

Policy Manual

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III-16.4 Ethics and Responsibilities

(Amended 3/08; 2/13; 6/4/21; 4/29/25; 9/1/25)

Effective April 29 and September 1, 2025, this policy has been revised. For the most current version without redlining, return to [III-16.4](#).

These ethics and responsibilities provisions apply to staff in the course of their work for the University of Iowa.

- a. Professional conduct. Staff members will conscientiously and professionally fulfill their assigned responsibilities relative to faculty, students, colleagues, customers, and clients. They will meet reasonable standards of work quality and quantity, as established by their supervisor. They will act with honesty and integrity in all matters related to their employment. When fulfilling workplace responsibilities in supervision of other staff, supervisors will demonstrate professional conduct through both instruction and example. All staff will support intellectual freedom among all members of the University. For example:
- (1) Staff will report to work free of influence of alcohol and drugs that may impair their performance and ability to perform their work in a safe manner.
- (2) Staff will refrain from unauthorized use of work effort or resources for non-University business.
- (3) Staff will maintain regular attendance and provide an acceptable quantity and quality of work.
- (4) Where appropriate, staff will promote and protect ~~diversity-of-opinion~~ **open expression of opinions** in the workplace, in support of intellectual freedom.
- (5) Supervisors will be responsible for encouraging the intellectual and professional growth of staff members for whom they have supervisory responsibility.
- b. Fairness. Staff will ~~be fair and~~ treat **equitably fairly** all members of the University community. For example:
- (1) Staff will adhere to and promote the University Policy on Human Rights ([II-3](#)).
- (2) Staff will disclose and manage any real or reasonably perceived conflicts of interest (see [II-18](#) and [III-8](#)), so as not to interfere with objective judgment.
- (3) Supervisors will be held accountable for fairness related to those staff members for whom they have supervisory responsibility, and will carry out their supervisory responsibilities consistent with the standards outlined in this policy.
- (4) The **equitable fair** treatment of staff will be based upon consideration of the relevant facts and circumstances to the individual situations, which may lead to differences in treatment based upon these factors.
- c. Respect. Staff will treat members of the University community with dignity and respect. Staff must not engage in, nor permit, disrespectful behavior in or affecting the workplace or classroom. For example:
- (1) Staff will respect ~~the diversity of all~~ individuals in the workplace and ~~respect the differences among them~~ **foster a welcoming and respectful workplace environment**.
- (2) Staff will not use threatening, intimidating, or abusive language, or otherwise engage in conduct that creates a hostile environment that interferes with work of the unit.
- (3) Staff will comply with the University Policy on Violence ([II-10](#)).
- (4) Supervisors will establish and maintain standards for collaborative interaction among peers and employees that is characterized by respect, honesty, and service, and will constructively manage conflict as it occurs.
- d. Compliance. Supervisory staff will see that those who report to them are informed about, understand, and comply with laws, regulations, policies, or procedures. Staff will understand and comply with federal, state, and local laws and regulations related to their duties. Staff are responsible for adherence to University policies and procedures. For example:
- (1) Staff will comply with health and safety regulations and policies, including those governing the reporting of workplace injuries or illnesses, and use of hazardous materials in the workplace.
- (2) Staff will comply with University policies governing the use and protection of University resources.
- (3) Staff will comply with procedures to assure the ethical treatment of humans and animals in research.
- (4) Staff will report any unsafe workplace conditions or practices to appropriate University authorities.
- (5) Senior managers are responsible for the compliance to the Regents Code of Business and Fiduciary Conduct for themselves and also those for whom they are responsible.
- e. Information and data management. Staff will act with honesty and integrity with respect to information and data management, and will respect the rights and dignity of all University members by keeping confidential information secure, including patient records, student records, library circulation records, and employee personnel, grievance, and medical files. For example:
- (1) Staff will refrain from any breach of confidentiality, falsification, fabrication, destruction, inappropriate and/or unacknowledged appropriation, or other misuse of data, and shall report any violations of such to appropriate administrative authority.
