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**Mission**  
 To educate and empower professionals to advance the science  
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## American College of Sports Medicine

### Conflict of Interest Policy and Procedures

**Purpose:**

The ACSM is committed to maintaining the highest ethical standards by ensuring transparency and integrity in the professional judgment and actions of its members and representatives. This Conflict of Interest (COI) Statement establishes clear guidelines to disclose, manage, and mitigate potential, real, or perceived conflicts of interest across all ACSM roles. ACSM supports a culture of personal accountability and transparency and protects individuals who report potential conflicts of interest or policy violations from retaliation.

**Definition of Conflict of Interest:**

A conflict of interest exists when any individual’s professional judgment related to ACSM activities is or may be influenced by a financial interest, personal gain, or other relationship that could compromise or appear to compromise ACSM’s integrity. This includes but is not limited to financial interests (salary, payments, equity, royalties), personal benefits, corporate board memberships, consultancies, gifts, proprietary information, and relationships involving family or household members. Conflicts of interest may also arise from the use of artificial intelligence tools where such use introduces bias, undisclosed influence, or reliance on external systems that could compromise objectivity or independence of judgment.

**Scope and Role-Based Disclosure Requirements:**

<b>Role/Level</b>	<b>Disclosure Requirement</b>	<b>Examples of Relevant Interests</b>	<b>Recusal Expectations</b>
<b>General Member</b>	Annual acceptance of understanding the COI	Any external business interests related to ACSM activities	Acknowledge activities where COI affects judgment or introduces bias
<b>Volunteer Committee Member</b>	Annual acceptance of understanding the COI	Financial ties to entities discussed, sponsored	Recusal from discussions, reviews, and votes involving



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	Disclosure of real/potential COIs related to committee work upon volunteering and updates as new real/potential COIs arise.	research, honoraria, pertinent professional or personal relationships.	COI. Must leave the room or meeting during all discussions related to conflicted issue.
<b>Scientific Presenter or Authors</b>	Annual acceptance of understanding the COI Mandatory disclosure of any real/potential financial or personal conflicts of interest related to research or sponsorship	Research funding sources, consultancies, honoraria, affiliations with industry stakeholders	Recusal from related content authorship, review, or event planning; full disclosure required at presentations.
<b>Elected Official or Appointed Leadership including Board of Trustees</b>	Annual acceptance of understanding the COI Real/potential disclosure including household/family interests, to be completed at role acceptance and promptly updated as new real/potential conflicts of interests arise	Leadership, contract interests with ACSM, board memberships in relevant industry Investments, corporate affiliations, fiduciary roles, research funding, pertinent professional or personal relationships.	Mandatory recusal; full disclosure required at all meetings, must leave the room or meeting during all discussions related to conflicted issue.
<b>Board of Trustees Member</b>	Annual acceptance of understanding the	Investments, corporate affiliations, fiduciary	Mandatory recusal and oversight, including possible divestiture of



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<b>(BOT)</b>	COI Real/potential disclosure including household/family interests, ongoing monitoring to be completed at role acceptance and promptly updated as new real/potential conflicts of interests arise Verbal declaration at the beginning of each meeting	roles, research funding, pertinent professional or personal relationships.	conflicted interests, must leave the room or meeting during all discussions related to conflicted issue.
<b>ACSM Employees</b>	Disclosure and management per ACSM Employee Handbook policies	Employment interests, external consulting, financial interests, family affiliations	Mandatory adherence to Employee Handbook; recusal as specified therein

**Reporting and Disclosure:**

All individuals in ACSM elected or appointed roles must complete an annual [Conflict of Interest Disclosure Form](#), annually after committee appointments are made and update as circumstances change. Disclosures must be sufficiently detailed to allow ACSM to assess and manage any conflicts.

**Management of Conflicts:**

- Before the start of each meeting, attendance and a declaration of any COI shall be asked and answered.
- Individuals must proactively disclose and remove themselves from participation in discussions, decisions, votes, or activities where a COI exists. We support a culture of over-disclosure.



