

<p style="text-align: center;">The following may serve as a template for state associations to develop a Board of Directors Conflict of Interest Policy Statement</p>	
<p>NSNA Conflict of Interest Policy</p>	<p>Rationale</p>
<p><u>Background</u></p> <p>In the history of the National Student Nurses' Association (NSNA), it has happened that a member of the Board has found himself/herself in a position where he/she must participate in a decision which represents, in truth or appearance, a conflict of interest for him/her. Such a conflict usually arises when the individual has a vested interest in the outcome of a decision; e.g. a committee member judging a contest has a vested interest in the outcome if he/she is associated with one of the contestants. To avoid the appearance of impropriety, NSNA must develop and institute a policy to guide the Board in such a situation.</p>	<p>This policy statement serves to guide the Board in situations where a conflict of interest may arise. At the 2002 Pre-convention Board of Director's meeting, the 2001-02 NSNA Board referred development of this policy to the 2002-03 Board. At its June 2002 meeting, the 2002-03 Board referred such action to the Bylaws and Policies Committee. This policy will not only help guide the Board's behavior, but also help ensure that any Board decision would not be interpreted as unethical by another party.</p>
<p><u>Disclosure</u></p> <p>In connection with any actual or possible conflict of interest, an interested person must disclose the existence and nature of his/her conflict of interest to the Board and any relevant committee members as soon as he/she becomes aware of such a conflict. For this purpose, an interested person shall include any Board member or member of a committee of the NSNA. A conflict of interest shall include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) a relationship with an entity with which the NSNA has a proposed transaction or agreement; (b) any compensation arrangement with the NSNA or with any entity or individual with which the NSNA has a proposed transaction or arrangement; (c) student status or membership in a school or state association under consideration for an award by a committee of which the interested individual is a member; 	<p>The NSNA Code of Ethics urges members to "use only legal and ethical principles in all association decisions and activities" and to "serve all members of the student nurses' association impartially, provide no special privilege to any individual member, and accept no personal compensation from another member or non-member." Honest and timely reporting of a conflict of interest (COI) speaks to both these issues. Furthermore, a delay in reporting a COI would make suspect any decision made with the participation of the interested person. It could be argued that those who participated in the original discussions in the presence of the interested person would be biased in any reconsideration of such a decision due to their previous exposure to the interested person's arguments. With a limited number of Board members available to make</p>

<p>(d) residency in a state under consideration for a MidYear Conference or Annual Convention location;</p> <p>(e) a Board member’s endorsement, including any apparent endorsement, of any candidate for office, whether at the local, state or national level;</p> <p>(f) any other conflict of interest that may arise, it being intended that the foregoing sub-paragraphs are set forth as examples only, and should not be deemed an exhaustive list of all potential conflicts that may occur.</p>	<p>decisions, it is important that any actual or possible COI be reported before any discussion of the relevant issue occurs.</p>
<p><u>Recusal and Investigation</u></p> <p>After disclosure of the conflict of interest, the interested person shall leave the Board or committee meeting while the issue is discussed and voted upon. The remaining Board members or committee members shall decide if a conflict of interest exists by a simple majority vote. Should the remaining committee members number less than three, the President shall appoint a disinterested Board member to help discuss and vote upon the issue. If a conflict of interest is found to exist, the President shall, if appropriate, appoint a disinterested board member to participate in the discussion. Should the interested individual be the President, the Vice-President shall make such appointment. No issue shall be voted upon by less than three Board or committee members.</p>	<p>At least three members must vote upon an issue in order to establish a simple majority vote. Thus, any decisions about the COI or the issue related to it must be made by at least three individuals.</p> <p>Although the President, as Chair of the Board, does not normally have a vote, he/she may be called upon to break a tie vote. Thus, protocol must exist to guide his/her behavior in such a situation.</p>
<p><u>Failure to Disclose</u></p> <p>If a Board member or committee member has reasonable cause to believe that an interested person has failed to disclose an actual or possible conflict of interest, the Board or committee member shall inform the interested person of the basis of such belief and afford the interested person an</p>	<p>The NSNA must act to protect its integrity by ensuring that no decision is made where a COI exists. To make a decision where one or more members of the Board or a committee has a COI would call into question the credibility of the NSNA and, thus, compromise its ability to transact</p>

<p>opportunity to explain the alleged failure to disclose. If, after hearing the response of the interested person and making such further investigation as may be warranted by the circumstance, the Board shall determine that the interested person has in fact failed to disclose an actual or possible conflict of interest, the Board shall take appropriate steps to protect the NSNA.</p>	<p>business. When the outlined measures fail to prevent making a decision in the presence of a COI, the Board must address the issue to maintain the NSNA's good name.</p>
<p><u>Record of Actions</u></p> <p>The minutes of the Board shall contain the name of person(s) who disclosed or otherwise were found to have an actual or possible conflict of interest, the nature of the conflict, any action taken to determine whether a conflict of interest was present, the Board's decision as to whether a conflict of interest in fact existed, and any action taken by the Board as a consequence the conflict of interest.</p>	<p>Should a decision be called into question, the record will show that the Board followed NSNA policy to identify and prevent any COI from influencing Board and committee decisions.</p>
<p><u>Field Visits</u></p> <p>In the event that a member of the Executive Committee is invited on a field visit, the president shall appoint one board member, not a member of the Executive Committee, to participate in any vote that involves a member of the Executive Committee who has been invited for a state field visit. Appointees shall be chosen at random and no board member shall be chosen twice before each available board member has been chosen to serve. The appointee will vote in place of the invited member of the Executive Committee.</p>	<p>The Executive Committee (President, Vice President, and Secretary/Treasurer) is responsible for deciding field visits between meetings of the Board of Directors. This policy will prevent a COI in the event that a member of the committee is invited to attend a state association meeting.</p> <p><i>Approved by the 2002-2003 NSNA Board of Directors as a separate motion at the November 2002 Board of Directors Meeting in Kansas City, MO. Amended June 2007.</i></p>

I have read this statement and believe that I am in compliance. If I find that at some future time I am not in compliance, I will immediately notify the NSNA Board of Directors.

Name

Signature

Date