



# **Statement of Values and Code of Ethics for the Connecticut National Guard Foundation Incorporated**

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## ***Introduction***

As a matter of fundamental principle, the Connecticut National Guard Foundation will adhere to the highest ethical standards because it is the right thing to do. As a matter of pragmatic self-interest, the foundation will do so because public trust in our performance is the bedrock of our legitimacy. Donors and volunteers support charitable organizations because they trust them to carry out their missions, to be good stewards of their resources, and to uphold rigorous standards of conduct.<sup>1</sup>

The Connecticut National Guard Foundation must earn this trust every day and in every possible way. But organizations are, at base, people, and it is up to the people of the foundation—board members, executive leaders, staff, and volunteers—to demonstrate their ongoing commitment to the core values of integrity, honesty, fairness, openness, respect, and responsibility.

Adherence to the law is the minimum standard of expected behavior. The Connecticut National Guard Foundation must do more, however, than simply obey the law. We must embrace the spirit of the law, often going beyond legal requirements and making sure that what we do is matched by what the public understands about what we do. Transparency, openness and responsiveness to public concerns must be integral to our behavior.

## ***Statement of Values***

Any code of ethics is built on a foundation of widely shared values. The values of the Connecticut National Guard Foundation include:

- Commitment to the public good;
- Accountability to the public;
- Commitment beyond the law;
- Respect for the worth and dignity of individuals;
- Inclusiveness and social justice;
- Respect for pluralism and diversity
- Transparency, integrity and honesty;
- Responsible stewardship of resources; and,
- Commitment to excellence and to maintaining the public trust.

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<sup>1</sup> Much of the spirit, and some of the language, in this Code are taken from *Obedience to the Unenforceable*, first published by INDEPENDENT SECTOR in 1991 and re-released in 2002. Other helpful sources include the Code of Ethics for Museums by the American Association of Museums, the Code of Ethics of the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, the Code of Ethics of the United Way of America, and the work of the Institute for Global Ethics. For a comprehensive listing of codes and standards for nonprofit and philanthropic organizations, see the INDEPENDENT SECTOR website at <http://www.IndependentSector.org/issues/accountability/standards.html>.

These values lead directly to the Code of Ethics for the Connecticut National Guard Foundation that follows.

## ***The Code of Ethics for the Connecticut National Guard Foundation Incorporated***

### **I. Personal and Professional Integrity**

All staff, board members and volunteers of the foundation act with honesty, integrity and openness in all their dealings as representatives of the foundation. The foundation promotes a working environment that values respect, fairness and integrity.

### **II. Mission**

The foundation has a clearly stated mission and purpose, approved by the board of directors, in pursuit of the public good. All of its programs support that mission and all who work for or on behalf of the foundation understand and are loyal to that mission and purpose. The mission is responsive to the constituency and communities served by the foundation and of value to the society at large.

### **III. Governance**

The foundation has an active governing body that is responsible for setting the mission and strategic direction of the foundation and oversight of the finances, operations, and policies of the foundation. The governing body:

- Ensures that its board members or trustees have the requisite skills and experience to carry out their duties and that all members understand and fulfill their governance duties acting for the benefit of the foundation and its public purpose;
- Has a conflict of interest policy that ensures that any conflicts of interest or the appearance thereof are avoided or appropriately managed through disclosure, recusal or other means; and
- Is responsible for the hiring, firing, and regular review of the performance of the chief executive officer, and ensures that the compensation of the chief executive officer is reasonable and appropriate;
- Ensures that the CEO and appropriate staff provide the governing body with timely and comprehensive information so that the governing body can effectively carry out its duties;
- Ensures that the foundation conducts all transactions and dealings with integrity and honesty;
- Ensures that the foundation promotes working relationships with board members, staff, volunteers, and program beneficiaries that are based on mutual respect, fairness and openness;
- Ensures that the foundation is fair and inclusive in its hiring and promotion policies and practices for all board, staff and volunteer positions;
- Ensures that policies of the foundation are in writing, clearly articulated and officially adopted;
- Ensures that the resources of the foundation are responsibly and prudently managed; and,
- Ensures that the foundation has the capacity to carry out its programs effectively.

