fact existed.
- b. The names of the persons who were present for discussions and votes relating to the transaction or arrangement, the content of the discussion, including any alternatives to the proposed transaction or arrangement, and a record of any votes taken in connection with the proceedings.

## **Article V Compensation**

- a. A voting member of the governing board who receives compensation, directly or indirectly, from the Organization for services is precluded from voting on matters pertaining to that member's compensation.
- b. A voting member of any committee whose jurisdiction includes compensation matters and who receives compensation, directly or indirectly, from the Organization for services is precluded from voting on matters pertaining to that member's compensation.
- c. No voting member of the governing board or any committee whose jurisdiction includes compensation matters and who receives compensation, directly or indirectly, from the Organization, either individually or collectively, is prohibited from providing information to any committee regarding compensation.

*[Hospital Insert-for hospitals that complete Schedule C]*

- d. Physicians who receive compensation from the Organization, whether directly or indirectly or as employees or independent contractors, are precluded from membership on any committee whose jurisdiction includes compensation matters. No physician, either individually or collectively, is prohibited from providing information to any committee regarding physician compensation.]

## **Article VI Annual Statements**

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Each director, principal officer, and member of a committee with governing board delegated powers shall annually sign a statement which affirms such person:

- a. Has received a copy of the conflict of interest policy,
- b. Has read and understands the policy,
- c. Has agreed to comply with the policy, and
- d. Understands the Organization is charitable and in order to maintain its federal tax Exemption, it must engage primarily in activities that accomplish one or more of its tax-exempt purposes.

### **Article VII Periodic Reviews**

To ensure the Organization operates in a manner consistent with charitable purposes and does not engage in activities that could jeopardize its tax-exempt status, periodic reviews shall be conducted. The periodic reviews shall, at a minimum, include the following subjects:

- a. Whether compensation arrangements and benefits are reasonable, based on competent survey information, and the result of arm's length bargaining.
- b. Whether partnerships, joint ventures, and arrangements with management organizations conform to the Organization's written policies, are properly recorded, reflect reasonable investment or payments for goods and services, further charitable purposes, and do not result in inurement, impermissible private benefit, or in an excess benefit transaction.

### **Article VIII Use of Outside Experts**

When conducting the periodic reviews as provided for in Article VII, the Organization may, but need not, use outside advisors. If outside experts are used, their use shall not relieve the governing board of its responsibility for ensuring periodic reviews are conducted.

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## **APPENDIX 2 (CONT'D)**

### **Document 2**

#### **Sample Bylaws Provision: Conflict of Interest Procedures**

##### **Article \_\_\_\_\_ Conflicts of Interest**

###### **Section \_\_.1 – Disclosure of Interests**

Any Director, Officer, employee, or committee member having a financial or other personal interest, including a conflicting fiduciary interest (due to status as an officer or director of another organization), in a transaction, contract or other matter presented to the Board of Directors or a committee thereof for authorization, approval, or ratification shall provide prompt, full, and frank disclosure of such interest to the Board or committee prior to its acting on such contract or transaction.

###### **Section \_\_.2 – Evaluation of Conflict of Interest Matters**

The body to which such disclosure is made (i.e., the Board or applicable committee) shall determine, by a majority vote, whether a conflict of interest (due to a personal financial or other interest, including any conflicting fiduciary interest) exists or can reasonably be construed to exist, which would reasonably be expected by an objective third party to affect the Director's ability to make an unbiased decision in the best interest of the Corporation and the System.

###### **Section \_\_.3 – Appropriate Action when a Conflict of Interest Is Determined to be Present**

If a conflict of interest is deemed to exist, such person shall not vote on, or use his or her personal influence on, or be present for or participate (other than to present factual information or to respond to questions) in the discussions or deliberations with respect to, such contract or transaction. Such person may be counted in determining the existence of a quorum at any meeting where the contract or transaction under discussion is being voted upon.

###### **Section \_\_.4 – Record in Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting shall reflect the disclosure made of any conflict or potential conflict of interest, the vote thereon, and, where applicable, the abstention from voting, presence, and participation, and whether a quorum is present.

###### **Section \_\_.5 – Conflict of Interest and Other Policies**

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The Corporation shall also adopt policies from time to time regarding conflicts of interest, including requirements regarding disclosure of such interests.