

Conflicts of Interest Engage Policy

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Authoring Origin: E R M S, Governance, Tanya Semenko: Sr. Mgr. Integrity Compliance

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Scope:

This policy applies to all affected and interested persons, as defined below, who are in positions that have influence over the affairs of Providence St. Joseph Health and its Members/Affiliates¹ (collectively known as "PSJH") and who have a direct or indirect financial interest in PSJH. This is a governance level policy approved by the Board of Directors (Board) and signed by the President/CEO.

Purpose:

To establish PSJH standards and responsibilities for addressing potential or real conflicts of interest or unethical or unlawful practices and to ensure that health care, education, research, investment and other activities are conducted free from undue influence or the perception of such influence arising from outside obligations.

Definitions:

1. "Affected person" refers to any employed or contracted: executive; health care administrator; department head (generally director or above); school administrator; medical director and other physician in a leadership position within PSJH; purchasing agents/buyer; those on committees that recommend or approve formularies or the purchase of medical devices, supplies, and equipment; those who recommend or approve investments by PSJH; and a consultant acting on behalf of PSJH in any of the aforementioned positions.
2. "Interested person" refers to any PSJH Board member or member of a local ministry board, community board, advisory board, foundation board, committee with board-delegated powers, or similarly situated governing body (collectively referred to as the Board). If a person is an interested person with respect to any entity of which PSJH is a part, he or she is an interested person with respect to all entities in PSJH.
3. "Conflict of interest (COI)" refers to a situation in which the personal and/or professional interests of a person performing duties on behalf of PSJH might appear to influence the objectivity of that person in carrying out her/his official duty to PSJH. A COI situation does not prove influence was exerted.
4. "External compensation" refers to any direct or indirect remuneration in any form, including wages, fees, honorarium, gifts, favors, loans or discounts when receipt is related to the

performance of duties on behalf of PSJH. Additional guidance on external compensation is available through your PSJH contact.

5. "Immediate family member" – the following relationships constitute a family member:

Spouse, partner or similar relationship	Children (and their spouses/partners)
Parents	Grandparents and great-grandparents
Grandchildren	Siblings
Legal Guardians	Cousins
Nieces	Nephews
Aunts	Uncles
Step and in-law relatives of all of the preceding categories	

6. "Financial Interest" refers to a situation where an affected or interested person or his/her immediate family member has a financial relationship with PSJH. In general a financial relationship is a direct or indirect ownership interest, investment interest or compensation arrangement with PSJH and/or any entity that conducts or proposes to conduct transactions with PSJH. Specifically for purposes of this policy, a financial interest includes:

- a An ownership or investment interest in any entity or business in which PSJH has a transaction or arrangement, including any entity, business, investment fund, convertible debt or equity investment in early stage companies, limited partnerships or joint ventures in which PSJH invests ("Investment Vehicles"), *except* investments in publicly traded securities valued at less than \$10,000 or that are managed in a mutual fund; exchange traded fund; or other similar financial instrument; or
- b A compensation arrangement with PSJH or with any entity, business or individual with which PSJH has a transaction or arrangement; or
- c A potential ownership or investment interest in, or compensation arrangement with, any entity, business or individual in which PSJH is negotiating a transaction or arrangement, including Investment Vehicles, except for investments in publicly traded securities valued

at less than \$10,000 or that are managed in a mutual fund; exchange traded fund; or other similar financial instrument.

7. "Inurement" refers to an improper economic advantage that can accrue to an officer, director, or other insider (i.e., a person who is in a position to exercise substantial influence over the entity's affairs) of a charitable organization. Charitable organizations are prohibited from providing private inurement and can lose tax-exempt status if they do so.
8. "Ministry or facility" is defined as all entities of which PSJH is the sole or majority member or shareholder, including, but not limited to, hospitals, home health and hospice agencies, physician practices, long-term care facilities, health plans, housing facilities, schools and departments within those entities.
9. "Vendor" refers to any existing or potential manufacturer, distributor, supplier or service organization, and their salespersons, representatives, or other employees.

Policy:

Affected and interested persons are required to maintain appropriate relationships with third parties, including patients and their families, health care practitioners, donors, suppliers, subcontractors and competitors so no third-party has an opportunity or appears to have an opportunity to inappropriately influence PSJH decisions or activities. A COI occurs when an individual's personal interests diverge from his or her professional obligations to PSJH. When this occurs, an independent observer may reasonably question whether an individual's professional actions or decisions are determined or affected by considerations of personal gain or benefit, whether financial or otherwise.

