

## **UNITED WAY OF THE CAPITAL REGION Code of Ethics**

The important role United Way plays in this region brings with it tremendous responsibility. We foster an essential public good, and therefore must assume the responsibility of earning and keeping public trust. Because the community places such a unique trust in United Way, we have a special obligation to act responsibly, and this is why United Way developed a code of ethics to hold ourselves to the highest ethical standards.

No one document can anticipate all issues that may arise, but this Code of Ethics can communicate key guidelines for staff and volunteers enabling us to make effective decisions with greater confidence. By putting our underlying values to paper we want to create ethical expectations, encourage ethical decision-making, prevent misconduct and provide a means for enforcement. Of course, any individual who has questions or may wish to discuss the guidelines further should meet with their supervisor, if they are staff, or the Board Chair, if they are volunteers.

### **1. Personal & Professional Integrity**

A personal commitment to integrity in all circumstances benefits each individual and the organization as a whole. We, therefore:

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

### **2. Responsibility & Accountability**

United Way is responsible to its stakeholders including staff, volunteers and donors. To uphold this trust we:

- Provide good stewardship of United Way resources, including all donations, fees, grants, etc., to pay disbursements, operating expenses, salaries and benefits.
- Refrain from using organizational resources for non-United Way purposes.
- Observe and comply with all laws, regulations and policies affecting United Way
- Provide full, fair, accurate, timely and understandable disclosure in periodic financial and programmatic reports.

**3. Solicitations and Voluntary Giving:** United Way of the Capital Region believes the most responsive contributors are those who have the opportunity to become transformed and involved. A well-planned campaign with an effective communications program, conducted by dedicated volunteers, will ensure responsive contributors. While United Way of the Capital Region has always been opposed to coercion, we do recognize a responsibility to state our beliefs formally, as freedom of choice is a basic tenet of our democratic society.

Therefore, United Way of the Capital Region's Board of Directors reaffirms that: "Giving is a personal matter and a personal decision: whether an individual wishes to give, and how much he or she chooses to give, is entirely up to the individual, and *no form of coercion is acceptable.*"

#### **4. Diversity & Equal Opportunity**

United Way of the Capital Region is dedicated to principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion by empowering families to be independent. We collaborate with residents and public and private partners to collectively create solutions that ensure the community has the resources, support, opportunities, and networks they need to thrive. We commit to leveraging all of our assets (convening, strategic investments, awareness building, advocacy) to create more equitable communities. We are dedicated to the principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Our collective future requires that all of us — as individuals and families, neighborhood groups and faith communities, small businesses and large companies, schools and governments — commit to supporting diversity, equity and inclusion and fighting racism in all its forms. Please join us in this very important work and choose to truly LIVE UNITED.

In addition, United Way of the Capital Region is an equal opportunity employer committed to the principle of diversity with both our employees and volunteers. We, therefore:

- Value diversity in all aspects of activities and require respect for all employees and volunteers without regard to race, color, religion, creed, age, sex, national origin or ancestry, marital status, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, or any other trait protected by law.
- Support hiring and recruitment practices that recognize and reflect the diversity of our community, as well as provide equal employment opportunity.
- Prohibit and refuse to tolerate any form of discrimination or discriminatory harassment.

#### **5. Conflicts of Interest**

All staff and volunteer representatives must avoid situations in which their personal interests may conflict, or appear to conflict, with the interests of United Way of the Capital Region. To avoid any conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest which could tarnish the reputation or undermine the public's trust in United Way of the Capital Region, staff and volunteer representatives must:

- Disclose to the Board, committee, or organization the material facts as to any possible personal or conflicting relationship or interest in any contract or transaction with United Way of the Capital Region
- Disclose in writing on an annual basis any other potential conflicts of interest regarding the operation of United Way of the Capital Region.
- Abstain from voting thereon or participating as appropriate.

- Ensure all outside employment and other activities do not adversely affect the performance of United Way of the Capital Region's duties or achievement of United Way's mission.
- Ensure that travel, entertainment and related expenses are incurred on a basis consistent with the mission of United Way of the Capital Region and not for personal gain or interests.
- Decline any gift, gratuity or favor in the performance of United Way of the Capital Region duties except those of minimal value, and any food, transportation, lodging or entertainment meant to influence a position or action of the organization.
- 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 personal relationship.

If a resolution to a conflict, other than abstaining or not participating, is warranted, the situation will be reviewed by the Executive Committee, if it is volunteer related, or the CEO, if it is staff related.

If a potential conflict of interest should arise, employees should report the situation to their supervisor, and volunteers should report the situation to the Board Chair.

## **6. Confidentiality & Privacy**

Confidentiality is a tenet of professionalism. We, therefore:

- Commit to ensuring that all United Way of the Capital Region information which is confidential or privileged or which is not publicly available not be disclosed outside the United Way system.
- Follow the policy regarding the release of information, which holds that the President & CEO is to be the official spokesperson for United Way of the Capital Region and all inquiries from the media and community are to be directed to him/her or a designee appointed by the President & CEO.

## **7. Discriminatory Harassment**

United Way of the Capital Region expects all employees and volunteers to treat each other with fairness and respect. Harassment based upon race, color, religion, sex, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, ancestry, national origin, genetics, veteran status, marital status, pregnancy, disability, age or any other factor protected under federal, state or local law, is strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated.

All allegations of discriminatory harassment or complaints of discriminatory treatment will be taken seriously. Employees should bring any such concerns to the attention of HR as soon as possible, and volunteers should bring any such concerns to the attention of the Board Chair as soon as possible. Retaliation in any form against an employee or volunteer who reports possible discriminatory harassment in good faith is strictly prohibited and will result in appropriate disciplinary action for the party found to have retaliated against the employee or volunteer.

## 8. Guidance & Disclosure

In order to foster an open atmosphere where possible violations of the Code of Ethics can be communicated and addressed, reports should be handled in the following manner:

- Reports should be made first to an employee's immediate supervisor or a volunteer's staff person and then to the Board Chair if not satisfactorily solved in the initial meeting.
- Reports will be handled confidentially to the extent possible consistent with United Way of the Capital's duty to investigate such concerns. Strict confidentiality cannot be guaranteed.
- All reported violations will be investigated and, if needed, appropriate action taken based on organizational policies.
- United Way maintains a Whistleblower Protection Policy. Retaliation against a person who suspects and reports a violation in good faith will be treated as an independent breach of the Code of Ethics.
- United Way of the Capital Region will fairly and diligently enforce all sections of this Code of Ethics. Resulting penalties will be enacted with due care after an appropriate investigation.
- If fiscal malfeasance (embezzlement, internal theft, payoffs and kickbacks or skimming) is suspected by a staff member or volunteer, they should contact Fiducia Solutions (1-844-384-7546 or [fiduciasolutions.org](http://fiduciasolutions.org)) and use United Way's organizational code (117318) to anonymously report the concern. Fiducia Solutions will contact the appropriate leadership at United Way of the Capital Region about the concern.

Adoption & Revisions by United Way of the Capital Region Board of Directors.

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