

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS SYSTEM



STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS SYSTEM ADMINISTRATION

STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

Purpose

The University of Texas System Administration (U. T. System Administration) is committed to the highest ethical standards in the pursuit of the U. T. System mission. U. T. System Administration values integrity, trust and credibility, respect for the individual, a culture of open and honest communication, and requires all operations to be conducted with accountability and transparency.

These *Standards of Conduct* and supporting policies, procedures, and guidelines, are a shared statement of ethical, professional, and legal standards to be used as a basis for daily actions and decisions.

Applicability

These *Standards of Conduct* apply to all U. T. System Administration employees. An Appendix is attached to the *Standards of Conduct* listing all key relevant policies by section.

More comprehensive information on these standards is found on the [Regents' Rules and Regulations website](#) and at the [UT System Policy Library](#) which provides a full listing of U. T. Systemwide Policies (UTS Policies) and U. T. System Administration Handbook of Operating Procedures (HOP).

1. Act Ethically with Integrity

Ethical conduct is a fundamental expectation of every U. T. System Administration employee. Management at every level is expected to set an ethical “tone at the top” and to be role models for ethical behavior in their departments.

In practicing and modeling ethical conduct, employees are expected to:

- Act according to the highest ethical and professional standards of conduct;
- Conduct business using sound judgment, honesty, integrity and fairness in serving the best interests of the U. T. System and the community;
- Take accountability for individual actions; and
- Stop before taking action or making a statement to ask:
 - Is it legal?
 - Does it align with U. T. System Administration policies and values?
 - Would I feel comfortable if others knew about it or did it?
 - How would I feel if I read about it in tomorrow's news?

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Questions or concerns about whether an action or decision is ethical should be referred to your supervisor, the [System Administration Ethics Officer](#), or the [System Administration Compliance Officer](#).

2. Know and Follow the Rules

All U. T. System Administration employees are expected to know and comply with the laws, regulations, and U. T. System policies and guidelines that are applicable to them. Failure to comply can have serious adverse consequences for U. T. System Administration as well as for the individuals involved.

In addition, employees who are also governed by ethical codes or standards of their professions or disciplines (such as attorneys, auditors, or physicians) are expected to comply with those applicable professional standards.

To meet this principle, employees are expected to:

- Become familiar with all laws, rules, regulations, policies, and guidelines applicable to their area of responsibility; and
- Conduct all U. T. System Administration business in accordance with the letter and the spirit of those applicable laws, rules, regulations, policies, and guidelines.

Questions or concerns pertaining to the interpretation or applicability of U. T. System policies should be directed to the responsible office for the policy or to the [System Administration Compliance Officer](#).

3. Respect Others

U. T. System Administration is committed to treating each employee with respect and dignity. As an equal employment opportunity employer, U. T. System Administration does not unlawfully discriminate. We are committed to ensuring that all aspects of employment, including recruitment, promotion, compensation, benefits, and training are based on equal employment opportunity principles.

When dealing with others, U. T. System Administration employees are expected to:

- Be respectful, fair, and courteous;
- Avoid all forms of harassment, illegal discrimination, threats, or violence;
- Refrain from engaging in inappropriate, intimidating, retaliatory, or disruptive behaviors; and
- Provide equal access to programs, facilities, and employment.

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4. Protect and Preserve U. T. System Resources

Every employee has the responsibility to be a good steward of U. T. System resources. Resources are provided solely for the purpose of conducting U. T. System Administration business and may not be used for private financial gain or for personal use except in very limited circumstances allowed by UTS Policies.

U. T. System Administration employees are expected to:

- Use U. T. System property, equipment, information resources, finances, and other resources only for legitimate U. T. System business;
- Treat U. T. System resources with care and adhere to the laws, policies, and procedures related to their acquisition, use, maintenance, and disposal;
- Avoid using U. T. System resources in a wasteful manner, for personal benefit, or to harm someone; and
- Refrain from using U. T. System resources, including the employee's work time, for political or illegal activity (e.g. to influence the passage or defeat of a legislative measure)

5. Avoid Conflicts of Interest and Conflicts of Commitment

The primary responsibility of U. T. System Administration employees is accomplishing their assigned duties and responsibilities. Employees may not have a direct or indirect interest (including financial or other interests) or incur obligations that are in substantial conflict with the proper discharge of their duties. In addition, activities on behalf of outside entities or individuals must not interfere with an employee's fulfillment of his or her duties and responsibilities to U. T. System Administration.

To ensure this objectivity, U. T. System Administration employees are expected to:

- Electronically request and receive prior approval for:
 - any outside employment or other compensated activity, unless pre-approved;
 - any outside activity, regardless of compensation, that reasonably appears to create a conflict of interest or a conflict of commitment; or
 - outside board service, unless preapproved.
- Decline any gift, favor, or service that might reasonably appear to influence the discharge of official duties;
- Decline other employment or compensation that could reasonably be expected to impair or be perceived as impairing independence of judgment in the performance of public duties; and

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- Reject invitations to serve on an outside board that creates an unmanageable conflict of interest or that imposes an unreasonable time commitment during normal work hours.

6. Carefully Manage Public, Private and Confidential Information

U. T. System Administration employees are the creators and custodians of many types of information, including that which is confidential, proprietary, private, and regulated. Individuals who have access to such information are expected to comply with all applicable rules, laws, regulations, and U. T. System policies pertaining to the access, use, protection, and disclosure of that information.

To meet these responsibilities, U. T. System Administration employees are expected to:

- Learn and follow laws and U. T. System policies and procedures regarding access, use, protection, and disclosure of public, private, and confidential information;
- Access, use, or disclose that information only when authorized and required to do so to complete assigned job duties;
- Maintain data security using electronic and physical safeguards; and
- Retain and dispose of records according to U. T. System Administration's records retention and disposition schedule.