Affected and interested persons shall complete PSJH's Confidentiality and Conflict of Interest Disclosure Form within 45 days of hire or engagement and annually thereafter. Failure to disclose an interest in accordance with this policy may result in removal from a Board or corrective actions for PSJH employees, consultants or others as appropriate.

PSJH maintains a Conflict of Interest in Research (COIR) policy applicable to the research environment. The COIR policy's requirements are in addition to the requirements of this policy, as applicable.

This policy incorporates Internal Revenue Service requirements necessary to establish the reasonableness of PSJH transactions with persons in a position to exercise substantial influence over the affairs of PSJH, and who have a direct or indirect financial interest in PSJH. This policy supplements applicable state laws governing conflicts of interest for nonprofit and charitable corporations.

This policy is not intended to restrict employees from engaging in concerted activity to improve the terms and conditions of their employment in accordance with applicable federal and state laws.

Requirements

1. **Required Disclosures:** Affected and interested persons are required to disclose potential conflict of interest situations on their annual disclosure form and on a situational basis for any situation occurring during the year. The following items are a non-exclusive list of items that must be

reported:

Ownership Relationships with Competitors: A direct or indirect (e.g., through a family member) financial interest of \$10,000 or more (including ownership of stock, stock options, equity, debt, other securities, other form of ownership interest, salary or other remuneration for services as an employee, consultant, officer, or board member) in any business or health care enterprise that produces services or products which compete with those of PSJH.

Work Relationships with Competitors: A direct or indirect (e.g. through a family member) financial interest where salary or other remuneration is received as an employee, consultant, officer or board member) in any business or health care enterprise that produces services or products which compete with those of PSJH.

Relationships with Organizations Doing Business with PSJH: A situation in which they directly or indirectly (e.g., through a family member) have any financial interest of \$10,000 or more (including ownership of stock, stock options, equity, debt, other securities, other form of ownership interest, salary or other remuneration for services as a consultant, officer, or board member) in any business or health care enterprise that does business with PSJH.

Personal Business Transactions with PSJH: A situation in which they directly or indirectly own, trade, or deal in real estate, materials, supplies, equipment or other property with the intent of selling, renting or contracting to PSJH. In addition, no affected person shall simultaneously work as a consultant for PSJH or otherwise be compensated by PSJH for personal services.

Certain Outside Roles and Commitments: A situation in which they serve as an officer, director, employee, committee member, advisor, agent, representative or consultant or in any other professional activity capacity for any company, firm or business that, to the best of their knowledge, does or seeks to do business with PSJH, competes or may compete with PSJH or in which PSJH holds an investment interest.

Employment of Relatives and Partner Relationships in the Workplace: PSJH employees shall disclose any situation in which their relationship with a Family Member results in a potential, perceived or actual conflict of interest. A conflict of interest may be the result of a direct reporting relationship (e.g., a supervisory relationship) or an indirect reporting relationship (e.g., if one employee holds a position which may influence the status or compensation of a Family Member).

Improper use of PSJH resources for personal gain or the gain of another person. Employees may not use their position at PSJH as the impetus to start a manufacturing, service or consulting business that depends on PSJH confidential information and/or specific operations knowledge obtained on the job at PSJH or which utilizes PSJH resources/facilities.

Prohibition of Co-Investments. Affected and interested persons are prohibited from knowingly co-investing alongside PSJH in any Investment Vehicle in which PSJH has a financial interest or in which PSJH has entered into an agreement to pursue an investment. If an affected or interested person unknowingly invests in any Investment Vehicle in which PSJH has a financial interest or in which PSJH has entered into an agreement to pursue an investment, the affected or interested person is required to disclose the potential conflict on his or her disclosure form upon obtaining knowledge of PSJH's investment. If PSJH invests directly in an Investment Vehicle that an affected or interested person has already invested in, the affected or interested person is required to disclose the potential conflict on his or her disclosure form upon obtaining knowledge of PSJH's investment.

