

CONFLICT OF INTEREST/DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

POLICY

The actions of the Board of Directors and Council should be free of any real or perceived conflict of interest, because individuals who participate in the activities of WOCN may have financial relationships with outside public and private entities that have an interest in WOCN issues. Significant financial or administrative relationships, which might create a conflict of interest, must be fully disclosed and mechanisms established to deal with such conflicts.

PURPOSE

To ensure that all participants in the activities of WOCN are governed exclusively by the best interests of WOCN, members of the Board of Directors cannot be employed by a commercial industry that provides products or services to WOCN.

PROCEDURE

1. **Who is covered by the Policy?** Board of Directors' members, Committee Chairs and other individuals to whom the Board of Directors has delegated significant decision-making authority (e.g., National Office executive staff, *JWOCN* editors, associate editors and editorial boards for WOCN publications, Director of the Center for Clinical Investigation).
2. **What is to be disclosed?** All relationships in which a covered individual or immediate family member may have a material interest, including but not limited to grants or other funding from another entity; participation in a speakers' bureau sponsored by another entity; or financial interest in another entity where such investments of the reporting individual or his or her immediate family aggregate more than \$10,000 in value. Conflicts may arise from administrative roles in other organizations whose activities may be affected by activities of WOCN. Such positions must be revealed (e.g., Board of Directors' member or Program/Committee Chair for another society), regardless of whether or not the covered individual has a financial interest in the outside entity.
3. **When is disclosure to be made?** Each covered individual shall file a completed disclosure form with the National Office upon assuming a covered position and annually, thereafter. In addition, if at any time there is a significant change in circumstances for a reporting individual that materially affects the disclosure form on file, an additional disclosure form containing updated information shall be filed with the National Office of WOCN and circulated to all Board of Directors' members.
4. **Who shall have access to the disclosure forms filed?** The Executive Director shall provide copies of the annual disclosure forms filed by Board of Directors' members to all Board of Directors' members. The information in the disclosure forms may be disclosed only upon approval by the Board of Directors or Executive Committee of WOCN.
5. **What rules govern the activities of individuals on behalf of WOCN with declared or perceived conflicts of interest?** Covered individuals should be sensitive to interests they have that might affect decisions to be made on behalf of WOCN or by WOCN.

- a. Members of the Board of Directors or any decision-making panel appointed by the Board of Directors of WOCN have an obligation to disclose such interests prior to the discussion or presentation of such matters before the Board of Directors or decision-making panel (see **SECTION 2.9.b – CONFLICT OF INTEREST DISCLOSURE STATEMENT FORM**).
 - b. Upon disclosure, the Board of Directors or panel should review the potential conflict. Depending upon the circumstances, it may be prudent for the Board of Directors or panel to exclude the affected individual from part or all of the discussion of the relevant matter.
 - c. Covered individuals may not vote on matters in which they have a potential conflict of interest.
6. **Process to request interpretation of possible conflicts of interest activity**
- a. If a member of the Board of Directors or Council has a question about a potential conflict of interest, they should submit a written summary and disclosure of the activity in question to the Board of Directors via the President and Executive Director.
 - b. The President presents the request to the Board of Directors for discussion.
 - c. When a decision is reached by consensus, a formal written reply is sent to the individual who has requested the determination.
 - d. If the Board of Directors is not able to reach consensus, the President will appoint an ad hoc Ethics Committee to review the request and deliver a recommendation to the Board of Directors complete with rationale.
 - e. The Board of Directors will review the recommendation and vote on the recommendation. The President will then provide a written response to the individual who has requested the determination.

Approved March 3, 2006