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### Procedure 1C.0.1 Employee Code of Conduct

#### Part 1. Purpose

To establish the code of conduct expected of all employees of Minnesota State Colleges and Universities, including administrators, faculty, staff, and student employees, whether full or part-time, temporary or unlimited.

In addition to this code of conduct, employees are subject to general standards of conduct for employees and expected to meet any professional standards of conduct or ethical requirements applicable to their discipline.

#### Part 2. Expectations

In striving to fulfill our system's **vision** and carry out our **mission**, all employees of Minnesota State must meet public expectations for excellence by providing high quality education and related services, demonstrating sound stewardship of resources, acting with integrity, and displaying fair treatment and respect for all, ensuring that employment and education opportunities are inclusive and serve all the state's diverse communities.

Those acting on behalf of the Minnesota State have a general duty to conduct themselves with honesty and trustworthiness, with efficiency and effectiveness, and to demonstrate accountability and compliance with state and federal laws, and board policies and system procedures. Employees are expected to perform their work duties honestly, ethically, and with integrity to ensure compliance with all applicable laws, avoid the appearance of impropriety, strengthen the public trust, and ensure state resources are used for state purposes.

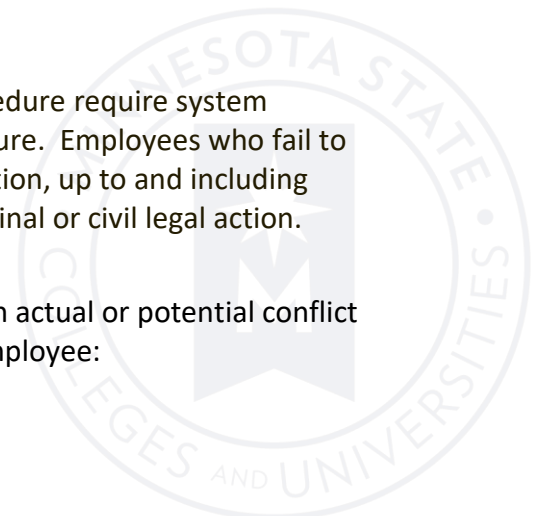
Questions regarding application of the employee code of conduct should be discussed with your supervisor or the chief human resources officer for your college or university or the system office.

#### Part 3. Ethics

Ethics are important in every organization. State law and this procedure require system employees to act ethically and comply with standards in this procedure. Employees who fail to comply with ethical requirements may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment, and under certain circumstances, criminal or civil legal action.

##### Subpart A. Conflicts of interest

Employees shall disclose and avoid situations that involve an actual or potential conflict of interest. An actual or potential conflict exists when an employee:



1. Uses or attempts to use their Minnesota State position to secure benefits, privileges, exemptions, or advantages that are not available to the general public for themselves, their immediate family, or an organization with which they are associated;
2. Accepts employment or a contractual relationship which would affect their independence of judgment in their Minnesota State job;
3. Performs other work subject to direct or indirect control, review or enforcement by the employee in their Minnesota State job;
4. Uses state time, facilities, equipment, supplies, badge, uniform, influence of their office, or confidential information for personal gain;
5. Holds or seeks financial interests that conflict with the ability of an employee to perform their job duties;
6. Acts as an attorney or agent in any Minnesota State matter other than in connection with one's job duties or on one's own behalf;
7. Works on any Request for Proposal (RFP), Request for Bid (RFB), or Request for Information (RFI), or the selection of any award or contract when the employee, their immediate family or an organization with which they are associated has a financial interest or may obtain a personal benefit from the award or contract;
8. Receives payment from non-state sources for work the employee is expected to do during their regular employment; or
9. Competes with the Minnesota State for services the system provides.

#### **Resolution of conflict of interest**

When an employee believes the potential for a conflict of interest exists, it is the employee's duty to disclose the conflict and avoid the situation. If an employee or their supervisor determines that a conflict of interest exists that cannot be avoided or mitigated, the matter will be assigned to an employee without a conflict of interest.

**Subpart B. Compensation, benefits or gifts from other sources.** Except as noted below or otherwise provided by law employees are not allowed to accept payment of expenses, gifts, compensation, rewards, or other benefits in connection with their employment from a source other than the state. Exceptions include:

1. Course materials. Faculty members may accept free samples of textbooks and related teaching materials. See Minn. Stat. §15.43. Because of the provisions of the state law and this procedure, such materials must not be sold for the personal benefit of the faculty member.
2. Acceptance of certain gifts. Allowable gifts are:
  - a. Gifts of nominal value. Nominal value means an item of little or no marketable value. Examples are a keychain with a vendor's name on it, a cup of coffee, or other trinket-type items
  - b. Plaques or similar items recognizing individual services in a field of specialty or to a charitable cause.