#### **IV. Legal Compliance**

The foundation is knowledgeable of and complies with all laws, regulations and applicable international conventions.

#### **V. Responsible Stewardship**

The foundation manages its funds responsibly and prudently. This should include the following considerations:

- It spends a reasonable percentage of its annual budget on programs in pursuance of its mission;
- It spends an adequate amount on administrative expenses to ensure effective accounting systems, internal controls, competent staff, and other expenditures critical to professional management;
- The foundation compensates staff, and any others who may receive compensation, reasonably and appropriately;
- Foundations that solicit funds have reasonable fundraising costs, recognizing the variety of factors that affect fundraising costs;
- Foundations do not accumulate operating funds excessively;
- Foundations with endowments (both foundations and public charities) prudently draw from endowment funds consistent with donor intent and to support the public purpose of the foundation;
- Foundations ensure that all spending practices and policies are fair, reasonable and appropriate to fulfill the mission of the foundation; and,
- All financial reports are factually accurate and complete in all material respects.

#### **VI. Openness and Disclosure**

The foundation provides comprehensive and timely information to the public, the media, and all stakeholders and is responsive in a timely manner to reasonable requests for information. All information about the foundation will fully and honestly reflect the policies and practices of the foundation. Basic informational data about the foundation, such as the Form 990, reviews and compilations, and audited financial statements will be posted on the foundation's website or otherwise available to the public. All solicitation materials accurately represent the foundation's policies and practices and will reflect the dignity of program beneficiaries. All financial, organizational, and program reports will be complete and accurate in all material respects.

#### **VII. Program Evaluation**

The foundation regularly reviews program effectiveness and has mechanisms to incorporate lessons learned into future programs. The foundation is committed to improving program and organizational effectiveness and develops mechanisms to promote learning from its activities and the field. The foundation is responsive to changes in its field of activity and is responsive to the needs of its constituencies.

#### **VIII. Inclusiveness and Diversity**

The foundation has a policy of promoting inclusiveness and its staff, board and volunteers reflect diversity in order to enrich its programmatic effectiveness. The foundation takes meaningful

steps to promote inclusiveness in its hiring, retention, promotion, board recruitment and constituencies served.

## **IX. Fundraising**

Organizations that raise funds from the public or from donor institutions are truthful in their solicitation materials. Organizations respect the privacy concerns of individual donors and expend funds consistent with donor intent. Organizations disclose important and relevant information to potential donors.

In raising funds from the public, the Connecticut National Guard Foundation will respect the rights of donors, as follows:

- To be informed of the mission of the organization, the way the resources will be used and it's capacity to use donations effectively for their intended purposes;
- To be informed of the identity of those serving on the organization's governing board and to expect the board to exercise prudent judgment in its stewardship responsibilities;
- To have access to the organization's most recent financial reports;
- To be assured their gifts will be used for the purposes for which they were given;
- To receive appropriate acknowledgement and recognition;
- To be assured that information about their donations is handled with respect and with confidentiality to the extent provided by the law;
- To expect that all relationships with individuals representing organizations of interest to the donor will be professional in nature;
- To be informed whether those seeking donations are volunteers, employees of the foundation or hired solicitors;
- To have the opportunity for their names to be deleted from mailing lists that an organization may intend to share; and,
- To feel free to ask questions when making a donation and to receive prompt, truthful and forthright answers.<sup>2</sup>

Board of Directors  
Connecticut National Guard Foundation Inc

March 7, 2005

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<sup>2</sup> These ten points are taken from A Donor Bill of Rights, developed by the American Association of Fund Raising Counsel, the Association for Healthcare Philanthropy, the Council for the Advancement and Support of Education, and the Association of Fundraising Professionals, and endorsed by INDEPENDENT SECTOR.