ORGANIZATIONAL STATEMENT

Although UAB has not developed an official policy on institutional conflicts of interests, it has undertaken a number of preliminary activities aimed at informing the university leadership and faculty about institutional conflicts of interest. During 2005 these activities included hosting the annual meeting of the Conflicts of Interest Working Group which is comprised of academic officers and administrators from across the nation. Also Susan Ehringhaus, General Counsel of AAMC, presented a series of talks to UAB leaders and faculty on institutional conflicts of interest. These activities will serve as a basis for future policy development.

Effective in May, 2006 the Conflict of Interest Review Board (CIRB) implemented policies and procedures related to use of UAB derived intellectual property in proposed clinical trials at UAB. As part of the review process, the CIRB receives information on UAB derived intellectual property related to human subjects’ research protocols from the UAB Research Foundation. The criteria for approval require that a substantial rationale be provided for such research to go forward. The rationale must demonstrate that a highly qualified group of investigators is essential to conduct the trials, UAB possesses the appropriate patient population, and the UAB IRB has determined that an outside board is necessary to monitor the design, management, and safety of the proposed study.

On August 14th 2007 UAB’s President directed the Vice President for Research, working in conjunction with UAB’s Research Compliance Officer, to develop a plan to address conflicts of interest in the academic health center including institutional conflicts of interest. The expected outcome of this process is a comprehensive unified set of policies and procedures for conflicts of interests for UAB and the UAB Health System. The initial organizational meeting is scheduled for October 16, 2007 and includes the Vice President for Research, the Dean of the School of Medicine, and the CEO of the Health System. Dr. Robert Rich, Executive Vice President and Dean of the School of Medicine, currently serves as co-chair of the AAMC/AAU Advisory Committee on Financial COI and is well versed in the issues surrounding Institutional Conflicts of Interests and current directions to address these issues.