- c. Honoraria or expenses paid for papers, talks, demonstrations, or appearances made by employees on their own time, for which they are not compensated by the state, and which are not impermissible conflicts of interest with Minnesota State.
3. Travel or meals from another source. An employee may accept travel or meals or reimbursement related to the employee's work assignment with the college, university, or system office from a source other than their appointing authority if it is:
  - a. Approved in advance in writing by the president or chancellor;
  - b. For no more than actual expenses incurred; and
  - c. Not reimbursed by their appointing authority.
4. Consulting work by non-administrative university faculty. Non-administrative university faculty may accept remuneration and expense reimbursement from an outside source for outside consulting, employment, or other activities performed on duty days, if such activities are in accordance with Inter Faculty Organization Master Agreement Article 27, Section C.

#### **Subpart C. Personal advantage**

Employees are not allowed to use their position to procure personal advantages not available to the general public. Faculty members may require the use of self-authored classroom textbooks, software and other course materials, subject to any applicable bargaining agreement provisions and college/university procedures.

#### **Subpart D. Use of Minnesota State property**

Minnesota State owned or leased property, including state time, supplies, equipment, and assets, must not be used for personal, private, or charitable use except as specifically authorized, such as limited personal use of computers and incidental use of Minnesota State cell phones, as provided in System Procedure 5.22.1. Long distance or international service or frequent flyer miles earned through state-authorized travel for state-related purposes must not be used for personal or private purposes.

#### **Subpart E. Political Activities and Influence**

Employees may not use their position or Minnesota State resources to advance a political party or candidate. Nor may employees during working hours solicit or receive funds for political purposes, use their position to compel an employee in the classified service to join any political organization, make any political contribution, or engage in any political activity.

#### **Subpart F. Purchasing and Contracting**

Minnesota State serves as a good steward of tuition funds, state appropriations, and other resources entrusted to it by Minnesotans and the students we serve. In that pursuit, Minnesota State contracting and procurement practices and processes must be transparent and fair, consistent with Board Policy 5.14 and associated system procedures.

Employees involved in purchasing or contracting decisions for the college, university, or system office may not have a conflict of interest (as expressed in Subpart A.) or any other financial interest in the purchase or contract, and may not accept any gift (other than one of nominal value) or other thing of value directly or indirectly from a vendor. When an actual or potential conflict of interest arises, employees shall work with their supervisor to identify and address the conflict.

#### **Part 4. Other Policies and Procedures**

Minnesota State employees must comply with all board policies and system procedures, and each employee is responsible for being familiar with all policies and procedures that apply to their areas of responsibility. The following policies apply to all Minnesota State employees.

##### **Subpart A. Nondiscrimination**

Minnesota State strives to provide all members of our community with a work and educational environment that is collegial and free of discrimination or harassment based on race, sex (including pregnancy, child birth, and related medical conditions), color, creed, religion, age, national origin, disability, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, veteran status, familial status, genetic information, or membership in a local commission as defined by law. Board Policy 1B.1 prohibits unlawful discrimination and harassment, and System Procedure 1B.1.1 describes the process through which individuals alleging discrimination or harassment may pursue a complaint.

Employees shall not enter into a romantic or sexual relationship with a student or another employee over whom the employee exercises direct supervisory responsibility or other significant academic, administrative, supervisory, evaluative, counseling, or extracurricular authority or influence, such as a student enrolled in a faculty member's class.

##### **Subpart B. Sexual violence prohibited**

All employees deserve to work in an atmosphere that is free from sexual violence. Board Policy 1B.3 prohibits sexual violence and System Procedure 1B.3.1 describes the process through which individuals alleging sexual violence may pursue a complaint.

##### **Subpart C. Fraudulent or other dishonest acts**

Minnesota State is committed to creating an environment where fraudulent or other dishonest acts are not tolerated. Pursuant to Board Policy 1C.2, employees are required to report fraudulent or other dishonest acts when they have a reasonable basis to

believe such an act has occurred. Managers and supervisors are responsible for educating employees about proper conduct, creating an environment that deters dishonesty and maintains internal controls that provide reasonable assurance of achieving management objectives and detecting fraudulent or other dishonest acts.

