

## **Conflict of Interest Policy**

**Policy:** Washington Vaccine Association (the “Association”) has been established by act of the Washington Legislature for the purpose of collecting and remitting adequate funds from health carriers and third party administrators for the cost of vaccines provided to certain children in the state of Washington. The Association will comply fully with all laws that relate to the conduct of its activities, including all tax law.

**Purpose:** The purpose of this policy is to protect the Association’s interests when it is contemplating entering into a transaction or arrangement, or making a decision, that might benefit the private interest of an officer or board member of the Association or member of a committee with board delegated powers or might result in a possible excess benefit transaction as defined by the Internal Revenue Code. The Association intends to conduct its affairs consistent with the requirements of tax-exempt status under the Internal Revenue Code.

### **Definitions:**

**Interested Person:** Any board member, principal officer, or member of a committee with board delegated powers, who has a direct or indirect financial interest, as defined below, or a duality of interest, as defined below, is an interested person.

**Financial Interest:** A person has a financial interest in a transaction or arrangement or decision if the person has, directly or indirectly, through business, investment or family: (a) an ownership or investment interest in any entity with which the Association has a transaction or arrangement; or (b) a compensation arrangement with the Association or with any entity or individual with which the Association has a transaction or arrangement; or (c) a potential ownership or investment interest in, or compensation arrangement with, any entity or individual with which the Association is negotiating a transaction or arrangement or which will be affected by a decision of the Association. A “family member” includes a spouse, siblings (half or whole), children, grandchildren, and in-laws. “Business” includes those businesses which the person owns or controls at least 35%, or disregarded entities.

**Duality of Interest:** An interested person has a duality of interest with regard to a decision or action where in addition to the obligations of the interested person to the Association, the interested person has an obligation with regard to another organization or enterprise involved or implicated in the action of the Association. For instance, an interested person may serve as a board member of the Association and also as a board member of an organization engaging in a transaction with the Association. A duality of interest will be dealt with in the manner of a conflict of interest.

**Conflict of Interest:** A conflict of interest exists where an interested person has a financial interest or a duality of interest, in a proposed transaction or arrangement with the Association or decision by the Association. Examples of conflicts of interest include the following:

- a. Where an interested person makes a decision or does an act or is required to make a decision or perform an act that also involves an entity with which the person has a financial relationship and that benefits financially from the sale, marketing, re-selling, or distribution of vaccines; examples of such relationships include direct employment or an investment interest, a consultancy or other contractor relationship, serving on a speakers bureau, receiving honoraria, research and/or travel support;
  - b. Where an interested persons personally contracts with the Association or where he/she is a board member of another organization which is contracting with this Association;
  - c. Where an interested person has any direct or indirect interest in, or a relationship with, any individual or organization that proposes to enter, or has entered, into any transaction or arrangement with the Association involving the sale, re-sale, purchase, marketing, or distribution of any goods or services (including vaccines) or involving the investment or deposit of any funds of the Association;
  - d. Where an interested person in his or her capacity with the Association learns of an opportunity for profit or benefit which may be valuable to him/her personally or to another organization of which he/she is a member, or to other persons known to the interested person;
  - e. Where an interested person will receive compensation, directly or indirectly, from the Association for services; and,
  - f. Where a family or business relationship exists between the interested person and another interested person, consultants, or with staff of the Association.
- (This is not an exhaustive list.)

## **Procedures:**

1. **Duty to Disclose:** An interested person will disclose any conflict of interest, be it real, potential, or apparent, *which is not immediately obvious* with regard to any matter being discussed in the person's presence during a meeting.

- a. In connection with any actual or possible conflict of interest, an interested person must disclose the existence of the interest and be given the opportunity to disclose all material facts to the board members or members of committees with board delegated powers considering the proposed transaction or arrangement or decision.
- b. Disclosure involving board members should be made to the board chair, who shall bring these matters, if material, to the board.
- c. Disclosure in the Association should be made to the chief executive (or if she or he is the one with the conflict, then to the board chair), who shall determine whether a conflict exists and is material, and if the matters are material, bring them to the attention of the board chair.
- d. The Washington law establishing the Association provides that board membership of the Association includes members selected from health carriers, third-party administrators, health plans, physicians, and a delegate of the Secretary of the Department of Health. A potential conflict of interest arises between the

obligations of a board member of the Association and the board members' obligations to the organization or profession or position represented by the board member. The representative capacities and experience of board members are valuable to the Association board of directors. Under these circumstances, board members are not required to specifically disclose their represented relationships in each instance so long as such relationships are obvious in the situation. The board member should annually disclose any such financial interest on the disclosure form required by this policy.

## 2. **Determining Whether a Conflict of Interest Exists**

After disclosure of the interest and all material facts, and after any discussion with the interested person, he/she shall leave the board or committee meeting while the determination of a conflict of interest is discussed and voted upon. The board shall determine whether a conflict exists and is material, and in the presence of an existing material conflict, whether the contemplated transaction may be authorized as just, fair, and reasonable to the Association. The decision of the board on these matters will rest in their sole discretion, and their concern must be the welfare of the Association and the advancement of its purpose and *will be documented in the minutes.*

## 3. **Procedures for Addressing the Conflict of Interest**

- a. An interested person may make a presentation at the board or committee meeting, but after the presentation, he/she shall leave the meeting during the discussion of, and the vote on, the transaction or arrangement or decision involving the possible conflict of interest.
- b. The chair of the board or committee shall, if appropriate, appoint a disinterested person or committee to investigate alternatives to the proposed transaction or arrangement or make the proposed decision.
- c. After exercising due diligence, the board or committee shall determine whether the Association can obtain with reasonable efforts a more advantageous transaction or arrangement 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 possible under circumstances not producing a conflict of interest, the board or committee shall determine by a majority vote of the disinterested board members whether the transaction or arrangement is in the Association's best interest, for its own benefit, and whether it is fair and reasonable. In conformity with the above determination it shall make its decision as to whether to enter into the transaction or arrangement.

