

## **Chapter 15 Ethics, Outside Employment, Nepotism, and Political Activities**

### **15.01 Code of Ethics**

The Wisconsin Code of Ethics is issued by the Administrator of the Division of Merit Recruitment and Selection and is included in the Wisconsin Administrative Code (ER-MRS 24). The ethical standards which are set forth are intended to avoid conflicts of interest between employees' personal interests and their public job responsibilities. ER-MRS 24 is a more complete statement of the code and may be obtained from your division Personnel Representative.

#### **A. Definition**

*"Organization"* means any corporation, partnership, proprietorship, firm, enterprise, franchise, association, self-employed individual, trust or any other legal entity other than an individual or body politic which engages either in nonprofit or profit-making activities.

#### **B. Conflict of Interest**

Activities which will cause a conflict of interest are prohibited. A conflict of interest exists whenever:

- a. The employee's action or failure to act propitiously could reasonably be expected to directly or indirectly produce or assist in producing a private benefit for the employee or the employee's immediate family or an organization with which the employee is associated; or
- b. The matter is one in which the employee in his or her private capacity, or a member of the employee's immediate family, or an organization with which the employee is associated, has a substantial interest.

#### **C. Rights and Responsibilities**

The Code of Ethics affirms certain employee rights and responsibilities:

- a. Employees retain the right to be paid fees for papers, appearances or talks made by an employee on the employee's own time and not directly part of the employee's job duties. It is the employee's responsibility to notify his/her supervisor before accepting such a fee.
- b. Employees are to refrain from use of state property for personal reasons with the exception of the use of state telephones for essential personal local calls.
- c. Outside employment is addressed in Ch. 15.02.
- d. Employees who are involved or about to be involved in any matter that could result in a conflict of interest on his or her part, shall so notify the Personnel Representative or Dean or Director by submitting a written statement describing the matter requiring action or decision, and the nature of the possible conflict of interest with respect to such action or decision.