Examples of fraudulent or other dishonest acts include taking cash or other property; making false time reports or reimbursement claims; forgery or alteration of documents or reports; improper handling or reporting of financial transactions or audit information; and incurring contractual or other obligations that exceed appropriations.

**Subpart D. Intellectual property**

Board Policy 3.26 and applicable labor agreements establish the intellectual property ownership rights for the employer, employees, and students.

**Subpart E. Nepotism**

Board Policy 4.10 Nepotism is intended to ensure Minnesota State avoids any perception that state employment is based on favoritism and not individual merit. Under Board Policy 4.10, employees may not participate in the selection, hiring, supervision, performance reviews, or compensation decisions for any person who is a member of their family or household. The rare exceptions to this policy are discussed in System Procedure 4.10.1.

**Subpart F. Weapons and safety**

To foster a safe learning and working environment for students and employees, the possession and carrying of firearms is restricted at Minnesota State.

Under Policy 5.21, employees and students generally are prohibited from having firearms on campus, except in their vehicles in college or university parking areas or for approved academic purposes. This policy complies with the Minnesota Citizens' Personal Protection Act of 2003, Minn. Stat. §624.714, and other applicable laws.

Zero Tolerance for Workplace Violence policies at each college, university, and the system office promote a workplace that is free from violence, threats of violence harassment, intimidation, and other disruptive behavior. Employees can obtain copies of applicable policies from their human resources office.

**Subpart G. Acceptable use of computers and technology**

Computer and information technology resources are essential tools in accomplishing the mission of Minnesota State. As with all public resources, employees must use these resources responsibly in order to ensure their availability for the competing demands of teaching, scholarship, administration, and other mission-related uses. Responsible management includes not sharing passwords, not allowing access by unauthorized users, and not using the resources for unauthorized purposes. Some types of limited

personal use are allowed in accordance with Board Policy 5.22 and associated System Procedure 5.22.1.

**Subpart H. Information security and privacy**

State employees are entrusted with public and private data in fulfilling their assigned work. Each employee must protect the privacy, security, retention, and disposal of government records and data under their control or to which they have access, in accordance with applicable state and federal laws.

**Subpart I. Alcohol, cannabis, and drug use**

Employees are expected to perform their jobs efficiently, safely and in a professional business-like manner. An employee's ability to perform effectively may be hampered by alcohol, cannabis, or other drug use, and pursuant to Minnesota Management & Budget's HR/LR Policy #1418, employees may not report to work under the influence, or operate machinery, vehicles, or equipment while under the influence. Recognizing that alcohol, cannabis, and other drug dependencies are a significant societal and personal problem, the state's employee assistance program is available to assist Minnesota State employees who may have an alcohol, cannabis, or other drug abuse problem.

**Part 5. Reporting Suspected Fraudulent or Other Dishonest Acts**

Minnesota State employees are required to report suspected fraudulent or other dishonest acts if they have a reasonable basis to believe that such an act is occurring or has occurred, in accordance with Board Policy 1C.2 Fraudulent or Other Dishonest Acts. The report should be made to the employee's supervisor or manager, unless the supervisor or manager may have participated in or condoned the act. In that case, employees should report the matter to the next highest level of supervision or management or directly to the college, university, or system office human resources office, or the Office of Internal Auditing. Employees also may report such acts to the Office of the Legislative Auditor.

**Part 6. Training**

All Minnesota State employees are required to complete employee code of conduct training annually.

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Date of Adoption: 05/19/08  
Date of Implementation: 07/01/08  
Date of Last Review: 03/07/24

**Date and Subject of Revision:**

03/07/24 – Full review, the amendment consists of (1) deleting or replacing outdated language, (2) replacing Part 2. title "General" with "Expectations", (3) reorganizing the information in a more logical sequence, (4) making the procedure language more concise, (5) updating the references to other policies and procedures in Part 4, (5)

adding 'cannabis" to Part 4, Subp. 1, (6) adding new Part 6. Training, and (7) applying the Minnesota State formatting and writing styles to the entire procedure.

3/10/15 - Periodic review complete. Part 3, Subpart D amended regarding personal use of system cell phones and electronic resources.

1/25/12 - The Chancellor amends all current system procedures effective February 15, 2012, to change the term "Office of the Chancellor" to "system office" or similar term reflecting the grammatical context of the sentence.

No Additional HISTORY.