

# United Way of Kentucky Code of Ethics

## Introduction

As volunteers, employees, and representatives of United Way of Kentucky, we have a responsibility to uphold the highest of ethical standards—both for ourselves and for the benefit of our community. We believe these standards go beyond compliance with laws and regulations—calling us to fulfill higher obligations as stewards of the public trust.

United Way of Kentucky has developed this Ethics Policy as an important way for us to reaffirm our ethical commitments. It sets forth our principles and standards that guide our decisions and actions. The components of our commitment, our core values, include

- Integrity
- Impact
- Volunteerism
- Inclusiveness
- Leadership

As we read the Ethics Policy, we must remember that it is more than a set of standards and responsibilities. It is a way of connecting our values and our ideals with the work we do every day.

The Code is not just about what we should do, but why we do it.

Of course, no document can give us all the answers to our public trust and ethics questions. This document is meant to help us further the discussion of ethics in our workplace. It also encourages us to seek guidance and clarification when we have questions about applying our principles and standards. The involvement of all our employees, volunteers and representatives is essential to upholding these principles and standards. Only by continuing to work together on these issues, can we ensure that United Way of Kentucky fulfills its commitment to build and maintain the public trust in all that we do.

To signify the importance of our commitment to public trust, in the first Board Meeting of each year, United Way of Kentucky employees, volunteers and representatives will verify in writing that they have reviewed this document and are complying with the intent and practices to the best of their ability.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>I</b>
<b>OUR MISSION AND CORE VALUES</b>	<b>3</b>
1. Integrity	<b>3</b>
2. Impact	<b>3</b>
3. Volunteerism	<b>3</b>
4. Inclusiveness	<b>4</b>
5. Leadership	<b>4</b>
<b>CODE OF ETHICS</b>	<b>4</b>
1. Personal and Professional Integrity	<b>5</b>
2. Accountability	<b>5</b>
3. Solicitations and Voluntary Giving	<b>5</b>
4. Diversity and Equal Opportunity	<b>5</b>
5. Conflicts of Interest	<b>6</b>
6. Confidentiality and Privacy	<b>6</b>
7. Political Contributions	<b>7</b>
8. Guidance and Disclosure	<b>7</b>
<b>CODE OF ETHICS EXAMPLES</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>CODE OF ETHICS GLOSSARY</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>CODE OF ETHICS CERTIFICATE</b>	<b>11</b>

## **United Way of Kentucky Code of Ethics**

### **Vision**

Kentuckians are working together – giving, sharing and creating community solutions.

### **Mission**

United Way of Kentucky builds local United Way capacity and strengthens a statewide network to meet the human services needs of all Kentuckians.

### **OUR CORE VALUES**

The mission of United Way of Kentucky is to build local United Way capacity and strengthen a statewide network to meet the human services needs of all Kentuckians. This critical role requires that all of us involved in United Way of Kentucky, who foster such an essential public good, must assume the responsibility of earning public trust.

Accordingly, United Way of Kentucky plays a unique role both as a leader in the health and human services sector and as a major resource to member United Way organizations to build trust through all that we do. This bond of trust goes far beyond legal or regulatory requirements to include our core values and ethics.

To fulfill this special obligation, five core values provide the foundation on which we base our actions and decisions.

#### **1. INTEGRITY**

We act with integrity that inspires the highest trust.

- We believe in honesty, integrity and adding value through careful stewardship of the resources provided to us.
- We believe that accountability to each other and our customers is essential to our success.
- We keep our promises. People know it: “United Way makes my caring count.”

#### **2. IMPACT**

We make a positive difference and have a measurable impact of enduring consequence.

- We make a difference in our community and collectively in our world. Our efforts change lives.
- We are committed to a United Way that is relevant to its people, its community and the times.

#### **3. VOLUNTEERISM**

We are made relevant and effective through the spirit of volunteerism.

- We believe in treating our volunteers and customers with respect and valuing the diversity each brings to our mission.
- We believe that the most effective models of service and excellence are created through the leadership of volunteers.

#### **4. INCLUSIVENESS**

We are strong only when we are inclusive.

- We aspire to involve every segment of the community in every aspect of our work.
- We believe local United Ways will be strengthened if they are intra-connected and that this whole will be stronger than the parts.
- We act in ways that respect the dignity, uniqueness and intrinsic worth of every person—the community, the donors, our own staff and families, boards and volunteers.
- We believe in a movement built from the rich diversity and gifts of all people in all systems.