- (2) Supervisors are responsible to establish appropriate safeguards for the information and data under their authority, and to assure their staff members have the ability and expectation to comply with appropriate expectations for the protection and appropriate use of this information.
- (3) All staff will adhere to the University policy on the Acceptable Use of Information Technology Resources ([II-19](#)).
- f. Stewardship. Staff will exercise fairness, integrity, and respect in the use of University resources, and will be responsible and accountable for the appropriate use of University equipment, facilities, and all other University assets. For example:
- (1) Staff will safeguard University time and property from inappropriate use, appropriation, or abuse.
- (2) Staff will not accept money for research or gifts on behalf of the University or as part of their University activities except as prescribed by University policy (see [II-35](#)).
- (3) Staff will assure that all funds provided for research must be spent in ways consistent with the funding documents and in compliance with the guidelines on allowable costs.
- (4) Staff in charge of budgets will monitor records of expenditures for compliance with University policies and procedures and will allow these records to be viewed by appropriate parties.
- (5) Staff are strongly encouraged to report potential financial fraud or other inappropriate use of University assets through one of the following options: The University's Anti-Retaliation policy ([II-11](#)) prohibits adverse actions resulting from the filing of a report of University-related misconduct.
- (a) Through their normal line of authority, starting with their supervisor, or anyone above, or,
- (b) To any financial or Human Resources representative within their organizational unit (e.g., college), or,
- (c) To a central University office such as University Controller, University Human Resources/Employee and Labor Relations, Office of General Counsel, or Office of Internal Audit,
- (d) In the case of possible criminal activity, the University of Iowa Police Department, 808 University Capitol Centre, or
- (e) Through University of Iowa [Compliance & Ethics Reporting](#), or
- (f) UI Health Care Employees may report through the Joint Office for Compliance Helpline at [Compliance@healthcare.uiowa.edu](mailto:Compliance@healthcare.uiowa.edu) or at 319-384-8282.
- (6) Supervisors are responsible for the staff assigned to them, and will correct, through education, coaching or discipline, any violations of University policy or lack of satisfactory performance.
- g. Relevant policies. In order to fully comply with this statement on professional ethics and responsibilities, it is essential that staff understand and comply with all University of Iowa regulations relevant to their employment. In particular, staff members need to understand the expectations contained in the following University of Iowa policies and statements listed below:
- (1) Nondiscrimination Statement: [II-6](#)
- (2) Disability Protection Policy and Accessibility Statement: [II-7](#)
- (3) Sexual Harassment and Sexual Misconduct: [II-4](#)
- (4) ~~Statement on Diversity:~~ [II-8.2](#)
- (5) Human Rights: [II-3](#)
- (6) A Drug Free Environment: [II-12](#)
- (7) Violence: [II-10](#)
- (8) Physical and Sexual Abuse of Children: [II-15](#)
- (9) Anti-Harassment: [II-14](#)
- (10) Financial Fraud Policy and Processes to Prevent and Detect Its Occurrence: <https://controller.fo.uiowa.edu/financial-fraud-policy-and-processes-prevent-and-detect-its-occurrence>
- (11) Regents Code of Business and Fiduciary Conduct: [www.iowaregents.edu/plans-and-policies/board-policy-manual/22-business-procedures/#Code-of-Business-and-Fiduciary-Conduct](http://www.iowaregents.edu/plans-and-policies/board-policy-manual/22-business-procedures/#Code-of-Business-and-Fiduciary-Conduct)
- h. Additional relevant policies. Other relevant policies may include the following, depending upon the staff member's position and responsibilities:
- (1) Ethics in Research: [II-27.6](#)
- (2) University Work Rules for Merit Staff: <https://www.legis.iowa.gov/docs/iac/chapter/02-27-2019.681.3.pdf>
- (3) Stewardship of Personnel Files: [III-7](#)
- (4) Acceptable Use of Information Technology Resources: [II-19](#)
- (5) Anti-Retaliation: [II-11](#)
- (6) Conflicts of Commitment and Interest: [II-18](#)
- (7) Conflict of Interest in Employment: [III-8](#)
- (8) Self-Identification through Use of University Name: [II-33](#)
- (9) Prohibition on Giving and Receiving Gifts: [II-35](#)

Where it would be difficult for staff to access, read, and/or understand these policies, it is the responsibility of the immediate supervisor to facilitate the communication of each of these policies or statements to the individual staff member. University staff will comply with the terms of relevant University policies as part of their employment obligation.