

University of Alabama at Birmingham Enterprise

CODE OF CONDUCT

October 1, 2011

Background

The University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) Enterprise is committed to conducting its affairs in ways that promote mutual trust and public confidence. All members of the UAB community are responsible for sustaining the highest ethical standards of excellence, integrity, honesty, and fairness and for integrating these values into teaching, research, patient care, business practices, and other services. Ethical conduct is a fundamental expectation for every UAB community member.

Scope

The UAB Enterprise consists of multiple legal entities engaging in activities in support of its tripart educational, research and patient care mission. Recognizing that the entities pursue various lines of business, the entities comprising the UAB Enterprise will adopt the standards set forth in this Code of Conduct individually. All entities that have adopted these standards are collectively referred to here as "UAB." This Code of Conduct applies to all members of the UAB community, including faculty, staff, volunteers, contractors, agents, affiliates, and others providing services to UAB or on behalf of UAB.

Students or trainees taking courses, attending classes, or enrolled in academic programs are expected to adhere to UAB policies governing academic and non-academic conduct. These student-oriented policies support and reflect the standards of conduct expected of other members of the UAB community described in this Code of Conduct. Residents and fellows are considered to be employees for purposes of the code and are expected to uphold its standards like other faculty and staff.

Standards of Conduct

The UAB Code of Conduct is a shared statement of commitment to uphold the ethical, professional, and legal standards used as the basis for daily and long-term decisions and actions. Adherence to its spirit, as well as its specific provisions, is critical to UAB's continued success. Each member is individually accountable for his or her own actions, and the UAB community is collectively accountable for upholding these standards of behavior and for compliance with applicable laws and policies that guide UAB's work.

Members of the UAB community commit to the following eight standards:

1. Provide quality education, research, healthcare, business interactions, and other services

UAB is committed to providing outstanding, high-quality services to our students, patients, families, visitors, business partners, colleagues, affiliates, and the community, whether those services are provided through teaching, research, patient care, or business interactions. In performing duties, UAB community members are expected to:

- Act with high ethical and professional standards of conduct;
- Be honest in performing one's duties, with no exceptions;
- Ask questions and request assistance when information is needed to properly perform one's duties;
- Be personally accountable for one's actions and admit mistakes when they occur;
- Be aware of UAB's obligations towards all stakeholders;
- Conscientiously fulfill obligations towards all stakeholders; and
- Communicate to others ethical standards of conduct and responsibilities under this Code of Conduct through instruction and example.

UAB community members **are not** to:

- Fabricate information;
- Change or knowingly omit information to misrepresent events, circumstances, results, or outcomes in relevant records; or
- Take credit for another's work or work product as one's own without permission.

With respect to teaching and research, UAB community members are expected to:

- Promote academic freedom, including the freedom to discuss all relevant matters in the classroom and to explore all avenues of scholarship, research, and creative expression;
- Propose, conduct, and report research with integrity and honesty;
- Protect people and humanely treat animals involved in teaching or research;
- Undertake human subjects research only in accordance with approved protocols;
- Learn, follow, and demonstrate accountability for meeting requirements of regulatory bodies, sponsors, and partners;
- Faithfully transmit research findings;
- Protect rights to individual, UAB, and third-party intellectual property;
- Ensure originality of one's work and provide credit for the ideas of others upon which work is built;
- Be responsible for the accuracy and fairness of information reported and/or published; and
- Fairly assign authorship credit on the basis of significant contributions.

With respect to patient care, UAB community members are expected to:

- Provide the highest quality of care by reaching for excellence;
- Do the right thing, at the right time, for the right person and have the best possible result; and

- Partner innovative medicine and technology with compassionate care that is safe, effective, patient-centered, timely, efficient, and equitable.

2. Treat individuals with respect

UAB is an institution dedicated to tolerance, diversity, and respect for differences. Central to that commitment is the principle of treating each UAB community member and those we serve with respect.

UAB community members are expected to:

- Be respectful, fair, and civil;
- Value diversity of opinion and contributions of others;
- Avoid all forms of harassment, illegal discrimination, threats, or violence;
- Provide equal opportunity for access to programs, facilities, and employment; and
- Promote conflict resolution.

