

Introduction: This policy applies to all elected and appointed members of the Executive Board (the “Board”) and its committees, task forces and workgroups (“Members”), in matters relating to the performance of Board duties and responsibilities and for the Presbytery of the Northwest Coast (“Presbytery”).

All funds and property received and administered by the Board are entrusted to the organization by God through the faithful financial support of members and friends. The highest degree of stewardship and fiduciary responsibility is expected of all Member, including the receiving, reporting, and use of funds, property, and time. Members are responsible for complying with policies, procedures and governing documents of the Presbytery, Board and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

What does this Ethics Policy Require?

1. Duty of Loyalty and Care. The duty of loyalty and care as well as the obligation of good stewardship requires all elected members to act first in the best interests of the Board rather than that of the Member’s own interests or the interests of another entity or person. All Members shall exercise reasonable efforts to inform themselves of the mission and ministry of the Presbytery and the Board. Members shall act as a reasonable member would act under the same or similar circumstances. These responsibilities are set forth below.

2. Conflicts of Interest. Members shall avoid conflicts of interest, potential conflicts of interest, and situations that give the appearance of a conflict of interest.

A. Definition. “Conflict of interest” means a situation in which the Member may be influenced or appear to be influenced in decision-making or business dealings by any motive or desire for personal advantage other than the mission and well-being of the Presbytery and/or the Board. Personal advantage means a financial interest or some other personal interest, whether present or potential, whether direct or indirect. This standard applies to both actual and contemplated transactions. When in doubt, the elected member is to assume there might be a conflict and should raise the question pursuant to this Conflict of Interest Policy.

B. Employment Ineligibility. No elected Board Member shall be eligible to become an employee of the presbytery or otherwise render compensable services to the presbytery for the duration of their term. This prohibition does not apply to a member serving as an ex-officio member of the Board. For purposes of this paragraph, resignation does not result in the premature end of term. Exceptions are allowed for the following two circumstances by a two-thirds vote of the Board:

- 1) To facilitate development of specified projects through limited contracts of less than 12 months in duration. A Member may be compensated under the contract.
- 2) To fill an officer or employee position on an “interim” or “acting” basis for two years or less. The Member may be compensated for such service but must first resign his/her elected position.

C. Disclosure Deadlines. All present and potential conflicts of interest issues must be disclosed in writing annually and thereafter as they arise (see Attachment). If the conflict is known in advance of any meeting, decision, business transaction, contract, or other activity at which issues may be discussed or on which the issues may have a bearing on the elected member's approach, whether directly or indirectly, it shall be disclosed ahead of time and the Member shall abstain from participation in the discussion or decision. If the conflict is not known in advance, it shall be disclosed when the actual or potential conflict becomes apparent. All disclosures are to be made promptly in writing to the moderator of the Board and the Executive Presbyter.

D. Potential Conflicts of Interest. All elected members are likewise to disclose promptly, in writing, matters and relationships that have the potential for giving rise to the appearance of a conflict of interest in any matter under the Board's consideration. Examples include, but are not limited to grants or potential grants¹ to congregations, ministry partners, ecclesiastical organizations, community organizations, or other ministries; financial interests, leadership roles, or board membership with vendors and other organizations engaged in ministry business with the Presbytery.

The Presbytery's business dealings with an elected member's friends and family are particularly sensitive and are to be disclosed and carefully evaluated because of the potential for inferences of tangible or intangible personal advantage and the appearance of impropriety. All disclosures are to be made promptly in writing to the moderator of the Council, Commission or Committee.

E. Gifts and Relationship Building. To avoid appearances of impropriety, any gifts, gratuities, special favors, and hospitality offered by any person or organization that sells, delivers, or receives goods, materials, or services to or from the Presbytery shall not be accepted by a Member. No monetary gifts of any amount shall be accepted. This prohibition includes persons or organizations that desire to enter into such relationships with the Presbytery or the Board.

