



# Conflict of Interest in Research

**Presented by:**

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# Purpose of Division of Research FCOI Policy

- An investigator may have an outside financial interest that could conflict or be perceived to conflict with his or her University of Houston research or educational activities.
- To address these situations and to comply with federal regulations and sponsor requirements, the University updated its financial conflict of interest policy in 2012 to comply with the latest federal regulations.

# Division of Research FCOI Policy (continued)

- The cornerstone of this policy:
  - Annual conflict of interest certification and disclosure of financial outside interests when they reach regulatory thresholds
  - The appropriate updating of these certifications
  - Managing these conflicts in a way that ensures that the integrity of the research remains intact.
- What are the thresholds (generally)?
  - \$10,000 for non-PHS funded investigators
  - \$5,000 for PHS funded investigators
- Some have no thresholds, such as:
  - Equity in a non-publicly traded entity
  - Intellectual property rights income received from any source other than the Investigator's current Institution

# Conflict of Interest in Research vs. Conflict of Commitment

- COI in Research:
  - An investigator may have an outside financial interest that could conflict or be perceived to conflict with his or her research activities on behalf of the University of Houston
- System COI/Conflict of Commitment:
  - Do not confuse the DOR FCOI policy with separate, system-wide policies such as:
    - Conflict of Commitment: SAM 02.A.08, Consulting and Paid Professional Services &
    - Conflict of Interest SAM 02.A.09

All of these policies may apply in certain situations; DOR is concerned with financial interests related only to research or sponsored educational activities.



# Tips & Tricks

Note: Not having certifications up to date and appropriately reviewed could jeopardize research funding for the University as a whole.

## Most common mistakes/misinterpretations

- Three bullets on certification screening page are overlooked:
  - **The financial interest belongs to you, your spouse and/or dependent child(ren);**
  - **The financial interest reasonably appears to be related to your institutional responsibilities on behalf of the University of Houston; AND**
  - **The financial interest may have the perceived potential to directly and significantly affect the design, conduct, or reporting of research.**

## Tips & Tricks (con't.)

- What specific project(s) does the financial interest have the perceived potential to bias
- How might the financial interest appear to conflict with the aims of the research



Note: A financial conflict of interest is not necessarily a bad thing. The importance is transparency and management of the conflict.

# Interest Related to Research

A financial interest is Related to the Research when the interest is in:



- A sponsor of the research;
- A competitor of the sponsor of the research;
- A product or service being tested;  
or
- A competitor of the product or service being tested.

# Overview of Certifications Reviewed

- Administrative Office Reviews – 767
- COIC review required – 20
- Management Plans – 13

(FY2016 as of July 29, 2016)



## Are you aware...

**Are you aware** that an updated Conflict of Interest Certification of Compliance form must be filed **within 30 days of:**

- discovering or acquiring a **new Significant Financial Interest** that *could appear to directly and significantly affect the design, conduct, or reporting of the proposed or funded research?*
- submitting a **new proposal for funding**, if the investigator has a Significant Financial Interest that *could be perceived to directly and significantly affecting the design, conduct, or reporting of the newly proposed research.*

Such disclosures must be accurately maintained to ensure that federal and funding agency requirements continue to be met across UH. This applies to all individuals who meet the definition of “investigator,” regardless of position or title.

# When Submitting a New Proposal in RAMP



Except as cover by written authorization for this project, this application does not obligate the University for funds for additional facilities, equipment, remodeling, extra operating funds, or matching funds, nor for the establishment of new organizations, courses, or programs not previously approved. My signature below certifies that:

1. I am not delinquent on any federal debt;
2. I am not presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from current transactions by any federal department or agency;
3. I have not and will not lobby any federal agency on behalf of this award;
4. I am aware of and agree to abide by the UH Drug Free Workplace policy;
5. I have filed my Conflict of Interest certification with the Division of Research (DOR) for the current fiscal year. In addition, I have taken the contents of this proposal into consideration, and have updated my certification/disclosure(s) as necessary under the DOR Policy on Conflict of Interest.
6. I agree to be bound by the terms and conditions of the outside grant or contract which supports this proposed activity and, in consideration of the information and facilities made available to me by the University or outside sponsor, to assign copyright (where appropriate) and patent rights to the University of Houston in accordance with the terms and conditions stated in the Faculty Handbook;
7. I certify that the information submitted within the application is true, complete and accurate to the best of my knowledge;
8. I understand that any false, fictitious, or fraudulent statements or claims may be subject to criminal, civil, or administrative penalties;
10. I agree that all research oversight committee approvals (e.g. IRB, IACUC, safety) will be obtained prior to use of the research funds, and protocols will be congruent with the research procedures stated in the funded grant/contract.

# New Question Related to Procurement

- There is a new procurement question on the certification form related to compliance with State of Texas Senate Bill 20 and must be answered regardless of potential affect on your research.
- If you answer “yes” to the procurement question, your certification form will be forwarded to the UH Office of Finance for further review.
- Questions regarding Senate Bill 20 should be sent to [mtglisson@central.uh.edu](mailto:mtglisson@central.uh.edu).

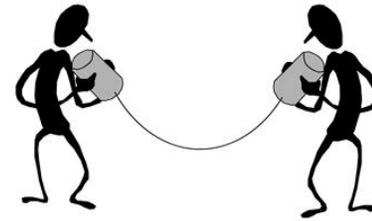
# Looking to the future



- New system (ICON) for COI should be in place for the Fall FY2017
  - Currently implementing IRB
- Anticipate rolling due dates rather than having all due October 1

# Best Way to Communicate

- Trainings being held for Business Offices
- We are available:
  - Group settings?
  - Phone calls?
  - One on one meetings?



# FY2017 Conflict of Interest in Research Links

UH COI in Research Policy:

- [http://www.uh.edu/research/compliance/coi/COI\\_Policy/](http://www.uh.edu/research/compliance/coi/COI_Policy/)

UH COI Forms and Instructions:

- <http://www.uh.edu/research/resources/dor-forms/coi-forms/>

NIH COI FAQ's:

- [http://grants.nih.gov/grants/policy/coi/coi\\_faqs.htm](http://grants.nih.gov/grants/policy/coi/coi_faqs.htm)

# Contacts

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