

Title: **Conflict of Interest**

Effective Date: **August 7, 2008**

Revision # **03**

Standard Operation Procedure Number: **IACUC-RVW-001** Last Committee Review: August 8, 2017

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### **Purpose/Scope**

The purpose of this Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) is to outline the IACUC's procedure regarding conflicting interests.

### **Background**

Both the Animal Welfare Regulations (AWRs) and PHS *Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals* state that no IACUC member "may participate in the IACUC review or approval of an activity in which that member has a conflicting interest, (e.g. is personally involved in the activity) except to provide information requested by the IACUC" (PHS IV.C.2 and USDA 2.31(d)(2)).

The AWRs and *Policy* also state that a member with a conflicting interest may not "contribute to the constitution of a quorum". Exclusion of members due to conflicting interest does not reduce the number necessary for a quorum. Therefore, exclusion of one or more members from voting may reduce the number of members present below the 50% required for the IACUC to conduct business. However, if a quorum is present without the excluded members, the vote needed for approval of the protocol is only a majority of the quorum voting.

### **Policy**

No IACUC member may participate in the review of a protocol in which the member has an actual conflicting interest or the appearance of a conflict exists, except to provide information requested by the IACUC.

### **Procedure**

1. It is the responsibility of each IACUC member to reveal any potential conflict of interest to the IACUC Chair as soon as it is recognized.
2. IACUC members should recuse themselves from the meeting room when the IACUC discusses and votes on research in which they have a conflicting interest, and such should be noted in the meeting minutes.
3. In order to avoid real or perceived conflicts of interest:
  - (a) no participating IACUC member may hold an equity interest (*e.g.*, partnership, stock, or profit-sharing) in the organization sponsoring the research;
  - (b) no participating IACUC member may be paid more than reasonable compensation or receive more than reasonable benefits for IACUC-related activities;
  - (c) no participating IACUC member may receive compensation or benefits under arrangements that could impede or discourage objective decision-making;

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(d) no participating IACUC member may be involved in potentially competing research programs; and

(e) no participating IACUC member (or immediate family of an IACUC member) may be listed on a protocol.

Conflicting interest may also include cases where access to funding or intellectual information may provide an unfair competitive advantage or cases where the member's personal biases may interfere with his or her impartial judgment.

4. If the investigator submitting a protocol feels that an IACUC member has a potential conflict, the investigator is encouraged to notify the IACUC Chair and request that the member be excluded.
5. If the Chair feels that a member has a conflicting interest, the Chair may require the member to recuse themselves.
6. If the IACUC Chair indicates a conflict of interest, then the matter will revert to the IACUC Vice Chair. In the event that the IACUC Vice Chair also has a conflict of interest, then the Director of Research Compliance will serve as Chair for the matter.

**Reviewed:**

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IACUC Chairperson

Date

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Research Compliance Director

Date