Prohibition of Sharing Confidential Information regarding Investment Vehicles. Whenever an affected or interested person is in a position at PSJH to gain confidential information regarding Investment Vehicles, the affected or interested person must not share that information with anyone outside of PSJH and those without a need to know. Further, if the affected or interested person has an investment interest in the Investment Vehicle, he/she must recuse her/himself from any deliberation or decision making relating to PSJH's investment in or purchase of items or services from the Investment Vehicle.

A. Duty to Disclose – Affected Persons

1. *Disclosures Required upon Hire/Promotion or Engagement:* All affected persons are required to complete the Conflict of Interest Disclosure Form within 45 days of engagement or hire/promotion in a role covered by this policy. Human Resources will notify Enterprise Risk Management Services Integrity and Compliance (ERMS) of new employees and promoted employees required to complete a disclosure form within fortyfive (45) days of hire or promotion. Applicable affected persons will receive notification with a link to this policy and the Conflict of Interest Disclosure Form to be completed and submitted electronically.
2. *Annual Disclosures:* All affected persons are required to complete the Conflict of Interest Disclosure Form on an annual basis for the duration of their service to PSJH in a role covered by this policy.
 - a. ERMS will administer the PSJH Annual Conflict of Interest disclosure processes by sending out a copy of this policy to all affected persons and others designated in this policy with instructions and links to the Conflict of Interest Disclosure Form.
 - b. Disclosures will be reviewed by ERMS. Disclosures requiring mitigation will be discussed with the employee's supervisor or other appropriate individual.
3. *Situational Disclosures:*
 - a. Any affected person, regardless of their position, with an actual, perceived or potential conflict of interest must disclose such interest to his/her immediate supervisor as soon as the situation arises.
 - b. In addition, management employees (director and above) are required to obtain explicit prior review and approval from their supervisor, business unit chief executive and the ERMS prior to engaging in any of the activities described in the "Requirements" section.
 - c. The interest must also be added by the individual to their conflict of interest disclosure form as soon as reasonably possible
4. *Conflicts evaluation and management:* After disclosure of an actual, perceived or potential conflict of interest, ERMS, working in conjunction with the affected person's department and the appropriate executive will decide whether a conflict of interest exists.
 - a. ERMS may appoint a disinterested person or committee to evaluate alternatives to an actual, perceived or potential conflict of interest, including the development of a conflict of interest management plan.

- b. ERMS shall determine whether the conflicting interest or an alternative arrangement is fair and reasonable and in the best interest of PSJH.

B. Violations of the Conflict of Interest Policy – Affected Persons

1. If any person has reasonable cause to believe that an affected person failed to disclose an actual, perceived or potential conflict of interest, that person shall inform ERMS of the basis for such belief. A person may also raise a concern through the PSJH Integrity Line (1-888-294-8455) or [Integrity Online](#). ERMS shall investigate and afford the affected person an opportunity to explain the alleged failure to disclose.
2. If, after hearing the response of the affected person and further investigating as may be warranted, ERMS determines that the affected person has in fact failed to disclose an actual, perceived or potential conflict of interest, ERMS shall request that the appropriate executive take corrective or disciplinary action.
 - a. An affected person will be terminated or suspended as an employee or will have their contractual arrangement terminated or suspended in accordance with contractual terms for intentionally failing or refusing to complete the required annual conflict of interest disclosure form or for violating PSJH's confidentiality or conflict of interest requirements.
 - b. An affected person who receives a gift, favor, or other service or thing of value exceeding that allowed in PSJH policy from any Vendor when in a position to influence the conduct of business of that person with PSJH will be subject to corrective action by the appropriate executive with the concurrence of ERMS.
 - c. Other corrective actions may be taken based on the severity of the conflict of interest.
3. ERMS must document the name of the affected person, the nature of the interest or conflict, the process taken to determine whether a conflict was present, the final decision as to whether a conflict of interest in fact existed, and any corrective or disciplinary action that was taken.

C. Duty to Disclose – Interested Persons

In connection with any actual or possible conflicts of interest, an interested person must disclose the existence of his or her financial interest and must be given the opportunity to disclose all material facts to the chairs/directors and members of committees with board delegated powers considering the proposed transaction or arrangement. Regional Chief Executives are responsible for ensuring compliance with this requirement for local ministry, community, foundation boards, and similarly situated governing bodies within their region. The System Board Chair is responsible for ensuring compliance for the System Board.