#### **5. LEADERSHIP**

We are recognized as leaders for community building to effect positive change.

- We believe that sustaining and strengthening local United Ways is the most effective way to create community solutions.
- We believe our work takes passionate, knowledgeable and visionary leaders who stay informed, plan appropriately and have the necessary skills and resources to complete the work.
- We are effective educators and conveners—bringing all segments of the community together to promote individual well being and common good.
- We are leaders of a process that multiplies the impact of people's innate desire and capacity to care for one another.
- We help transform visions of compassion and giving into dynamic reality.

#### **CODE OF ETHICS**

United Way of Kentucky is committed to the highest ethical standards. Indeed, based on the unique trust placed in United Way of Kentucky to serve the public good, we have a special obligation to act ethically.

The success of the United Way system and our reputation depend upon the ethical conduct of everyone affiliated with the United Way of Kentucky. Volunteers, staff and representatives set an example for each other, and for member United Way organizations, by their pursuit of excellence in high standards of performance, professionalism and ethical conduct.

This United Way of Kentucky Code of Ethics is based on our mission and guided by our fundamental values. We are mindful that these core values must be clearly articulated, communicated and continuously reinforced. In addition, more detailed policies, guidelines, explanations, definitions and examples are often needed to bring these values into actual practice. While no document can anticipate all of the challenges that may arise, the Code communicates key guidelines and will assist United Way of Kentucky volunteers, staff and representatives in making good decisions that are ethical and in accordance with applicable legal requirements. All are encouraged to discuss any questions or concerns they have with a supervisor or with the president.

## **1. PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL INTEGRITY**

A personal commitment to integrity in all circumstances benefits each individual as well as the organization. We therefore:

- Strive to meet the highest standards of performance, quality, service and achievement in working towards the United Way of Kentucky mission.
- Communicate honestly and openly and avoid misrepresentation.
- Promote a working environment where honesty, open communication and minority opinions are valued.
- Exhibit respect and fairness toward all those with whom we come into contact.

## **2. ACCOUNTABILITY**

United Way of Kentucky is responsible to its stakeholders, which include member United Way organizations, donors and others who have placed faith in United Way of Kentucky. To uphold this trust we:

- Promote good stewardship of United Way of Kentucky resources, including membership fees, grants and other contributions that are used to pay operating expenses, salaries and employee benefits.
- Refrain from using organizational resources for non-United Way of Kentucky purposes.
- Observe and comply with all laws and regulations affecting United Way of Kentucky.

## **3. SOLICITATIONS AND VOLUNTARY GIVING**

The most responsive contributors are those who have the opportunity to become informed and involved. We therefore:

- Promote voluntary giving in dealing with donors and vendors.
- Refrain from any use of coercion in fundraising activities, including predicated professional advancement on response to solicitations.

## **4. DIVERSITY AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITY**

United Way of Kentucky is an equal opportunity employer and is committed to the principle of diversity. We therefore:

- Value, champion and embrace diversity in all aspects of United Way of Kentucky activities and respect others without regard to race, color, religion, creed, age, sex, national origin or ancestry, marital status, veteran status, sexual orientation or status as a qualified disabled or handicapped individual.
- Support affirmative action and equal employment opportunity programs throughout United Way of Kentucky.
- Refuse to engage in or tolerate in any other form of discrimination or harassment.

## **5. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

To avoid any conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest which could tarnish the reputation of United Way of Kentucky as well as undermine the public's trust in all United Way organizations:

### **United Way of Kentucky staff and representatives:**

- Avoid any activity or outside interest which conflicts or appears to conflict with the best interest of United Way of Kentucky, including involvement with a current or potential United Way of Kentucky vendor, grantee or competing organization unless disclosed to and not deemed to be inappropriate by the United Way of Kentucky president and United Way of Kentucky Board Executive Committee.
- Ensure that outside employment and other activities do not adversely affect the performance of their United Way of Kentucky duties or the achievement of United Way of Kentucky's mission.
- Ensure that travel, entertainment and related expenses are incurred on a basis consistent with the mission of United Way of Kentucky and not for personal gain or interests.
- Decline any gift, gratuity or favor in the performance of United Way of Kentucky duties except for promotional items of nominal value, and any food, transportation, lodging or entertainment unless directly related to United Way of Kentucky business.
- Refrain from influencing the selection of staff, consultants or vendors who are relatives or personal friends or affiliated with, employ or employed by a person with whom they have a relationship that adversely affects the appearance of impartiality.

