MEMORANDUM

TO: Vice Presidents
    Chancellors

FROM: Vassilis L. Syrmos
       Vice President for Research and Innovation

SUBJECT: Hawai‘i State Ethics Code – Hawai‘i Revised Statutes Chapter 84

The University of Hawai‘i (UH), as a public academic institution of the State of Hawai‘i is bound by Articles contained in the Hawai‘i State Constitution, including but not limited to, Article XIV, Code of Ethics, which constitutionally mandates that public officers and employees must exhibit the highest standards of ethical conduct. In that regard, our State Legislature in 1972 enacted Hawai‘i Revised Statutes (HRS) Chapter 84, Standards of Conduct (“Ethics Code”), to prescribe a code of ethical behavior and conduct applicable to all public employees of the State of Hawai‘i. In addition, the Hawai‘i State Ethics Commission was established to preserve the public’s confidence in our government by promoting high ethical standards and conduct among public employees, while ensuring compliance with and enforcement of the Ethics Code. All State employees, including UH employees, are personally responsible to ensure their compliance with the Ethics Code, as well as, individually consult the Hawai‘i State Ethics Commission on any personal ethical issues as they may arise.

In Board of Regents Policy RP 12.201, the Regents have also affirmed their expectation that UH administrators, faculty and staff adhere to strict ethical standards of conduct. Under the UH’s Executive Policy EP 12.214, Conflicts of Interest and Commitment, UH employees, namely UH research investigators and key personnel as defined as “Investigator” in UH AP 5.504 and AP 8.956, are required to file a disclosure of significant financial and other conflict of interest each year via the completion of the form-fillable disclosure form contained in AP 5.504. With the implementation of the online myGrant Conflicts of Interest (COI) module on November 28, 2016, completion of the paper form (AP 5.504) is no longer required for UH research investigators and key personnel who complete their disclosures on-line via the myGrant COI module. However, please note that approval of the online disclosures by the Office of Research Compliance (ORC) applies only to Significant Financial Interests and Financial Conflicts.
of Interest information as they relate to extramurally funded activities, and should not be confused with the additional need to fulfill the statutory reporting and filing requirements of the Ethics Code.

This memorandum is a reminder that if an Investigator reports the use of UH resources and/or the Investigator or his/her students or staff report that they are engaged in outside employment, it is the responsibility of the supervisor reviewing the disclosure, and the Investigator’s dean, director and/or chancellor, as applicable, to ensure that all State Ethics Code issues have been addressed, as well as, compliance with all applicable grant and regulatory requirements and UH policies and procedures. Confirmation from the dean/director/chancellor may be sought prior to the acceptance of award funding if questionable issues arise. Please ensure that ALL employees receive the necessary training and access to resources in order to prevent any State Ethics Code violations. Training information, an Ethics Code checklist, and additional State Ethics Code information are available at http://ethics.hawaii.gov/.

Please forward this information to the appropriate personnel within your campuses/offices. Should you have any questions regarding the above, please have the employees contact their respective human resources office for more information.

c: David Lassner, President
Carrie Okinaga, Vice President for Legal Affairs and General Counsel
Victoria Rivera, Interim Director, Office of Research Compliance
Darcie Yoshinaga, Interim Director, Office of Research Services