## 4. **Violations of the Conflicts of Interest Policy**

- a. If the board or committee has reasonable cause to believe a member has failed to disclose actual or possible conflicts of interest, or duality of interest, it shall

inform the member of the basis for such belief and afford the member an opportunity to explain the alleged failure to disclose.

- b. If, after hearing the board member's response and after making further investigation as warranted by the circumstances, the board or committee determines the member has failed to disclose an actual or possible conflict of interest, or duality of interest, it shall take or not take such disciplinary and/or corrective action as it, in its sole discretion, determines to be appropriate.

## 5. **Records of Proceedings**

The minutes of the board and all committees with board delegated powers shall contain:

- i. The names of the persons who disclosed or otherwise were found to have a financial interest or duality of interest, the nature of the financial interest or duality of interest, any action taken to determine whether a conflict of interest or duality of interest was present, and the board's or committee's decision as to whether a conflict of interest in fact existed.
- ii. The names of the persons who were present for discussions and votes relating to the transaction or arrangement or decision, a brief summary of 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 proceedings.

## 6. **Annual Statements**

Each board member and member of a committee with board delegated powers shall annually sign a statement which affirms such person:

- i. Has received a copy of the conflicts of interest policy;
- ii. Has read and understands the policy;
- iii. Has agreed to comply with the policy; and,
- iv. Understands the Association is charitable and in order to maintain its federal tax exemption it must engage primarily in activities which accomplish one or more of its tax-exempt purposes.

## 7. **Periodic Reviews**

To ensure the Association operates in a manner consistent with charitable purposes and does not engage in activities that could jeopardize its tax-exempt status, periodic reviews shall be conducted. The periodic reviews shall, at a minimum, include the following subjects:

- i. Whether compensation arrangements and benefits are reasonable, based on competent survey information and the result of arm's length bargaining.
- ii. Whether partnerships, joint ventures, and arrangements with management of the Association conform to the Association's written policies, are properly recorded, reflect reasonable investment or payments for goods

and services, further charitable purposes and do not result in inurement, impermissible private benefit or in an excess benefit transaction.

8. **Use of Outside Experts**

When conducting the periodic reviews, the Association may, but need not, use outside advisors. If outside experts are used, their use shall not relieve the board of its responsibility for ensuring periodic reviews are conducted.

## **Conflict of Interest Disclosure Statement**

The Washington Vaccine Association (the “Association”) has adopted a conflict of interest policy to protect the Associations interest when it is contemplating entering into a transaction or arrangement or making a decision that might benefit the private interests of an officer or director or committee member of the Association. The existence of a conflict does not imply wrong doing on anyone’s part. But when conflicts do arise, they must be recognized and disclosed. Some relationships may create an appearance of conflict; those too, are important to manage so that the Association may maintain public confidence in the integrity of the Association’s activities and to maintain federal tax exempt status.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Please complete the following information, date and sign this statement below.

A. Name and position (e.g. director, officer, member of a committee with board delegated powers): \_\_\_\_\_

B. Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_

C. Current employer, if any: \_\_\_\_\_

D. Affirmation:

- (1) I have received a copy of the Policy;
- (2) I have read and understand the Policy;
- (3) I agree to comply with the Policy; and

(4) I understand that the Washington Vaccine Association (the “Association”) is a tax-exempt organization (or intends to apply for tax-exempt status) and that in order to maintain the federal tax exemption it must engage primarily in activities which accomplish one or more of its tax-exempt purposes.

E. Financial Interests:

The Policy requires that if you have a financial interest in a proposed transaction or arrangement with the Association, you must disclose the existence and nature of your financial interest to the board or board committee with board delegated powers considering the proposed transaction or arrangement. Please identify any such financial interest which you have disclosed in the past 12 months. If there is a financial interest you believe you should have disclosed, please describe any such interest here as well.

A person has a financial interest in a transaction or arrangement if the person has, directly or indirectly, through business, investment, or family<sup>1</sup>: (a) an ownership or investment interest in any entity with which the Association has a transaction or arrangement, or (b) a compensation arrangement with the Association or with any entity or individual with which the Association has a transaction or arrangement, or (c) a potential ownership or investment interest in, or compensation arrangement with, any entity or individual with which the Association is negotiating a transaction or arrangement.

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The Policy also requires you to report family or business relationships you may have with other members on the board, or with officers, with consultants, or with staff of the Association. The reportable relationships include: (a) whether you are employed by, or you employ, a board member, an officer, a consultant, or staff; (b) a business in which you and any one of the above-listed persons holds a key position or an aggregate of 10% ownership in the assets or income; (c) transactions between you and any of the above-listed persons individually, or through their 35% owned business, which exceeds \$5,000 in aggregate during the reporting year; and (d) family relationships with any of the above-listed persons. Describe any such relationship in detail below.

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I affirm the accuracy and completeness of the information provided above.

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Signature

Date

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<sup>1</sup> Family members include spouse, siblings (half or whole), ancestors, children, grandchildren, and in-laws. Businesses include those in which you own or control at least 35%, or disregarded entities.