There are four exceptions to this rule:

1. Gifts, meals, outings, and relationship-building activities provided by Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) churches, Councils, partner churches or related organizations in connection with Presbytery business.
2. Gifts that primarily benefit the Board and not an individual Member, such as gifts of complimentary rooms given to the Board by hotels, conventions, and conferences in relation to official Board business.
3. Occasional small gifts, less than \$50.00 in value, such as flowers or foodstuffs, to an individual Member. Where gifts are shared with other elected members or Presbytery staff (e.g., foodstuffs set out for all to partake), then the gift is not deemed to be to an individual Member.

¹e.g. Community Blessing Grants or other grant requests; a member shall recuse himself or herself when a proposed grant to his or her congregation is under consideration.

4. Luncheons, dinners, outings, and relationship-building activities in connection with Presbytery or Board business may be received. If an activity permitted under this section results in a value of over \$100 to the Member, the Member shall promptly report this in writing to the moderator of the body. The written report will include a description of the activity, the dollar value, the name of the person and/or organization providing it, and the business that person and/or organization conducts with the Presbytery. The Stated Clerk shall maintain a log that includes all of the written reports submitted under this section, which will be available at all times to the Board Moderator, the Executive Presbyter and the Presbytery Moderator.

3. Confidentiality. Board Members shall not disclose information about the Board that is not known outside of the Board or is not known by public means. It is expected that Members will share certain Board information with other members of the Presbytery, related entities and the public when requested by the Board. Questions regarding information disclosure may be directed to the Board Moderator, Stated Clerk, or Executive Presbyter.

4. Transactions, Reporting, and Document Retention. Each Member has a duty to prepare, process, maintain, and report complete, accurate, and timely records pertaining to their role, including, but not limited to, expense reports. This also includes safeguarding all physical, financial, informational, and other Presbytery and Board assets and records. Members shall comply with the Records Retention Schedule of the Office of the General Assembly's Department of History and related schedules as part of the normal course of business and use the schedules in a consistent and accountable manner for both records retention and destruction purposes. ²Any document relevant to actual or anticipated internal investigations, legal proceedings or governmental investigations (civil or criminal) must be preserved in a manner that would ease accessibility and retrievability of the document. Members shall not direct or participate in the establishment or maintenance of undisclosed or unrecorded funds or assets, nor shall a Member direct the making of any artificial or false entries in the financial or other records of the Presbytery.

5. Process and Resolution. All conflict of interest disclosures, reports, or questions are to be made promptly and in writing to the Board Moderator and Executive Presbyter who will consult with the Stated Clerk, as appropriate. The Moderator will make a recommendation to the Board who will provide the final decision on any Member's matters of conflict of interest.

6. Violations. Violation or noncompliance with this policy may result in discipline by the Board, or any committee or commission of the Presbytery with jurisdiction over the Member as provided by the Presbytery bylaws or the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

²See www.history.pcusa.org/national/schedules.html.

Attachment

Member Annual Report

This form is to be completed annually and signed by all elected members of the Board as defined in the Conflict of Interest and Disclosure Policy (“the Policy”). Completed reports are to be submitted to the Stated Clerk.

Please initial:

- _____ I acknowledge I have received a copy of the Policy for elected members of the Board.
- _____ I understand it is my responsibility to read and comply with the Ethics Policy and any revisions made to it.
- _____ I understand that I am responsible for reporting immediately in writing any possible or real violations of the Policy that involves me or that I observe.
- _____ I am responsible for reporting immediately in writing any whistle blower reports I receive under the Ethics and Conflict of Interest Policy, as well as any other violations I observe.

Report of Violation

Initial all of the following statements that apply:

- _____ I am not aware of any possible or real violations of the Policy that involve me nor have observed possible or real violations by others.
- _____ I am aware of a possible or real violation of the Policy by me, or I have observed a possible or real violation by others. By submitting the information below, I am reporting the alleged violation.

Name of employee, elected member, or organization with the possible violation:

Description of involvement or observation:

Printed Name

Signature

Date