

United Way Worldwide

**United Way
Code of Ethics Guide**



A Message from the United Way Worldwide Board of Trustees

At the core, to care for one another, we have to trust one another.

As volunteers, employees, and representatives of United Way Worldwide, we have a responsibility to uphold the highest of ethical standards—both for ourselves and for the benefit of our communities. We believe these standards go beyond compliance with laws and regulations—calling us to fulfill higher obligations as stewards of the public trust. Upholding these ethical standards is at the heart of what we do and who we are as a worldwide organization. Conducting our activities with honesty, integrity, and in the best interests of the organization we serve, is essential to preserving and growing the United Way network, brand, and reputation.

As we move forward in a worldwide environment, we must revisit and renew our ethical commitments. Because our success as a worldwide organization requires a high degree of accountability and ethical behavior, we have aligned internal policies to reflect our commitment to ethical practices and to provide sanctions for non compliance.

In order to effectively address ethical challenges there must be a mutual commitment between the organization and its volunteers and staff to seek and provide guidance and clarification when there are questions about applying our principles and standards. Only by continuing to work together on these issues can we ensure a strong United Way culture that fulfills its commitment to build and maintain the public trust.

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Our Core Values

The mission of United Way Worldwide (UWW) is to improve lives by mobilizing the caring power of communities around the world to advance the common good.

This critical role requires that all of us involved in UWW, who foster such an essential public good, must assume the responsibility of earning public trust.

Accordingly, United Way Worldwide 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, our core values provide the foundation on which we base our actions and decisions.

1. Impact and commitment to community success

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 all people, all cultures, all communities, and the times.
- We assume responsibility as good stewards of and are accountable for our work and sustainable results.

2. Volunteerism

- We are made relevant and impactful through the spirit of volunteerism.
- United Way is outstanding in the way it invites volunteers to express their philanthropic beliefs.
- We believe that the most effective models of service and excellence are created through the leadership of volunteers.

3. 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 are committed to understanding the political, economic, social, and cultural context of our work and activities.
- 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.

4. Integrity and accountability

We act with integrity that justifies trust.

- We uphold our core mission in a manner that promotes the trust of our volunteers, donors and stakeholders.
- We maintain the highest standards of excellence and accountability, including prudent use of finances, and accurate and honest disclosures of information.

5. Innovation

We value innovation in community building to effect positive change.

- 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 Worldwide (UWW) is committed to the highest ethical standards. Indeed, based on the unique trust placed in UWW 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 UWW. 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 UWW code of ethics (code) is based on our mission and guided by our fundamental values (see our core values): impact and commitment to community success, volunteerism, inclusiveness, innovation and integrity and accountability

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 UWW 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 UWW staff ethics officer.

1. Personal and professional integrity

A personal and organizational 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 UWW 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

UWW is responsible to its stakeholders, which include member UWW organizations, donors and all those who have placed faith in UWW. To uphold this trust we:

- Promote good stewardship of UWW 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-UWW purposes.
- Observe and comply with all applicable federal, state and local laws and regulations and with UWW internal policies.

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. Inclusion

UWW is an equal opportunity employer and is committed to the principle of inclusion. We therefore:

- Value, champion, and embrace inclusion in all aspects of UWW 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 UWW.
- 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 UWW as well as undermine the public's trust in all United Way organizations, UWW staff and representatives:

- Avoid any activity or outside interest which conflicts or appears to conflict with the best interest of UWW, including involvement with a current or potential UWW vendor, grantee, or competing organization unless disclosed to and not deemed to be inappropriate by the UWW staff ethics officer or UWW executive committee.
- Ensure that outside employment and other activities do not adversely affect the performance of their UWW duties or the achievement of UWW's mission.
- Ensure that travel, entertainment and related expenses are incurred on a basis consistent with the mission of UWW and not for personal gain or interests.
- Decline any gift, gratuity or favor in the performance of UWW duties except for promotional items of nominal value, and any food, transportation, lodging or entertainment unless directly related to UWW business, in a manner that is respectful of the customs or manners in the particular country.
- 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.
- Avoid appearances of impropriety.
- Refrain from making any payment that may improperly influence government officials, business partners or other individuals. Exercise due diligence to ensure funds are not used or diverted to illegal payments of any kind. Ensure payments are in accordance with UWW financial policies.

6. United Way Worldwide Volunteers:

- Should not knowingly take any action, or make any statement, intended to influence the conduct of UWW 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 trustees, 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 file with the staff ethics officer a disclosure of all known potential conflicts of interest.

7. 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.
- Refrain from use of information acquired in the course of work for personal gain.
- Respect the privacy rights of all individuals in the performance of their UWW duties.

8. Political Contributions

UWW encourages individual participation in civic affairs. However as a charitable organization, UWW 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 UWW.
- 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 UWW.
- 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 UWW, while engaging in political activities in an individual capacity.
- Refrain from engaging in political activities in a manner that that may create the appearance that such activity is by or on behalf of UWW.

9. Guidance and Disclosure

Volunteers, staff, and representatives are encouraged to seek guidance from the executive committee and staff ethics officer 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 staff ethics officer. Volunteers should contact a member of the executive committee, with reports of suspected or known accounting, auditing or financial impropriety made to the chair of the audit 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, including termination of employment for serious misconduct, fraud, theft, falsification of records, dishonesty or violation of UWW policies.
- Retaliation against a person who suspects and reports a breach in good faith will be treated as an independent breach of the code.
- UWW affirms prompt and fair resolution of all reported breaches.
- Staff and volunteers shall annually affirm receipt of the code of ethics and obligations contained therein. Volunteers will also submit an annual conflicts of interest questionnaire and disclosure statement.

10. Definition of Terms

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 UWW.

Immediate family members: an individual's spouse, children, parents, siblings, and spouses of children and siblings.

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 UWW as independent contractors, consultants or loaned executives.

Staff: all individuals, who provide services to UWW as employees or leased employees.

Vendors: entities which provide goods and services to UWW for a fee.

Volunteers: all members of the UWW board of trustees, the U.S. National board and board appointed committees who perform their UWW duties without compensation.

United Way Worldwide Code of Ethics Certificate

I acknowledge that I have received and read my personal copy of the United Way Worldwide code of ethics. I understand that each United Way Worldwide 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 UWW staff and members of the Board of Trustees.

PRINTED NAME

SIGNATURE

DATE

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