7. Ensure Records and Documentation are Accurate

U. T. System Administration employees are required to maintain the integrity and accuracy of business documents and records for which they are responsible. No one may alter or falsify information on any record or document. Compliance with financial reporting requirements and the fair presentation of the financial statements are essential.

To meet these reporting requirements, U. T. System Administration employees are expected to:

- Ensure all business documents within their responsibilities are accurate, clear, and complete;
- Ensure that all accounting and financial records are accurate, clear, and complete; and
- Ensure that time sheets accurately record time worked during the work week.

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8. Promote Health and Safety in the Workplace

U. T. System Administration is committed to providing a safe and healthy working environment for all employees and to complying with all applicable institutional, local, state, and federal environmental, health, and safety requirements and best practices. All employees have a shared responsibility to ensure the work environment is safe and should become familiar with and follow safety policies and practices that apply to their specific job responsibilities.

To promote health and safety in the workplace, U. T. System Administration employees are expected to:

- Follow safe workplace practices to reduce the likelihood of accidents;
- Report accidents, injuries, unsafe conditions, and suspicious activities to their supervisor or to the Office of Risk Management; and
- Refrain from using drugs, alcohol, or any form of tobacco, smoke, or mechanical nicotine delivery device at U. T. System facilities.

9. Report Suspected Violations - When in Doubt, Point It Out

U. T. System Administration is committed to meeting legal requirements and fostering a culture of compliance and ethics. However, maintaining the highest ethical standards requires everyone's participation. Employees should report any suspected compliance concerns, including illegal or fraudulent activity, unethical conduct, or violations of laws, rules, regulations, policies, or procedures. More information on reporting suspected noncompliance can be found [here](#).

U. T. System Administration does not tolerate retaliation against anyone who makes a good faith report of suspected misconduct or otherwise assists in an inquiry or investigation. Every reported concern is treated seriously and will be reviewed in the appropriate manner. If it is determined that a violation has occurred, U. T. System Administration reserves the right to take disciplinary action against the individuals involved.

To foster a culture of compliance and ethics, employees are expected to:

- Be proactive to prevent and detect any compliance violations;
- Report suspected violations to their supervisor, the [System Administration Compliance Officer](#), or call the Compliance Hotline at 877-217-2426; and
- Fully cooperate with all inquiries and investigations related to reported issues.

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Appendix Key Relevant Policies by Section

1. Act Ethically with Integrity

- [Regents' Rule 10901: Statement of U. T. System Values and Expectations](#)
- [Regents' Rule 30103: Standards of Conduct](#)
- [UTS 134 Code of Ethics for Financial Officers and Employees](#)

2. Know and Follow the Rules

- [Regents' Rules and Regulations website](#)
- [University of Texas Systemwide Policies \(UTS\)](#)
- [System Administration Handbook of Operating Procedures \(HOP\)](#)
- [HOP 3.7.3 Discipline/Dismissal of Employees](#)

3. Respect Others

- [Regents' Rule 10701: Policy Against Discrimination](#)
- [UTS 105 Sexual Orientation Nondiscrimination Policy](#)
- [HOP 3.1.1 Equal Employment Opportunity](#)
- [HOP 3.4.5 Accommodating Disabilities in the Workplace](#)
- [HOP 3.7.1 Sexual Harassment and Sexual Misconduct](#)

4. Protect and Preserve System Administration Resources

- [Regents' Rule 30103: Standards of Conduct](#)
- [UTS 165 Information Resources Use and Security Policy](#)

5. Avoid Conflicts of Interest and Conflicts of Commitment

- [Regents' Rule 30104: Conflict of Interest, Conflict of Commitment, and Outside Activities](#)
- [UTS 189 Institutional Conflicts of Interest](#)
- [HOP 1.1.1 Conflicts of Interest, Conflicts of Commitment, and Outside Activities](#)
- [HOP 1.1.2 Outside Activity Policy](#)

6. Carefully Manage Public, Private and Confidential Information

- [Regents' Rule 10801: Policy on Transparency, Accountability, and Access to Information](#)
- [UTS 139 Compliance with the Texas Public Information Act](#)
- [UTS 165 Information Resources Use and Security Policy](#)
- [UTS 183 Maintenance of Education Records Subject to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act \(FERPA\)](#)

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- [HOP 4.1.1 Information Resources Acceptable Use and Security Policy](#)
- [HOP 4.1.3 Confidentiality and Security of Education Records Subject to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act \(FERPA\)](#)
- [HOP 4.1.4 System Administration HIPAA Privacy Policy Manual](#)
- [HOP 4.1.5 Breach Notification Policy](#)

7. Ensure Records and Documentation are Accurate

- [Regents' Rule 10801: Policy on Transparency, Accountability, and Access to Information](#)
- [UTS 142 Financial Accounting and Reporting](#)
- [HOP 3.4.3 Time and Attendance](#)

8. Promote Health and Safety in the Workplace

- [Regents' Rule 80102: Alcoholic Beverages](#)
- [UTS 102 Drugs and Alcohol Policy](#)
- [UTS 135 Fire and Life Safety](#)
- [UTS 164 Drug-Free University Community and Workplace Policy](#)
- [HOP 3.6.3 Smoke and Tobacco Free Workplace](#)

9. Report Suspected Violations - When in Doubt, Point It Out

- [Regents' Rule 30602: Employee Grievance](#)
- [UTS 118 Dishonest or Fraudulent Activities](#)
- [UTS 131 Protection from Retaliation for Reporting Suspected Wrongdoing](#)
- [HOP 3.7.2 Procedures for the Handling of an Allegation of Retaliation](#)