### **United Way of Kentucky volunteers:**

- Should not knowingly take any action, or make any statement, intended to influence the conduct of United Way of Kentucky in such a way to confer any financial benefit on themselves, their immediate family members or any organization in which they or their immediate family members have a significant interest as stakeholders, directors or officers.
- Disclose all known conflicts or potential conflicts of interest in any matter before the Board of Directors, if they are Board members, or any committee upon which they serve and withdraw from the meeting room during any discussion, review and voting in connection with such matter.
- Members of the Board shall annually, in the first Board Meeting of the year, file with the president a disclosure of all known potential conflicts of interest.

## **6. CONFIDENTIALITY AND PRIVACY**

Confidentiality is a hallmark of professionalism. We therefore:

- Ensure that all information, which is confidential, privileged or nonpublic, is not disclosed inappropriately.
- Respect the privacy rights of all individuals in the performance of their United Way of Kentucky duties.

## **7. POLITICAL CONTRIBUTIONS**

United Way of Kentucky encourages individual participation in civic affairs. However as a charitable organization, United Way of Kentucky may not make contributions to any candidate for public office or political committee and may not intervene in any political campaign on behalf of or in opposition to any candidate for public office.

We therefore:

- Refrain from making any contributions to any candidate for public office or political committee on behalf of United Way of Kentucky.
- Refrain from making any contributions to any candidate for public office or political committee in a manner that may create the appearance that the contribution is on behalf of United Way of Kentucky.
- Refrain from using any organizational financial resources, facilities or personnel to endorse or oppose a candidate for public office.
- Clearly communicate that we are not acting on behalf of the organization, if identified as an official of United Way of Kentucky, while engaging in political activities in an individual capacity.
- Refrain from engaging in political activities in a manner that may create the appearance that such activity is by or on behalf of United Way of Kentucky.

## **8. GUIDANCE AND DISCLOSURE**

Volunteers, staff and representatives are encouraged to seek guidance from the Board Executive Committee and president concerning the interpretation or application of this Code of Ethics. Any known or possible breaches of the Code of Ethics should be disclosed. Staff and representatives should contact a supervisor or the president. Volunteers should contact a member of the Board Executive Committee. Reports of possible breaches will be handled in the following manner:

- All reports of possible breaches will be treated in confidence as much as the organization's duty to investigate and the law allow. If confidentiality cannot be maintained, the individual disclosing the possible breach will be notified.
- All reported breaches will be investigated and, if needed, appropriate action taken based upon the policies of the organization.
- Retaliation against a person who suspects and reports a breach in good faith will be treated as an independent breach of the Code.
- United Way of Kentucky affirms prompt and fair resolution of all reported breaches.

## **CODE OF ETHICS EXAMPLES**

These examples are provided only to illustrate how provisions of the Code of Ethics may be applied under certain circumstances.

The outcome of any particular situation depends on the facts presented and in all cases, the language of the Code of Ethics is controlling.

### **Harassment**

**Situation:** Joe is continually teased by his younger co-workers for being an “old-geezer” , “out of touch” and not able to keep up with the pace of the office.

**Solution:** This could be considered harassment and is, at least, contrary to maintaining a positive work environment. Joe should tell his co-workers that their behavior is unwelcome and ask them to stop. If it continues, he should bring it to the attention of his supervisor.

### **Conflict of Interest**

**Situation:** A firm that your father owns is interested in bidding on a contract to supply goods to United Way of Kentucky.

**Solution: Staff:** You must notify your supervisor and the President. It is important to avoid even the appearance of conflict of interest or favoritism, especially in situations that could appear to personally benefit you or your family. However, as long as you do not participate in, or are able to remove yourself from the decision making process, and thereby do not have influence in the awarding of the contract, (s)he will likely be allowed to submit a bid.

**Board Member:** You must notify the Chairman of the Board. It is important to avoid even the appearance of conflict of interest or favoritism, especially in situations that could appear to personally benefit you or your family. However, as long as you do not participate in, or are able to remove yourself from the decision making process, and thereby do not have influence in the awarding of the contract, (s)he will likely be allowed to submit a bid.