1. *Disclosures Required upon Appointment:* All interested persons are required to complete the Conflict of Interest Disclosure Form within 45 days of appointment. Applicable interested persons will receive notification with a link to this policy and the Conflict of Interest Disclosure Form to be completed. Disclosures are handled confidentially and will be reviewed by ERMS. Disclosures requiring mitigation will be discussed with the applicable Regional Chief Executive.
2. *Annual Disclosures:* All interested persons are required to complete the Conflict of Interest Disclosure Form on an annual basis for the duration of their service.

- a. ERMS will administer the PSJH Annual Conflict of Interest disclosure processes by sending out a copy of this policy to all interested persons and others designated in this policy with instructions and links to the Conflict of Interest Disclosure Form.
 - b. Disclosures will be reviewed by ERMS. Disclosures requiring mitigation will be discussed with the applicable Regional Chief Executive.
3. *Situational Disclosures:* An interested person with any actual, perceived or potential conflict of interest must disclose such interest verbally to the directors and members of the appropriate Board that is considering a decision, transaction or arrangement that may be in conflict. The interest must also be disclosed in writing to the chair of the appropriate Board and added by the individual to their conflict of interest disclosure form as soon as reasonably possible.
 - a. If management identifies an actual, perceived or potential conflict of interest for an interested person, the conflict will be reported to ERMS. ERMS shall inform the appropriate PSJH leader of the actual, perceived or potential conflict.
 - b. Actual, perceived or potential conflicts of interest may also be reported through the Integrity Line (1-888-294-8455) or [Integrity Online](#).
4. *Determining Whether a Conflict of Interest Exists:* After disclosure of the actual, perceived or potential conflict of interest, the interested person shall not participate in any Board meeting while the conflict is discussed except to provide factual information/respond to Board questions, and must leave the proceeding during the Board's general discussion and deliberation process. The remaining Board members shall decide if a conflict of interest exists. The outcome of any vote on a conflict of interest shall be recorded in the meeting minutes.
5. *Procedures for Addressing the Conflict of Interest:*
 - a. An interested person may make a presentation at the Board or committee meeting, but after such presentation, he/she shall leave the meeting during the discussion of, and the vote on, the transaction or arrangement that result in the conflict of interest.
 - b. The Board chairperson shall, if appropriate, appoint a disinterested person or committee to investigate alternatives to the proposed decision, transaction or arrangement affected by the interest.
 - c. After exercising due diligence, the Board shall determine whether PSJH can obtain a more advantageous transaction or arrangement with reasonable efforts from a person or entity that would not give rise to a conflict of interest.
 - d. If a more advantageous transaction or arrangement is not reasonably attainable under circumstances that would not give rise to a conflict of interest, the Board shall determine by a majority vote that the proposed decision, transaction or arrangement is in PSJH's best interests and for its own benefit and whether the transaction is fair and reasonable to PSJH and shall make its decision as to whether to enter into the transaction or arrangement in conformity with such determination.

D. Violations of the Conflict of Interest Policy — Interested Persons

1. If a Board has reasonable cause to believe that an interested person has failed to disclose an actual, perceived or potential conflict of interest, it shall inform such person of the basis for such belief and provide the member an opportunity to explain the alleged failure to disclose.
2. If, after hearing the response of the interested person and investigating further as may be warranted in the circumstances, the Board determines that the interested person has in fact failed to disclose an actual, perceived or potential conflict of interest; it shall take appropriate corrective action.
 - a. Interested persons will be removed from their Board positions for refusing to complete the required conflict of interest disclosure form or for failing to abide by confidentiality or conflict of interest requirements. Removal shall occur within thirty (30) days of such failure or refusal.
 - b. Other corrective actions may be taken based on the severity of the conflict of interest.

E. Records of Proceedings — Boards

1. The minutes of all Board meetings must contain:
 - a. The name of the person who disclosed or otherwise was found to have had a financial interest in connection with an actual, perceived or potential conflict of interest;
 - b. The nature of the financial interest;
 - c. Any action taken to determine whether a conflict of interest was present;
 - d. The Board's decision as to whether an actual, perceived or potential conflict of interest in fact existed; and
 - e. The names of the persons who were present for discussions and votes relating to the transaction or arrangement, the content of the discussion, including any alternatives to the proposed transaction or arrangement, and a record of any votes taken in connection with the proposed decision, transaction or arrangement.
2. Meeting minutes shall be retained in accordance with record retention requirements.