3. Comply with applicable laws, regulations, and policies

UAB is committed to sustaining a culture of trust, ethics, and compliance in which legal requirements are met and individuals are comfortable raising concerns to the appropriate individuals when they have a good faith belief that actions of individuals or an entity within the UAB Enterprise are not consistent with laws, regulations, policies, or standards. Additionally, UAB leadership is committed to maintaining the community trust by ensuring appropriate actions are taken to resolve non-compliance. UAB community members are expected to:

- Learn and follow the rules, laws, regulations, contracts, and UAB policies and procedures applicable to one's UAB work or activities;
- Be proactive to prevent and detect compliance violations;
- Report suspected compliance violations through standard management channels, beginning with one's immediate supervisor, instructor, or advisor or, if not appropriate because of that individual's involvement, to a higher level of management within one's unit, department, school, or entity, to Human Resources, to a compliance officer, or to the Ethics Matters Hotline; and
- Ensure that reports of suspected compliance violations within one's area of responsibility are properly resolved.

4. Use confidential information responsibly

UAB community members are creators and custodians of various types of confidential, proprietary, and private information. Each UAB community member is required to comply with federal and state laws and regulations agreements with third parties and UAB policies pertaining to the use, protections, and disclosure of such information. UAB community members are expected to:

- Learn and follow all laws, UAB policies, and agreements with third parties regarding access, use, protection, disclosure, retention, and disposal of public, private, and confidential information;
- Respect the privacy of all information records, whether student, employee, or patient;
- Follow document retention and disposal policies;
- Maintain information security using appropriate electronic and physical safeguards; and
- Fulfill any applicable requirements when one's relationship to UAB is terminated.

5. Acknowledge and appropriately manage conflicts of interest

UAB community members who are UAB faculty and staff owe their primary professional allegiance to UAB and its mission to excel in the highest levels of education, patient care, research, and scholarship. UAB community members have an obligation to be objective and impartial in making decisions on behalf of UAB. External professional activities, private financial interests, or the receipt of benefit from third parties can cause an actual or perceived conflict between UAB's interests and an individual's private interests. UAB community members are expected to:

- Accept benefits, awards, and prizes from external entities only in accordance with established UAB policies and standards;
- Disclose relationships with third parties, such as consulting, board membership, or professional services, in accordance with UAB's process to ensure objective judgment in purchasing, research, and other UAB business and to identify any potential or actual conflicts of interest;
- Adhere to any management plans created to manage conflicts of interest; and
- Ensure one's personal relationships do not interfere with objective judgment in decisions affecting UAB employment or academic progress of any UAB community member.

6. Safeguard and accurately account for UAB resources

UAB is dedicated to responsible stewardship. UAB resources must be used for UAB business purposes and not for personal gain. All UAB accounts, financial reports, tax returns, expense reimbursements, time sheets, and other documents including those submitted to government agencies must be accurate, clear, and complete. All entries in UAB records must accurately reflect each transaction. UAB community members are expected to:

- Use UAB property, equipment, finances, materials, electronic and other systems, and other resources only for UAB purposes;
- Prevent waste and abuse;
- Promote efficient operations;
- Follow appropriate protocols for obligating UAB entities by contract/agreement;
- Follow sound financial practices, including accurate inventory accounting, financial reporting, responsible fiscal management, and internal controls; and

- Engage in appropriate accounting and monitoring.

7. Provide a safe environment

UAB community members have a shared responsibility to ensure a safe, secure, and healthy environment for all UAB students, patients, faculty, staff, volunteers, and visitors. UAB community members are expected to:

- Promote personal safety and follow safe workplace practices, including participating in applicable education sessions, using appropriate personal safety equipment, and reporting accidents, injuries, and unsafe situations;
- Maintain security, including securing UAB assets;
- Report suspicious activities; and
- Protect the environment, including carefully handling hazardous waste and other potentially harmful agents, materials, or conditions.

8. Document, code, bill, and collect in accordance with applicable rules and regulations

As a comprehensive research enterprise and academic medical center, UAB must coordinate activities to ensure that clinical services and sponsored projects are billed appropriately and in compliance with relevant laws, regulations, and contractual obligations. UAB community members are expected to:

- Provide medically appropriate goods and services to the patients UAB serves;
- Render services within the scope of federal, state, and professional licensure guidelines and applicable staff by-laws;
- Substantiate goods and services provided with complete and accurate documentation in the medical record; and
- Accurately code and bill for services based on current payer and government standards.

Adherence to this code requires UAB community members to bring suspected violations of applicable laws, regulations, policies, and standards to the attention of the appropriate office. UAB treats every notice of suspected compliance violation very seriously and considers reports of suspected noncompliance to be a service to UAB. Reporting a compliance concern in good faith will not jeopardize one's employment. No such protection is extended to UAB community members reporting in bad faith.

UAB prohibits UAB community members from retaliating or allowing retaliation against another community member for reporting activities suspected of violating laws, regulations, contractual obligations, or UAB policy.

Confirmed violations of this Code of Conduct will result in appropriate consequences for the violators, up to and including termination of employment or other relationships with UAB.