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- Committee Chairs, the ACSM President, or the CEO reserve the right to require recusal if a conflict is identified and the individual does not voluntarily recuse themselves.
- Confidential information acquired through ACSM work must not be disclosed or used for personal or third-party gain until released publicly by ACSM.

### **Oversight, Appeals, and Enforcement:**

- The Ethics and Professional Conduct Committee oversees compliance with COI policies and reviews disclosure processes and management plans as warranted.
- Non-disclosure, failure to recuse, or misuse of proprietary information may lead to disciplinary actions including removal from ACSM roles or other sanctions consistent with the ACSM Code of Ethics.
- Appeals related to COI determinations will be submitted to the Ethics and Professional Conduct Committee as outlined in ACSM bylaws and ethics procedures.

### **Conflict of Interest Management Process by Constituent Group**

#### **1. ACSM Members (General Membership)**

- **Initial COI Acceptance:** Annual acceptance upon renewal of membership and payment of dues.
- **Management:** Acknowledge activities where COI affects judgment or introduces bias. Issues escalated to Ethics and Professional Conduct Committee (EPCC) as needed.

#### **2. Volunteers (Regional Chapter Committees, National ACSM Committees)**

- **Initial COI Acceptance:** Annual acceptance upon renewal of position
- **Initial COI Disclosure:** Disclosure of real/potential COIs related to committee work upon volunteering and update annually as new real/potential COIs arise.
- **Initial Review:** Regional chapter committee chairs or presidents for local volunteers; National ACSM committee chairs or presidents for national volunteers review disclosures.
- **Management:** Chairs/presidents monitor recusals to be followed and can recommend management plans. When recusal is necessary, the chair/president



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will ensure the party's recusal is recorded in the minutes. Complex or unresolved conflicts escalated to EPCC.

### 3. Scientific Presenters and Authors (Conference, Publications)

- **Initial COI Acceptance:** Annual acceptance upon acceptance or renewal of authorship
- **Initial COI Disclosure:** Mandatory at abstract submission/publication stage, updated if relevant changes occur.
- **Initial Review:** Conference Program Committee for meeting presenters; relevant editorial groups for publications review disclosures.
- **Management:** Disclosed conflicts must be clearly communicated publicly (e.g., at presentations), with sufficient time given for review by attendees, and individuals recuse themselves from related peer reviews or editorial decisions. Complex or unresolved conflicts escalated to EPCC.

### 4. Elected Officials and ACSM Leadership (Regional and National Presidents, Board of Trustees - BOT)

- **Initial COI Acceptance:** Annual acceptance upon renewal or acceptance of position
- **Initial COI Disclosure:** Real/potential disclosure, including household/family interests, to be completed at role acceptance and promptly updated as new real/potential conflicts of interests arise.
- **Initial Review:** Regional or national presidents review disclosures for elected officials at their level. BOT reviews conflicts involving national leadership or elected officials with broad impact.
- **Management:** Mandatory recusal and formal management plans. When recusal is necessary, the president will ensure the party's recusal is recorded in the minutes. Complex or unresolved conflicts escalated to EPCC.

### 5. ACSM Employees

- **Initial COI Disclosure:** Per ACSM Employee Handbook policies during hiring and annually updated.
- **Initial Review:** ACSM Human Resources Director oversees initial and ongoing conflict disclosures.



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- **Management:** Employee conflicts managed through ACSM Human Resources with guidance from the Ethics and Professional Conduct Committee as needed. Recusals and corrective actions enforced according to the employee handbook and ethics code.

### **General Notes for All Groups:**

- **Escalation:** In all cases, if conflicts cannot be managed satisfactorily at the respective level or are egregious, the matter is escalated to the ACSM Ethics and Professional Conduct Committee (EPCC).
  - **Documentation:** All disclosures, reviews, management plans, recusals, and compliance actions are documented and maintained confidentially by the responsible office, chapter, committee or group. When recusal is necessary, the chair/president will ensure the party's recusal is recorded in the minutes.
  - **Training:** All groups are provided informational updates when COI policies and disclosure responsibilities change.
  - **Appeals:** Complex or unresolved conflicts and appeals escalated to EPCC as per ACSM bylaws.
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