

## CODE OF CONDUCT POLICY

### POLICY

The actions of the Board of Directors, Council, and National Office staff should be free of any real or perceived conflict of interest. The mission and philosophy of WOCN are based upon the values WOCN strives to attain. Ethical behavior arises from adherence to these values by all National Office staff, volunteer leaders and members.

### PURPOSE

This Code of Conduct is meant to provide direction and guidance for professional interactions; however, it should not limit or serve as a barrier to those interactions.

### GUIDELINES

Members, National Office staff and volunteer leaders strive for compatibility between our values and actions. Our dealings with each other should be based on mutual trust and dedication. We should treat each other with respect and dignity at all times. In doing so, WOCN will maintain ethical relationships and lasting credibility with members, colleagues and the general public. Listed below are guidelines to assist members of the Board of Directors, Council, and National Office staff in avoiding any real or perceived conflict of interest.

1. **Maintain exemplary standards of personal and professional conduct.** The personal and professional conduct of the members of the Board of Directors and Council is held up to the scrutiny of the membership since they are serving the members' interests. Maintenance of this code requires an unwavering commitment on the part of these individuals.
2. **Actively model and encourage the integration of ethics into all aspects of professional and volunteer work.** Members of the Board of Directors and Council fulfill an important leadership role. They have the opportunity to enhance the ethical awareness of their members. They have the obligation to actively apply ethics throughout the activities of WOCN.
3. **Maintain loyalty to WOCN and pursue its objectives in ways that are consistent with the interests of the members.** It is the primary and fundamental responsibility of the Board of Directors and Council to loyally serve the interests of WOCN and its members.
4. **Recognize and discharge personal responsibility and that of WOCN to uphold all laws and regulations in implementing the policies and conducting the activities of WOCN.** Be familiar with the basic principles of law and regulations, which affect WOCN. As a leader of WOCN, the Board of Directors and Council has the responsibility to help members understand the legal framework within which they operate in WOCN and to make sure that all policies of WOCN are formulated and all activities are conducted within this framework.
5. **Strive to continually advance personal knowledge and achieve higher levels of excellence in WOC nursing.** Board of Directors and Council members have a responsibility to maintain current practice and be aware of changes in WOC nursing practice and to apply this knowledge in all of the interactions of WOCN.

6. **Serve all members fairly, and realize no personal gain from a member or industry partner except with full disclosure and with the knowledge and consent of the Board of Directors.** By virtue of position, the Board of Directors and Council members may find themselves in a position to grant or receive special favors (e.g., Kickbacks) for or from members, vendors, and others. The Board of Directors and Council members have a responsibility to make the best possible decisions in the interest of WOCN without regard to personal gain. Therefore, members of the Board of Directors and Council should take special care to avoid either the fact or the appearance of personal gain in decision-making. They have a responsibility to represent the interests of all members fairly and should avoid incurring an obligation to a single individual or some fraction of the membership.
7. **Maintain the confidentiality of all privileged information, except when doing so becomes an ethical or legal breach of conduct.** The Board of Directors and Council frequently has access to privileged information, and is expected to exercise discretion in handling that information. If Board of Directors and Council members receive information, which potentially places WOCN legally at risk, they should seek to protect WOCN and/or themselves while recognizing the confidentiality of the information.
8. Members of the Board of Directors and Council must be cognizant that they are representing WOCN at all times.
9. If a Board or Council members is uncertain if an activity would be considered a conflict of interest, the member should consult with the President. The matter may be referred to the Board of Directors for a decision.
10. **Use of Publications and Products.** All WOCN publications and products are the property of WOCN. No individual is authorized to publish or reproduce documents or material, nor act on behalf of WOCN except with the express permission or written consent from the Board of Directors, President, or Executive Director. This includes the use of the WOCN name, logo, or any terminology implying WOCN sponsorship or endorsement.
11. A brief ethical behavior checklist is included for addressing situations that have not been discussed. If unsure of what to do in a given situation, before making decisions or taking action, the following questions should be considered (the CLICK model):

**C**onsequence: What are the consequences if I do this? Who will benefit?

Who will suffer?

**L**egal: Is it legal?

**I**mage: Would I like to see this on the front page of the newspaper?

Would I like to tell this to my kids?

**C**ulture: Does this decision support or damage our organization's culture and values?

**K**not: Does doing it cause a knot in my stomach?

Digh, P. (2001). *Doing the Right Thing Just Got Harder*. ASAE. Retrieved from <http://www.asaecenter.org/resources/whitepaperdetail.cfm?itemnumber=12155>. Retrieved November 18, 2010.