

Youth On Their Own

Conflict of Interest Policy

Youth On Their Own (YOTO) requires that all board and staff members maintain the highest level of integrity and objectivity in performing their duties.

A conflict of interest occurs when a board or staff member's personal, professional, or financial interests could interfere with, or reasonably appear to interfere with, their ability to act in the best interests of YOTO. Board and staff members are expected to conduct their business dealings with funders, vendors, and clients in a manner that will avoid any real or perceived conflict between their interests and the interest of YOTO.

Board and staff members are required to sign and submit a Conflict of Interest Disclosure Form every calendar year that certifies the board or staff member will help YOTO establish and maintain the highest level of public confidence in its accountability.

Board/staff members will personally commit to follow these standards:

- To conduct responsibilities at YOTO in a way that does not advance or protect personal interests.
- To conduct responsibilities at YOTO in a way that does not advance or protect the private interests of others with whom the board or staff member has a relationship.
- To conduct responsibilities at YOTO in a way that is not detrimental to the interests of or to the fundamental mission of YOTO.
- In all matters pertaining to board or staff service, to disclose any relationships that may benefit the board or staff member's own financial interests.
- In all matters pertaining to board or staff service, to disclose any relationships that may benefit the private interests of others with whom the board or staff member has a financial relationship.
- To disclose any potential conflict of interest when it emerges and seek resolution.

Disclosed conflicts will be reviewed and resolved by the CEO (for staff), the Board Chair or Executive Committee (for board members), or another designated authority as appropriate. When a conflict of interest exists, the affected individual is expected to recuse themselves from related discussions, decisions, or votes.

Further, board and staff members must abide by the following:

A. Accepting Business Gifts

At times, YOTO clients, donors, vendors, or other persons who do business with YOTO may attempt to provide gifts to individuals in the organization. Providing a gift to a YOTO staff or board member may create a real or perceived conflict of interest. Staff and board members should follow these guidelines:

- Without written approval, board and staff members are not to accept personal gifts with an objective value (i.e. standard market value regardless of discounts) of \$50 or more.
- The \$50 value pertains to a single gift or cumulative gifts from the same source within a fiscal year. *Note: Infrequent, non-cash gifts of nominal value are typically non-taxable.*

- In cases where a vendor may provide a gift to the organization (e.g. a gift basket of baked goods, printed notebooks, etc), the items must be made available to and shared with all staff.
- No gifts of cash or cash equivalents (e.g. gift cards) from YOTO clients, donors, vendors, or other persons who do business with YOTO may ever be accepted by a YOTO staff or board member.

At times, YOTO board or staff members may be invited to dine with YOTO donors, vendors, or other persons who do business with YOTO. Staff with YOTO credit cards should offer to pay for the meal. Although the client, donor, or vendor may pay the bill, these occasions should be infrequent. YOTO business should be discussed during the meal.

To assist YOTO board and staff members with discerning whether it is ok to accept a gift, use this simple checklist to reinforce transparency and ensure compliance with the policy:

- Is the gift nominal in value (\$50 or less)? *If no, do not accept the gift.*
- Would I be comfortable if my manager – or the public – knew about the gift? *If no, do not accept the gift.*
- Could accepting the gift create a sense of obligation or influence? *If yes, do not accept the gift.*
- Have I shared the gift with other board or staff members according to YOTO's policy? *If the gift is sharable, make it available to everyone.*

YOTO board and staff members should speak with the Director of HR if they aren't sure whether it is permissible to accept a gift. YOTO board and staff members may be asked to provide documentation for gifts received.

B. Outside Employment

In a small workplace such as ours, employees may be called upon to work beyond normal business hours and/or on weekends. The first priority is meeting our clients' needs on their schedule.

Employees are permitted to engage in outside work or to hold other jobs, subject to certain restrictions as outlined below:

- Activities and conduct away from the job must not compete with, conflict with, or compromise YOTO's interests or adversely affect job performance and the ability to fulfill all job responsibilities.
- Employees are not to solicit or conduct any outside business during paid working time.
- Employees are cautioned to carefully consider the demands that additional work activity will create before accepting outside employment. Outside employment will not be considered an excuse for poor job performance, absenteeism, tardiness, leaving early, refusal to travel, or refusal to work overtime or different hours.

If YOTO determines that an employee's outside work interferes with performance, the employee may be asked to terminate the outside employment. Employees pursuing outside employment with a potential real or apparent conflict should disclose it on the Conflict of Interest Disclosure Form at the time the conflict emerges but not less frequently than on the annual Conflict of Interest Disclosure.

C. Employment of Relatives

Relatives of YOTO board and staff members may be eligible for employment with YOTO only if the individuals involved do not work under any level of supervisory relationship or in job positions in which a conflict of interest could arise. Relatives include spouses, domestic partners, children, siblings, parents, in-laws, and step-relatives. Employees who marry or become domestic partners after commencing employment will be permitted to continue working in their current positions only if they do not work in direct supervisory relationship with one another or in job positions involving conflict of interest. In the event that a supervisory/subordinate situation or conflict of interest exists, the CEO will determine the appropriate action to take.

Conflict Of Interest Disclosure Form

As a Board or Staff Member of Youth On Their Own,

I am committed to YOTO's goal to establish and maintain the highest level of public confidence in its accountability. I personally commit to follow the standards set out below in compliance with YOTO's Conflict of Interest Policy:

- I will conduct my board or staff responsibilities at YOTO so that I do not advance or protect my own interests (or the private interests of others with whom I have a relationship), and in a way that is not detrimental to the interests of or to the fundamental mission of YOTO.
- In every instance in which I represent YOTO, I will conduct my activities in a manner to best promote the interests of YOTO.
- In all matters or relationships pertaining to my board or staff role at YOTO that may benefit my own financial interests, or the private interests of others with whom I have a financial relationship, I will disclose that relationship.
- When a conflict of interest arises, or when a potential conflict of interest emerges, I will disclose that conflict or potential conflict and seek a resolution of the issue.

Check one:

_____ I have no conflict of interest to report at this time

_____ I have the following conflict of interest to report (please specify below):

Printed Name

Signature

Date