



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF POLICY ON CODE OF ETHICS AND CONFLICT OF INTEREST

This acknowledgement form is for board members, members of advisory committees or commissions, employees, contractors, subcontractors and/or vendors.

I am a:

- Member of the Board of the Department of Public Health
- Member/employee of advisory committee or commission
- BOH Employee
- Contractor, Subcontractor, and/or Vendor

I, the undersigned, hereby acknowledge that:

- A. I have received the attached Code of Ethics and Conflict of Interest Policy of Cobb & Douglas Public Health (the "Policy");
- B. I am aware of the provisions of the Policy;
- C. I agree to comply with the terms and conditions of the Policy;
- D. I agree to abide by Section 8 of this Policy regarding disclosure of business transactions.

Print Name _____

Signature _____

Date _____

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Douglas County Board of Health

Policy # HR-00091

Revised: 07/12/2019

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1.0 PURPOSE

This policy is intended to assist Cobb County Board of Health and Douglas County Board of Health (BOH) employees in maintaining the highest standards of ethics, and to provide guidelines that BOH employees must follow to avoid an ethics violation, a conflict of interest, or the appearance of conflict.

1.1 AUTHORITY – The BOH Code of Ethics and Conflict of Interest Policy is published under the authority of the BOH and in compliance with the following:

1.1.1 Official Code of Georgia Annotated (OCGA), Sections:

1.1.1.1 O.C.G.A. § 45-10-1 et seq.;

1.1.1.2 O.C.G.A. § 21-5-1, et seq.;

1.1.2 Governor's Executive Order establishing an Ethics in Government Policy for Executive Branch Officers and Employees, 10 January 2011

2.0 SCOPE

This policy applies to all employees of the BOH and Board Members.

3.0 POLICY

All employees of the BOH are expected to maintain and exercise at all times the highest moral and ethical standards in carrying out their responsibilities and functions. Employees must conduct themselves in a manner that prevents all forms of impropriety, placement of self-interest above public interest, partiality, prejudice, threats, favoritism and undue influence.

Employees must be alert in conducting business with employees and non-employees to avoid even the appearance of misconduct, personal or financial gain or conflict of interest. While performing departmental duties, employees are required to comply with Federal and state laws, the Code of Ethics for Government Service, the Governor's Executive Order, dated January 11, 2011, and Rules of the State Personnel Board.

The BOH may suspend, demote, or terminate the employment of any Employee who violates this policy, in addition to any penalties which may be imposed by other authorities.

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4.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

- 4.1 The Human Resources Director shall serve as the agency's Ethics Officer. The Ethics Officer shall advise and assist the District Health Director/Appointing Authority (DHD/AA) in educating BOH employees about their ethical obligations, in interpreting the law and BOH policies pertaining to ethics, and in deciding whether to refer alleged ethics violations to the local county attorney or DPH Inspector General for further investigation.
- 4.2 DPH Inspector General shall, upon request by the DHD/AA, investigate the facts in cases of a claim or criminal misconduct, fraud or abuse and prepare a report of his/her findings if indicated.

5.0 PROCEDURES

5.1 CODE OF ETHICS

- 5.1.1 In fulfilling their designated duties and responsibilities, employees and Board members shall:
 - 5.1.1.1 Uphold the Constitution, laws, and legal regulations of the United States and the state of Georgia.
 - 5.1.1.2 Give a full day's labor for a full day's pay and perform duties with earnest effort and best thought.
 - 5.1.1.3 Never discriminate unfairly by extending special favors or privileges, whether for remuneration or not and never accept, for personal gain or for a family member, favors or benefits under circumstances which might be construed by reasonable persons as influencing the performance of governmental duties.
 - 5.1.1.4 Make no private promises of any kind binding upon the duties of office, since a government employee has no private word which can be binding on public duty.
 - 5.1.1.5 Refrain from engaging in business with the state of Georgia, either direct or indirectly, which is inconsistent with the conscientious performance of governmental duties.

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- 5.1.1.6 Never use confidential information in the performance of governmental duties as a means of making a profit.
- 5.1.1.7 Expose corruption.
- 5.1.1.8 Seek to find and employ more efficient and economical ways of getting tasks accomplished.
- 5.1.1.9 Uphold these principles, ever conscious that public office is a public trust.

5.2 TRANACTING BUSINESS

5.2.1 BOH Board Members and Employees

- 5.2.1.1 BOH Board Members and employees shall refrain from transacting business with the BOH. However, BOH Board Members and employees may conduct business with other agencies if the business transaction does not result in a benefit for the BOH members or employees.
- 5.2.1.2 A business in which BOH employees or Board Members maintain a substantial interest may not transact business with the BOH.
- 5.2.1.3 The transactions identified in O.C.G.A. Section 45-10-25 as exempt from the statutory prohibition on transactions with state agencies shall be exempt from this policy as well.

5.2.2 “Revolving Door” Transactions with Former BOH Employees

- 5.2.2.1 A BOH employee shall not knowingly authorize, recommend, approve, or participate in any business transaction between the BOH and a person who had been employed by the BOH in the previous 12 months, or an entity for whom such a previous employee acts as officer, director, employee, consultant, shareholder, or owner.

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5.2.2.2 If a BOH employee discovers that the BOH has engaged in such a business transaction, then that fact shall be reported immediately to the Ethics Officer.

5.2.2.3 Upon request made in advance of the transaction, the DHD/AA may waive this prohibition if it appears that the interests and mission of the BOH would be better served by approving the transaction, and that the former employee has not attempted to take advantage of his or her former position.

5.3 FAMILY MEMBERS

5.3.1 A family member of a public official or employee shall not transact business with the BOH, nor shall a business in which a family member of a public official or employee maintain a substantial interest transact business with the BOH.

