

## SECTION 2. CODES OF CONDUCT

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### 2.1 OVERVIEW

CDM faculty and staff are accountable for adherence to several codes of conduct, most of which are University-wide, though some are specific to Columbia University Medical Center (CUMC). This section brings together those codes in one place to facilitate knowledge of and compliance with them.

#### Key Links

- [CUMC HR web pages](#)
- [Faculty Handbook](#) for codes of conduct in appendices
- [Sponsored Projects Handbook](#)
- [Office of Research Compliance and Training](#)
- [Administrative Policy Library](#)
- [CU’s Employment Operating Policies](#)
- [Institutional Policy on Misconduct in Research](#)
- [Billing Compliance Program](#)
- [University hotline](#)

### 2.2 ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS

- ✓ Make sure all newly hired employees, as well as consultants, volunteers, trainees and observers have received a full orientation to Columbia University’s codes of conduct
- ✓ Ensure each new employee is informed of these policies and has specific information on to whom a complaint or concern may be addressed

- ✓ Ensure that academic and administrative officers file conflict of interest disclosures in accordance with the University's conflict of interest policy when first hired and on an annual basis thereafter

## 2.3 CONFLICT OF INTEREST

### 2.3.1 Conflict of Interest - General

The University has several conflict of interest policies with which faculty members, other officers, and staff members are expected to comply. The two general policies, which are available in the appendices of the [Faculty Handbook](#), are:

- Appendix J: Statement of University Policy on Conflicts of Interest (1987)
- Appendix K: Columbia University Guidelines for Situations Involving Potential Conflicts of Interest Between Scholarly and Commercial Activities (1986)

More resources are available on the University's [Conflict of Interest in Research website](#).

In addition, other policies cover general conflicts, conflicts of commitment, and other related topics. See the [Administrative Policy Library](#) and the [Sponsored Projects Handbook](#).

### 2.3.2 Conflict of Interest – Research

The University has a conflict of interest policy that governs CUMC employees entitled *Columbia University Medical Center Conflict of Interest Policy* (1994). It is available in Appendix L of the [Faculty Handbook](#).

The policy establishes safeguards to prevent medical faculty, employees, consultants, or members of governing bodies from using their positions for purposes that are, or give the appearance of being, motivated by a desire for private financial gain for themselves or others such as those with whom they have family, business, or other ties. It covers research and administrative activities that are not normally allowable and allowable activities that must be disclosed.

### 2.3.3 CDM Conflict of Interest – Education and Clinical Care

The University's *Conflict of Interest Policy Regarding Education and Clinical Care for CDM Faculty* governs CDM employees' education and clinical care activities. The policy establishes safeguards to prevent perceived or real conflicts of interest in academic-industry relationships, where potential questions may arise regarding the intellectual independence of faculty who are involved with commercial enterprises. It provides direction regarding support from commercial entities for educational activities

(including meals), gifts, consultation, continuing medical education (CDE), non-CDE presentations and publications, travel, speakers' bureaus, ghost writing, inventions, and drug and device representatives and samples.

??Please refer to ? (there is no link—how do we attach the policy as a pdf link?)

### **2.3.4 Annual Conflict of Interest Disclosure**

All University officers, including officers of administration must file a conflict of interest disclosure in accordance with Columbia University's conflict of interest policy when first hired and on an annual basis thereafter. Certification is obtained by completing the Conflict of Interest form in RASCAL, which is the University's online Research Compliance and Administration System. Each year on the anniversary of an employee's hire date, he/she will receive a reminder to file the form.

Conflict of interest disclosures must be current for all officers and faculty on a sponsored project in order for the University to permit any proposal to be submitted to a funding agency or award account to be established.

### **2.3.5 Protocol-Specific Disclosure for Research with Human Subjects**

Researchers must also fill out a conflict of interest form for each protocol that has human subjects. For further information, see [Section 5.12](#) on compliance filings for research. See also the resources at the University's [Conflict of Interest in Research website](#).

## **2.4 ADMINISTRATIVE CODE OF CONDUCT**

Columbia University has an [Administrative Code of Conduct](#) that applies to officers of administration, and vendors of the University and promotes the environment of respect that is central to success of the University and the individuals who work for it. The policy articulates the principles that govern interactions at the University and some of the basic expectations that flow from those principles. Specifically, the following topics are covered: respect for governance, respect for others, respect for information, respect for property, and ethical conduct.

- Respect for governance covers the expectation that members of the Columbia University community will act in compliance with the laws, regulations, and policies that are in effect and that govern behavior, the conduct of University business, and the use of University information systems.
- Respect for others governs interactions between people within the Columbia University community and between those within and outside the University community.

- Respect for information covers the proper handling of information and maintenance of confidentiality.
- Respect for property calls for maintaining the highest standards of stewardship for the property and resources entrusted to the University.
- The University also has a statement of ethical conduct that applies to all faculty, staff, and students. It lays out the basic principles of ethical conduct and procedures for acting if a person is concerned with another's conduct.

