

CODE OF ETHICS

The Southwest Virginia Higher Education Center (CENTER) will conduct its business honestly and ethically at all times. No illegal or unethical conduct on the part of officers, directors, employees or affiliates is in the CENTER's best interest. The Southwest Virginia Higher Education Center will not compromise its principles for short-term advantage. The ethical performance of the CENTER is the sum of the ethics of the men and women who work here. Thus, we are all expected to adhere to high standards of personal integrity.

1. We perform our public responsibilities, services and activities ethically, competently, efficiently and honestly, in keeping with CENTER policy and applicable law.
2. We expect that all necessary and proper controls safeguarding public resources are in place and observed, with periodic auditing of functions and departments by the State Auditor of Public Accounts.
3. While in the service of the CENTER, we conduct ourselves free of personal conflicts or appearances of impropriety, mindful that our exercise of authority on behalf of the CENTER has been delegated fundamentally for the public good. Conflicting interests or influences are promptly disclosed to our superiors and appropriate steps are undertaken to promote the integrity of University business and other transactions.
4. We do not accept anything of value offered in consideration of performing our public duties, other than the compensation, benefits and reimbursement of expenses duly authorized by the CENTER or otherwise permitted by law.
5. We do not accept any favor, loan, service, business or professional opportunity from anyone knowing (or when it should be known) that it is offered in order to improperly influence the performance of our public duties, or when acceptance thereof may reasonably be perceived as an impropriety in violation of CENTER policy or state law.
6. CENTER procurements of goods or services are undertaken only by authorized personnel and, when competitive principles apply, decisions are made impartially and objectively in accordance with established policy and state law.
7. We preserve and respect the confidentiality of CENTER records, including patient and student records. We do not externally disclose confidential records or other nonpublic information without appropriate authorization, and any confidential record or information we access as a result of our position or duty is neither exploited for personal benefit nor misused for any unauthorized purpose.
8. We are committed to the principles of federal and state law guaranteeing equal opportunity and nondiscrimination with respect to CENTER services, programs, activities and employment, and we support an environment that respects the rights and opinions of all people. Complaints of discrimination, harassment and retaliation are investigated and when warranted appropriate corrective action is taken and disciplined in accordance with CENTER policy and applicable law.
9. Our communications on behalf of the CENTER with all persons, including co-employees, clients, customers, patients, students, guests and vendors, are conducted professionally and with civility.
10. We do not condone dishonesty in any form by anyone, including misuse of CENTER funds or property, fraud, theft, cheating, plagiarism or lying. We encourage and expect reporting of any form of dishonesty, and our managers and supervisors to appropriately investigate such reports. We also expect that the police and/or State Auditor of Public Accounts will be notified when circumstances reasonably indicate fraud or theft of CENTER funds.
11. We strive for continuous improvement in our performance of public duties for the CENTER, mindful of the public cost to our activities which must be reasonable and appropriately authorized.
12. We bring to the attention of supervisors and managers, the CENTER auditor or other responsible CENTER office, any violation of these principles or circumstances reasonably indicating that a violation has occurred or may occur. Such reporting in good faith in order to promote the ethical integrity of operations is expected and encouraged by the CENTER, and retaliation by any CENTER employee as a result against the person making such good faith report shall be subject to disciplinary action. We appropriately investigate all such reports and, when warranted by the facts, require corrective action and discipline in accordance with CENTER policy and state law.