

# OUTSIDE ACTIVITIES/INTERESTS DISCLOSURES

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

### 1. When should I fill out the Outside Activities Form?

You are required to fill out the form and get approval prior to starting the outside activity. This requirement is still applicable even if the employee has already started the outside activity. Separate forms need to be completed for each outside activity. However, the form(s) just need to be completed once (not every year) and updated if and when there are any changes to the information on the completed form(s).

### 2. Why do I have to fill out this form?

The University is required to monitor outside professional activities of full-time exempt faculty and staff, as provided by Board of Regents policy 57.01.02. SAM 02.A.08 – Outside Activities/Interests Disclosures prescribes the procedures—including the timely completion of the Outside Activities Form—to comply with the Board policy, as well as state conflict of interest laws.

### 3. What type of outside activities are required to be reported on the Outside Activities Form?

The following activities, if not on the pre-approved list (see FAQ below), are required to be reported:

- Outside paid professional activities where the work is for the same or similar types of activities or area of expertise for which the employee was hired by the university;
- Startup company activities (i.e., starting, or joining with others to start, a company) where the work is for the same or similar types of activities or area of expertise for which the employee was hired by the university;
- Outside board service (except where no approval is required); and
- Any outside activities, regardless of compensation, that reasonably appear to create a conflict of interest or a conflict of commitment.

### 4. What type of outside activities are pre-approved?

The following activities are pre-approved so long as the activity does not create, or create the appearance of, a conflict of interest or conflict of commitment:

- Acting in an editorial capacity for a professional journal;
- Reviewing journal manuscripts, book manuscripts, grant or contract proposals, theses or dissertations;
- Attending and presenting talks at scholarly colloquia and conferences;
- Developing scholarly communications in books, journal articles, television productions and similar works, even when such activities result in financial gain, consistent with intellectual property and UHS or university policies and guidelines. (However, prior approval is required if an employee will be paid by an outside entity to conduct research related to their area of expertise);
- Serving as a committee member or an officer of a professional or scholarly organization; and
- Serving on a grant review committee.

## **5. When is no approval required for outside board service?**

No approval is required for service on the board of a local organization, religious organization, neighborhood association, public, private or parochial school, youth sports or recreation league, and similar outside boards that are personal in nature so long as the board service is on the employee's own time outside of work hours and the board service does not create a conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest or conflict of commitment.

## **6. What is a conflict of commitment and what are some examples?**

A conflict of commitment is defined as a "situation in which an employee's outside activities interfere with the employee's duties and responsibilities to UHS, including their commitment of time and intellectual energies." Some examples of a conflict of commitment are a staff member who works from home on Mondays but also volunteers at the local food bank during that same time or a faculty member who has office hours on certain days but instead uses that time to work on their startup.

## **7. What commitment of time to the university is expected of its employees?**

Except for the limited pre-approved outside activities outlined in Section 4.6 of SAM 02.A.08, the time commitment expected of the outside activity should generally be no more than 8 hours per calendar week, but in no event can the activity exceed a maximum of 32 hours per month. Assuming no conflict of commitment, an employee's outside activity could occur on several days a week so long as for the month the 32 hours are not exceeded. For instance, an employee could attend an outside board retreat for several days in one week.

With regard to teaching, a full-time exempt employee may not teach more than one three semester credit hour course at a time.

## **8. What about work conducted on sabbaticals?**

Faculty development leaves (sabbaticals) provide an opportunity for full-time faculty to improve their professional effectiveness through research, writing, study, field observation, or other suitable professional activities. Work conducted in conjunction with the approved sabbatical is permissible but any other work is subject to the reporting requirements and restrictions contained in SAM 02.A.08.

## **9. What about work conducted during the Summer if I have a 9-month contract with the university?**

Work conducted during the summer when there is no employment contract with the university is not subject to SAM 02.A.08, including the reporting requirements and restrictions contained in that policy.

## **10. What is a conflict of interest and what are some examples?**

A conflict of interest is defined as a "situation in which an employee has a direct or indirect financial or other interest, engages in a business transaction or professional activity, or incurs any obligation that is in substantial conflict with the proper discharge of the

employee's duties and responsibilities to UHS.” Some examples of a conflict of interest are being a member of an outside board and then recommending that company for a university contract award or accepting gifts or gratuities from companies doing business or sponsoring one's research at the university.

#### **11. Can I accept an honorarium or is that prohibited?**

An employee can accept an honorarium if the employee was asked to participate in the activity because of their academic or other expertise and not because of the employee's official position or duties.

#### **12. Do I have to fill out the Outside Activities Form for volunteer activities that are not Board service?**

Generally no; however, you should fill out the form if the unpaid work you are conducting is for the same or similar type of activities or area of expertise for which you are hired by the university, and may result in current or future monetary or professional benefits to you.