## 2.5 WORKPLACE POLICIES ON CONDUCT

This sub-section highlights the most frequently referenced codes of conduct in the workplace. The University has additional workplace policies on business hours, solicitation, rules of conduct, and information security. For further information, see [Section 7.23](#) in the Human Resources section and [CU's Employment Operating Policies](#).

### 2.5.1 Substance-Free Workplace

Columbia University operates a substance-free workplace in all locales. Smoking is prohibited in all University-owned, leased, or controlled facilities and vehicles, regardless of local custom. This includes all offices, laboratories, and storage rooms.

Alcohol and other banned substances may not be consumed during work hours. No employee may work under their influence on University premises or while operating a University vehicle, no matter where the substances are consumed.

The use, manufacture, sale, or distribution of illegal drugs is strictly forbidden and grounds for immediate dismissal.

For further information, see the policies on *Smoking* and on *Drugs and Alcohol* at [CU's Employment Operating Policies](#). Anyone working at Columbia (faculty, staff, volunteer, trainee, observer, or consultant) found to be in violation of these policies may be subject to immediate termination of employment.

### 2.5.2 Equal Opportunity

Columbia University is an equal opportunity employer. It does not discriminate against employees or applicants for employment on the basis of race, color, sex, gender, religion, creed, national and ethnic origin, age, citizenship, status as a perceived or actual victim of domestic violence, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, status as a veteran, or any other legally protected status.

For the full text of the *Equal Employment Opportunity and Nondiscrimination Policies*, see the [Administrative Policy Library](#).

### **2.5.3 Discrimination and Sexual Harassment**

Columbia University is committed to providing a working and learning environment free from discrimination and sexual harassment and to fostering a nurturing and vibrant community founded upon the fundamental dignity and worth of all of its members. Consistent with this commitment and with applicable federal and state laws, it is the University's policy not to tolerate discrimination and sexual harassment in any form and to provide those who feel that they are victims of either with mechanisms for seeking redress.

This means that employees have the right to the enjoyment of a workplace that is free from harassment by word of mouth or conduct resulting in fear, pressure, or discomfort caused by any other fellow employee. Employees who engage in any form of harassment of other employees shall be in breach of this agreement and shall be liable to disciplinary action or immediate dismissal.

Under the University's policy, all employees are protected from coercion, intimidation, interference, or retaliation for filing a complaint or assisting in an investigation under any of the applicable policies and laws.

Further information on this topic may be found in *Columbia University Equal Employment Opportunity and Nondiscrimination Policies and Procedures on Discrimination, Discriminatory Harassment and Sexual Harassment*, available at the [Administrative Policy Library](#).

## **2.6 POLICY ON MISCONDUCT IN RESEARCH**

The University is committed to assuring the integrity of research conducted under its auspices and has put in place policies and procedures that define misconduct, outline the process for investigating allegations, and explain the consequences of committing misconduct.

The University's Standing Committee on the Conduct of Research implements the [Institutional Policy on Misconduct in Research](#). Research misconduct is defined, in accordance with federal policy, as any fabrication, falsification or plagiarism in proposing, performing or reviewing research or in the reporting of research results. Research misconduct does not include honest error or differences of opinion, authorship disputes that do not involve plagiarism, and violations of other University policies (e.g., sexual harassment policy). For further information see [http://www.columbia.edu/cu/compliance/docs/research\\_misconduct](http://www.columbia.edu/cu/compliance/docs/research_misconduct).

## **2.7 REPORTING CONCERNS OF MISCONDUCT**

### **2.7.1 Reporting Concerns Directly**

As the “Statement of Ethical Conduct” in the [Administrative Code of Conduct](#) states, any Columbia employee may report conduct that concerns him/her to his/her supervisor or, if the supervisor is involved in the questioned conduct, with the supervisor at the next level. Concerns may also be discussed with a University ombuds officer. See [Section 7.29.4](#) in the Human Resources section for more information.

### **2.7.2 Reporting Through CUMC’s Billing Compliance Program**

All University employees and managers should be aware of their rights and responsibilities under the Federal Civil False Claims Act (FCA), which was established by the U.S. government to detect fraud, by encouraging individuals, often called “whistleblowers” or “relators,” to uncover and report fraud, and to prevent fraud. When facing an incident of fraud or possible fraud, the employee or manager should immediately report to the [CUMC Billing Compliance Program](#), which handles allegations of misconduct associated with physician billing.

### **2.7.3 Reporting Through the University Hotline**

The University has established a Compliance Hotline, which serves as a confidential channel for employees to report or seek guidance on possible compliance issues. The Hotline focuses primarily on financial impropriety. The Hotline is a “best practice” hotline provided by a third party and staffed by professionals. It is available to Columbia personnel through the telephone and the internet, with confidential intake and report handling, and the option to report anonymously:

- Phone: (866) 627-3768
- <https://www.submitreport.com/columbiauniversity.jsp>
- Through a link at [http://finance.columbia.edu/internal\\_audit/request\\_services.html](http://finance.columbia.edu/internal_audit/request_services.html)