

University Unitarian Church  
Conflict of Interest Policy

*Adopted by the Board on June 18, 2021*

All officers, employees, Trustees and the Moderator of the University Unitarian Church (**UUC** or **Church**) and all members of UUC committees shall avoid any conflict between their personal, professional, or business interests and the interests of the Church.

**I. Definitions**

A. Close Relationship: A **Close Relationship** is one of the following:

1. A relationship with a spouse or domestic partner; parent or child; sister or brother; aunt, uncle, niece, or nephew; or the spouse of any of these persons; or any similar relationships; or
2. Any other close family, personal, professional, or business relationship that might cause a **Conflict of Interest**.

B. Committee: A **Committee** is any appointed or elected, decision-making body of the Church. A Committee does not include groups that form to advance particular projects, for example, climate justice team, the pledge drive, etc.

C. Conflict of Interest: A **Conflict of Interest** is any actual or potential situation in which an individual's close relationship to another party would make it difficult for the individual to be unbiased in carrying out their obligations to the Church, or would make others perceive that it would be difficult for the individual to be unbiased in carrying out their obligations to the Church.

D. Interested Person: An **Interested Person** is any officer, employee, elective office holder or committee or team chair who has any direct or indirect interest in, or a Close Relationship with, any individual or organization that proposes to enter into any transaction or affiliation with the Church, including but not limited to the:

1. sale, purchase, lease or rental of any property or other asset,
2. employment, or rendition of services, personal or otherwise,
3. award of any grant, loan, contract, or subcontract,
4. investment or deposit of any funds of the Church,
5. seeking an elective office in the Church.

E. Policy: This Conflict of Interest **Policy**.

## **II. Disclosure of Conflicts**

The President shall assure that all officers, employees, elective office holders and **Committee** chairs are informed of this **Policy** annually. If any person believes they have an actual or potential **Conflicts of Interest** they shall promptly disclose it to the President or to the Senior Minister.

All applicants for appointment or election to any **Church** leadership position shall be informed of this policy and shall be asked to disclose any **Conflicts of Interest** that might compromise their ability to serve the **Church**. If any such conflict is disclosed, the appointment or nomination of the individual may not be considered unless the Board of Trustees determines that the relationship should not bar the individual from service to the **Church** in the role being considered.

## **III. Conflicts of Interest Concerning Appointments and Nominations**

If any person involved in nominating or selecting individuals for elected or appointed positions within the **Church** has a **Conflict of Interest** with regard to an individual who is being considered for nomination or appointment, the person shall disclose the relationship as set forth above, and shall not participate in gathering information or evaluating the individual, shall not attempt to influence any action taken, and shall leave any meeting during discussion of and vote on the action. The person shall be given the opportunity to provide information about the individual under consideration that would not otherwise be known.

If the individual is recommended for nomination, any materials distributed to Church members in preparation for the election shall identify the potential conflict and briefly summarize the steps taken to avoid any undue influence.

## **IV. Financial Conflicts of Interest**

The **Church** should avoid financial transactions involving **Interested Persons** whenever possible. Financial transactions with **Interested Persons** may only occur if agreed to by the Finance Committee. No **Interested Person** shall participate in any way in the decision of the Finance Committee.

## **V. Other Conflicts of Interest**

If an **Interested Person** discloses a possible **Conflict of Interest** (other than those types of possible conflicts discussed in previous sections of this policy), or if member of the Executive Team or any elected leader of the Church becomes aware that an undisclosed possible **Conflict of Interest** exists, the matter shall be referred to the Board of Trustees for action.

## **VI. Resolving Potential Conflicts of Interest**

When a potential **Conflict of Interest** is disclosed, the Board, meeting in executive session, shall determine if a **Conflict of Interest** exists that would prevent a proposed course of action. The **Interested Person** shall be given the opportunity to make a statement, either in person or in writing. The **Interested Person** may not be present during the Board's deliberations.

If the Board determines that a **Conflict of Interest** exists, it shall then determine whether the proposed transaction or affiliation may continue in the light of the disclosures. In making its decision, the Board shall consider whether the **Church** can obtain with reasonable efforts an equally advantageous transaction or affiliation from an entity that would not give rise to a **Conflict of Interest**. Any determination concerning a **Conflict of Interest** shall promptly be communicated to the **Interested Person** and anyone else with an interest in the outcome of the decision.

If the Board determines that consideration of a proposed transaction or affiliation can continue despite a **Conflict of Interest**, the **Interested Person** shall refrain from attempting to exert any influence on the **Church** to affect a decision on such matter, shall not participate in any way in committee or other deliberations about the decision, and shall leave the room during any discussion of it.

## **VII. Employment of Trustees**

Without prior approval of the Board, a trustee may not apply for or accept employment with the Church within one year after the end of the member's service on the Board.

## **VIII. Gifts**

Officers, employees, elected officials and committee and team chairs may not accept gifts, loans, or pledges of behavior, of any kind, from any source, that could be interpreted as attempting to inappropriately influence any action taken by them on behalf of the **Church**. This includes cash gifts in any amount, or other gifts, entertainment, or favors in excess of \$50 per person per year, from any individual or organization which does or is seeking to do business with the **Church**.

## **IX. Violations of the Conflict of Interest Policy**

If the President or Senior Minister has reasonable cause to believe that an individual failed to disclose an actual or potential **Conflict of Interest**, or has otherwise violated this policy, they shall inform the individual of the basis for such belief and afford the individual an opportunity to explain the alleged violation. If, after hearing the individual's response and after making further investigation as warranted by the circumstances, the President or Senior Minister determines the individual has violated this policy, they shall initiate appropriate corrective action.