5.3.2 Family members may conduct business with other agencies only if the business transaction does not result in a benefit for the BOH.

5.4 DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS AND OTHER REMEDIAL ACTIONS

5.4.1 In addition to any penalties which may be imposed by other authorities, the BOH may suspend, demote, or terminate the employment of any employee who violates this policy.

5.5 OTHER CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

5.5.1 Employees are prohibited from accepting gifts from any person with whom the employee interacts on official BOH business.

5.5.2 Employees may accept perishable items, such as a basket of fruit, so long as they are promptly placed in a common area for sharing among other employees and visitors.

5.5.3 Employees may accept a gift on behalf of the BOH when ceremonial courtesies require such an acceptance. Upon acceptance, the employee should transfer the gift to Ethics Officer.

5.5.4 If a Vendor has a personal relationship with the employee, a gift that is unconnected with the employee's duties at the BOH is not

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necessarily prohibited. However, regardless of the personal relationship between a vendor and an employee, a gift is strictly forbidden where it is being given under circumstances where a member of the public might reasonably infer that it was intended to influence the employee in the performance of his or her official duties.

5.6 HONORARIA

BOH employees may not accept honoraria.

5.7 SERVICE ON BOARDS

5.7.1 Employees should avoid serving as a corporate officer or director of for-profit or publicly held organizations. Notwithstanding the foregoing, each circumstance may be assessed on a case-by-case basis to determine if an actual conflict of interest exists which would determine whether the employee could provide such service.

5.7.2 Employees may provide pro bono services to non-profit organizations if such services do not take away from the employee's ability to perform his or her duties effectively and with objectivity.

5.8 NEPOTISM

5.8.1 An employee shall not advocate for or cause the advancement, appointment, employment, promotion, or transfer of a family member to a position within the BOH. Because the BOH desires to assist supervisors in making equitable decisions regarding work assignments, promotions, performance evaluations, disciplinary actions, and all other actions which have a direct impact on an individual's employment, the BOH may impose the following restrictions:

5.8.1.1 Family Members of individuals currently employed by the BOH may be hired only if they will not be working directly for nor be in the line of supervision a family member.

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5.8.1.2 If family members are currently employed, they cannot be transferred into a direct reporting relationship nor anywhere in the line of supervision.

5.8.1.3 If the family member relationship is established after employment and there is a direct reporting relationship or direct line of supervision, the manager shall make the determination as to which employee shall be subject to transfer, if such transfer does not adversely affect the business needs of the BOH. This policy shall in no means violate state and federal laws regarding discrimination based on marital status.

5.9 LOBBYISTS

If any vendor who submits bids or responses to request for proposals has engaged a lobbyist, then employees working with that vendor must verify that the lobbyist engaged by the vendor has registered with the State Ethics Commission and made the appropriate disclosures.

5.10 EXPENSES FOR CONFERENCES AND MEETINGS

5.10.1 As a rule, all expenses for an employee to participate in conferences, meetings, and other activities on behalf of BOH shall be paid by BOH. Expenses include food, travel, lodging, and registration fees.

5.10.2 With the prior approval of the Ethics Officer, an outside entity may pay or waive registration fees and travel expenses related to a conference, meeting, or other activity related to official or professional duties, if the entity is (a) a state or federal government agency, (b) a non-profit entity that does not have a contractual relationship with BOH and is unlikely to seek such a relationship, or (c) an entity that has been given funds by BOH, another government entity, or a non-profit entity for the specific purpose of defraying the travel expenses of participants to a conference or meeting related to the official duties of BOH.

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5.10.3 Expense that are paid or waived by an outside entity shall be limited to those items that are directly associated with the business or professional duties and are not attributable to personal, social or recreational activities.

5.11 GIFTS

5.11.1 If an employee receives a gift on behalf of BOH, the employee must file a report with Ethics Officer no later than 30 days after the receipt of the gift. The report should include the name and address of the person giving the gift, the date the gift was given, the monetary value of the gift, and an explanation of the disposition of the gift.

5.12 GUIDANCE

If a BOH employee has reason to believe a conflict of interest might exist in a circumstance, the employee should seek guidance from the Ethics Officer.

5.13 MANDATORY REPORTING

5.13.1 Any employee who has knowledge of a possible ethics violation shall report the matter to the Ethics Officer.

5.13.2 Supervisors shall report to the Ethics Officer any suspected ethics violations observed or brought to their attention and shall ensure the employees under their supervision are aware of and comply with the BOH ethical standards and policies.

5.13.3 There shall be no retaliation for reporting suspected ethics violations in good faith. Reporting suspected policy violations by others shall not jeopardize the terms or conditions of the employee's tenure with the BOH.

5.13.4 Anyone reporting a possible violation of this policy must be acting in good faith and have reasonable grounds for believing the information disclosed indicates a violation.

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5.13.5 Employee shall not act against, direct others to act against, recommend personnel action against, approve personnel action against or threaten another BOH employee for questioning or reporting in good faith possible violations of this policy.

For the Cobb County Board of Health and the Douglas County Board of Health



Janet Pak Memark, MD, MPH, FACP
Executive Officer

A. COMPLIANCE MONITORING

Deficiencies in compliance by the BOH will be addressed through targeted training and reinforcement of policy as needed. Willful noncompliance with the law or policy may be sanctioned by disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

B. REVISION HISTORY

REVISION #	REVISION DATE	REVISION COMMENTS
0	08/01/05	Initial Issue
1	11/08/11	Reviewed
2	05/03/13	Revised
3	7/28/2015	Revised
4	5/18/2018	Revised
5	7/12/2019	Revised

C. RELATED DOCUMENTS

Code of Ethics for Government Service
Governor's Executive Order January 10, 2011
Gift Reporting Form