**Situation:** While at a conference you bump into a representative from a hotel who learns you are planning United Way of Kentucky’s next conference. He invites you to dinner and then offers you tickets for you and your spouse to attend the theater.

**Solution:** This could be considered a conflict of interest. You should decline any gift or entertainment that exceeds a nominal value. Similarly, you should not offer any entertainment or gift to a potential donor or supplier that could be interpreted as inappropriately influencing their decision about interaction with United Way of Kentucky.

### **Solicitation**

**Situation:** Your daughter is in the school band and at your previous job you sold gift wrapping paper for her to your colleagues at work. Can you do that here at United Way of Kentucky?

**Solution:** Solicitations are permitted at United Way of Kentucky provided prior approval is obtained from Human Resources. However, solicitations should be done in such a manner to avoid coercion, whether real or implied, and also to avoid conducting personal business during working time. You therefore should not directly solicit those members of the staff over whom you exercise supervisory authority. You may however solicit in a manner which is non-personal such as posting your request on a bulletin board.

### **Nepotism/favoritism**

**Situation :** Your sister-in-law is graduating at the top of her class from college this spring. You think she would be a great asset to United Way of Kentucky.

**Solution:** Favoritism based on family or close personal relationships are unfair to other employees. The appearance of such favoritism is easily perceived, even when such situations are harmless. To avoid such an appearance, United Way of Kentucky employees may not supervise or exercise management authority, directly or indirectly, over staff with whom they have a relationship that may adversely affect impartiality. While it may seem like a mutually beneficial situation to bring your sister-in-law into your department, this may create an awkward or unfair situation for co-workers or other potential employees.

### **Confidentiality**

**Situation:** A reporter from a magazine calls you and asks you for your comments concerning United Way of Kentucky's new fundraising strategy towards its largest donors.

**Solution:** Although you may want to be helpful, it is important that you do not give out potentially proprietary or confidential information. For your protection and that of the organization, it is necessary that you refer the call to the President.

### **Political Contributions**

**Situation:** I serve on the board of my local United Way organization. I would like to make a personal donation to my Congressman. Is this something I can do under United Way of Kentucky's political contribution policy?

**Solution:** United Way of Kentucky, as a charitable corporation, legally cannot make political contributions. There is no legal restriction on our volunteers, staff or other representatives. However, in making contributions in an individual capacity, volunteers, staff and representatives should refrain from actions or representations which may imply or create the appearance that the contribution is on behalf of United Way of Kentucky such as use of United Way of Kentucky stationery, name or logo.

## CODE OF ETHICS GLOSSARY

***Candidate for Public Office:*** An individual who offers herself or himself or is proposed by others as a contestant for an elected public office, whether such office is federal, state or local.

***Contribution, political:*** Anything of value, including monetary and in-kind gifts, provided for the purpose of influencing the outcome of an election.

***Donors:*** All individuals and entities that make charitable or in-kind contributions to United Way of Kentucky.

***Immediate family members:*** An individual's parents, children and spouse.

***Nonpublic Information:*** Any business, financial, or personal information, which is not publicly known or available.

***Political Committee:*** Any party, committee, association, fund or other organization organized and operated primarily for accepting contributions to influence the selection, nomination or election of any individual to any federal, state or local office.

***Privileged Information:*** Information that is protected from involuntary disclosure by legally recognized privileges such as attorney-client, doctor-patient and others.

***Promotional Items of Nominal Value:*** Gifts used to promote an organization's name, products or services which have a retail value of \$25 or less.

***Representatives:*** Individuals who provide personal services to United Way of Kentucky as independent contractors, consultants or loaned executives.

***Staff:*** All individuals who provide services to United Way of Kentucky as employees or leased employees.

***Vendors:*** Entities that provide goods and services to United Way of Kentucky for a fee.

***Volunteers:*** All members of the United Way of Kentucky Board of Directors, Councils, Cabinets or committees who perform their United Way of Kentucky duties without compensation.

Approved: February 17, 2004

**Code of Ethics Certificate**

I acknowledge that I have received and read my personal copy of the United Way of Kentucky Code of Ethics. I understand that each United Way of Kentucky volunteer, staff member and representative is responsible for adhering to the principles and standards of the Code, and I confirm that I have conducted myself in accord with the principles and standards of the Code. The certification process is mandatory for all United Way of Kentucky staff and members of the Board of Directors.

PRINTED NAME \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_