F. Compensation

1. A voting Board member who receives compensation, directly or indirectly, from PSJH for services is precluded from voting on and exerting undue influence related to matters pertaining to that member's compensation.
2. An "excess benefit transaction" occurs when a disqualified person receives an economic benefit that exceeds the value of the goods or services that the disqualified person provides to a tax-exempt organization. A disqualified person is any individual or family member in a position to exercise substantial influence over the affairs of a tax-exempt organization. If a planned transaction by PSJH involves a disqualified person and there is risk of an excess benefit transaction, the following three conditions must be complied with:

- a. The compensation or other financial interest must be approved by a Board, composed entirely of individuals not related to or controlled by the disqualified person.
- b. The Board must rely on appropriate comparable valuation or compensation studies and document the basis for its compensation valuation determination. Compensation studies or comparable valuation that may be used in such a determination include:
 - i. Compensation paid by comparable organizations for functionally comparable positions;
 - ii. Compensation patterns in the organization's immediate locale;
 - iii. Availability of similar medical specialists in the geographical area;
 - iv. Independent compensation surveys by nationally recognized firms; and
 - v. Written offers of employment from other firms.
3. Physicians who receive compensation, directly or indirectly, from PSJH whether as employees or independent contractors, are precluded from membership on any Board committee whose jurisdiction includes compensation matters. No physician, either individually or collectively, is prohibited from providing information to any committee regarding physician compensation.

G. Prohibited Activities

1. Affected and Interested Persons are prohibited from the following activities that may benefit private interests ("Prohibited Activities"):
 - a. Competition - To assist a potential competitor or to direct business away from PSJH unless the best interests of the patient necessitate otherwise.
 - b. Loans - Except for routine relationships with banking or similar organizations commonly available to the general public, individuals and their families may not loan to or borrow money from patients or entities with whom PSJH has a business or competitive relationship.
 - c. Inside and confidential information and self-dealing - To disclose or use information relating to PSJH's business, especially for the personal inurement or advantage of the individual or his or her family is prohibited. The individual may not disclose to others, and may not use or assist others in using, confidential or proprietary information obtained from PSJH as a basis for trading or investing in securities of any other corporation, or in any other personal business venture.

H. Periodic Review, Reporting and Records Retention

1. Periodic reviews of the conflict of interest disclosure process will be conducted to confirm that PSJH has a process that supports operating in a manner consistent with its charitable purposes and that it does not engage in activities that could jeopardize its tax-exempt status. The periodic review shall, at a minimum include the following subjects:

- a. Whether disclosed compensation arrangements and benefits are reasonable and the result of arm's-length bargaining.
 - b. Whether disclosed acquisition of physician practices and other provider services result in inurement or impermissible private benefit.
 - c. Whether disclosed partnerships and joint ventures, and arrangements with management service organizations and physician hospital organizations conform to written policies, are properly recorded, reflect reasonable investments or payments for goods and services, further charitable purposes, and do not result in inurement or impermissible private benefit.
 - d. Whether disclosed agreements to provide health care and other services with other health care providers, employees, and third party payers further charitable purposes and do not result in inurement or impermissible private benefit.
2. The PSJH Board or designated committee will receive an annual report summarizing review results and other COI program information.
 3. ERMS will maintain or will have a conflict of interest system that retains copies of conflict of interest disclosure forms for inspection and review in accordance with the record retention policy.

References

[Conflict of Interest Process Manual and Disclosure Forms](#) maintained by the Enterprise Risk Management Services division

Codes of Conduct and related policies applicable to entities covered under this policy

Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Form 1023, Conflict of Interest Policy IRS Form 990

Joint Commission Leadership Standards

¹ For purposes of this policy, "Members/Affiliates" is defined as any entity that is wholly owned or controlled by Providence Health & Services, St. Joseph Health (for example, Covenant Health Network and Covenant Health System) or Western HealthConnect (for example, Swedish Health Services, Swedish Edmonds, Kadlec Regional Medical Center, PacMed Clinics and Inland Northwest Health Services).

f.

Attachments:**Approval Signatures**

Approver _____ **Date** _____

Tanya Semenko: Sr Mgr Integrity Compliance 12/2016

[Older Version Approval Signatures](#)