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Effective Date: July 1, 2026

**POLICY**

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**EMPLOYMENT, ETHICS**

# **Employee Handbook – Section 404B**

## **Conflicts of Commitment**

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RESPONSIBLE OFFICE

**Human Resources**

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## **404B Conflicts of Commitment**

### **404B.1 Policy Statement**

A Conflict of Commitment exists when a staff member engages in consulting, employment, board service, or other activities outside of the University that utilize the expertise or knowledge the employee has developed or is developing in carrying out their University responsibilities, and such external activities or interests conflict with the interest(s) of the University or interfere with the staff member's successful performance of their University job duties. A Conflict of Commitment may also exist when a staff member has an external financial interest that gives rise to an actual, potential, or perceived conflict of interest. Examples include using University work hours to conduct business for another employer, or conducting a personal business during University work hours.

Corporate Opportunities also constitute a Conflict of Commitment. A Corporate Opportunity is an opportunity a University employee takes for themselves that is discovered through the use of University property, information, or position. Employees owe a duty to the University to advance its legitimate interests whenever possible and, pursuant to the [Code of Ethical Conduct](#), employees are prohibited from taking Corporate Opportunities without the prior written consent of the University. Employees are also prohibited from using University property, information, or their position for improper personal gain, and no employee may directly or indirectly compete with the University.

Any Conflicts of Commitment as defined in this policy are impermissible, except in the case of Corporate Opportunities which may be appropriate with the prior written consent of the University.

## 404B.2 Reporting Conflicts of Commitment

University staff with an actual, potential, or perceived Conflict of Commitment, including a Corporate Opportunity, must obtain written approval from their department head or supervisor prior to engaging in the activity.

University staff seeking prior written approval for a potential Corporate Opportunity must report the Corporate Opportunity to their department head or supervisor, and to the Compliance Services Office, for review and approval as appropriate.

Some proposed professional activities, including Corporate Opportunities, may be subject to the prior review and approval of the Compliance Committee whose authority over University conflicts is established in the [Conflict of Interest Policy](#). Questions about how to report actual, potential, or perceived Conflicts of Commitment of the staff member or another University employee may be directed to the Compliance Service Office.

Failure to meet reporting obligations related to a Conflict of Interest, Conflict of Commitment, or a Corporate Opportunity requiring prior approval may result corrective action, up to and including termination of employment with the University.

## 404B.3 Additional Conflict of Commitment Reporting for Research Staff

Any research staff who complete personnel activity reports for sponsored research and obtain their department head's approval to engage in activities subject to this policy must notify Post Award Financial Operations of the full scope of those activities and accurately report their effort on sponsored research.

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END OF POLICY TEXT

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## Additional Resources Regarding This Policy

### Related Policies and Procedures

- [Employee Handbook Policies Manual](#) (staff)
  - [404A Conflict of Interest Policy](#)
  - [404B Conflicts of Commitment](#) [this Policy]
- [Code of Ethical Conduct](#)
- [Boston University Conflict of Interest Policy](#)
- [President's Statement of Commitment to Ethical Conduct](#)
- Research Conflict of Interest Policies
  - [Investigator Financial Conflicts of Interest Policy for Research](#)
  - [Institutional Conflicts of Interest in Research Policy](#)
- [Faculty Handbook](#) (faculty)

- [Conflict of Commitment Policy](#) (faculty)

## Related BU Websites

- [Human Resources](#)
  - [Manager Resources](#) - HR Website

THIS POLICY IS PART OF THE **[EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK AND POLICIES MANUAL](#)**, AND SHOULD BE READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH ALL OF THE POLICIES THAT COMPRISE THE HANDBOOK. THE PROVISIONS OF THE EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK DO NOT CONSTITUTE AN EMPLOYMENT CONTRACT AND DO NOT ALTER THE AT-WILL STATUS OF AN EMPLOYEE.

Categories: Employee Handbook and Policies Manual, Employment, Ethics, Non-Represented Staff, Outside Activities and Gifts  
Keywords: commitment conflict, conflict of committment, conflict of interest, conflicts of commitment, employee conflict