

ACAHM Accreditation Commission for Acupuncture and Herbal Medicine

Policy Title: Conflict of Interest and Disclosure Policy

Approved By: ACAHM Executive Committee

Document History: Implementation Date: 1 December 2015

Last Updated: 11 Jan 2024

Related Commission Policies: [Code of Conduct and Professional Ethics Guide](#); [Conflict of Interest Disclosure Form](#); [Commissioner Manual](#); [Site Visit Manual](#)

References: 20 U.S. Code § 1099b; 34 CFR 602.14(b)(3), 602.25(f)(1)(ii)

Responsible Official: ACAHM Director of Regulatory Affairs

Policy Summary: This guidance outlines the Commission's *Conflict of Interest and Disclosure Policy* and the duty to disclose actual or possible conflicts of interest.

Conflict of Interest and Disclosure Policy

The Accreditation Commission of Acupuncture and Herbal Medicine (ACAHM or Commission) is committed to maintaining a high standard of professional integrity in fostering scientific, clinical, and educational work in the fields of acupuncture and Herbal medicine. It is essential that ACAHM's staff, Commissioners, consultants, representatives, communities of interest and the public (stakeholders) recognize and have confidence in this commitment. Thus, even the appearance of a conflict of interest should be avoided. To maintain the confidence of its stakeholders, ACAHM has adopted this *Conflict of Interest and Disclosure Policy*.

ACAHM depends upon its staff, Commissioners, and the voluntary service of its consultants to achieve its goals as an accreditor. It is the Commission's policy that the acceptance of any money, property, gifts, favors, or services that might be reasonably perceived by others to influence the discharge of one's duties on behalf of the Commission is strictly prohibited. The Commission recognizes that those serving on its behalf may have personal, business, and professional interests, some of which may have the potential to create actual or possible conflicts with the best interests of ACAHM. ACAHM does not necessarily view the existence of these interests as an impediment to participation in ACAHM activities, but it does require that they be disclosed and managed as outlined herein.

1. Definitions:

Conflict of Interest: A situation in which professional judgment or behavior concerning the integrity of the Commission and its duties as an accreditor have been improperly influenced by a different interest (such as for financial gain).

Immediate family member: a person's parents, spouse or partner, sibling(s), child, or children, and first cousins.

Significant financial interest: an equity interest that exceeds \$5,000 in value or 5% ownership.

ACAHM Representative: an ACAHM employee, Commissioner, volunteer, consultant, or person acting in any way as the ACAHM's designated representative.

2. Duty to Disclose

All ACAHM Representatives are under a continuous affirmative duty to promptly disclose actual or possible conflicts of interests when:

- 1) The ACAHM Representative or, to the best of his or her knowledge, an immediate family member has a significant financial interest in any institution/entity which provides products, educational services or clinical services that are likely to be affected by actions taken by the Commission.
- 2) If within the previous seven (7) years, the ACAHM Representative or an immediate family member has received consulting fees, licensing fees, honoraria, stock options, travel expenses, lodging, gifts, gratuities, entertainment, free products, or services from any institution/entity which provides products, educational services or clinical services that are likely to be affected by actions taken by the Commission.
- 3) If currently, or within the previous seven (7) years, the ACAHM Representative or an immediate family member has served as an officer or director or has been employed by or on behalf of any institution/entity which provides products, educational services or clinical services that are likely to be affected by actions taken by the Commission.
- 4) The ACAHM Representative becomes aware of any development in his or her life or in the life of an immediate family member that may compromise the integrity of the Commission and the fulfillment of its duties as an accreditor.
- 5) The ACAHM Representative or an immediate family member is a graduate of an institution/program for which the ACAHM Representative has been asked to perform services for and on behalf of the Commission.
- 6) The ACAHM Representative is or has been involved with a competitive institution/program in the same geographical area as an ACAHM assignment.

3. Filing a Disclosure Statement

Before any formal engagement by the Commission and at least annually thereafter all ACAHM Representatives shall file a *Conflict of Interest Disclosure Form* (Disclosure Statement) with the Commission's Executive Director or designee for review and disposition. Disclosure Statements filed by the Commission's Executive Director shall be reviewed by the Chair of the Commission.

Any information provided in a *Disclosure Statement* will be marked and treated as confidential, and not reviewed by any person except as required by law or provided herein.

All *Disclosure Statements* shall be retained in a secure file at the Commission's office for three (3) years after which they shall be destroyed under the direction of the ACAHM's Executive Director.

4. Interim Disclosures

ACAHM Representatives are under a continuous affirmative duty to disclose actual or possible conflicts of interests. Whenever an ACAHM Representative becomes aware of an actual or possible conflict of interest he or she shall promptly disclose the relevant facts and circumstances to the ACAHM Executive Director (or the Chair of the Commission) and withdraw or recuse himself or herself from Commission service until the matter has been reviewed and resolved.

5. ACAHM Response to the Disclosure Statement

An ACAHM Representative who has made a conflict of interest disclosure that upon review does not appear to constitute an issue of sufficient magnitude to warrant further action by the Commission will be so informed in writing by the ACAHM Executive Director or designee.

An ACAHM Representative who has made a conflict of interest disclosure that upon review does appear to constitute an issue of sufficient magnitude to warrant further action will be so informed in writing by the ACAHM Executive Director or Chair of the Commission as the case may be. The matter will be promptly referred to the Executive Committee of the Commission for further review and disposition. The disclosing individual will have the opportunity to fully present his or her view of the situation (by letter, teleconference, or other agreed upon means) to the Executive Committee of the Commission. If that body determines (by a simple majority vote) that the disclosure poses a conflict of interest or could create a substantial perception of a conflict of interest, it shall direct the disclosing individual to withdraw from the Commission service giving rise to the conflict at issue. In certain circumstances, the individual may need only to recuse himself or herself from a specific discussion or vote on a specific topic that may be perceived to create a possible conflict of interest for the individual.

6. Failure to Comply

Failure to fully comply with this *Conflict of Interest and Disclosure Policy*, or instructions issued by the Executive Committee of the Commission, may be considered cause for administrative action up to and including termination as an ACAHM Representative.

Revision History

Date Revised	Summary of Revisions	Approved By
160818	Reformatted and revised policy	ACAOM Executive Director
190817	Periodic Review Performed. No material revisions made.	ACAOM Executive Director
220204	Adjusted terminology throughout for ACAHM name change and removal of "Oriental" term; no material revisions made	ACAHM Executive Director
240111	Reviewed; no revisions	ACAHM Executive Director