SECTION 14
CONFLICT OF INTEREST

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14.1 PURPOSE

To establish guidelines for Navajo County employees to identify, disclose, avoid and manage conflicts of interest as required by law.

14.2 SCOPE

A conflict of interest occurs when an employee, elected or appointed official, volunteer or a member of an appointed board, committee, or commission:

A. Has a substantial interest in any decision, contract, sale, purchase or invoice with Navajo County;

B. Solicits, accepts or agrees to accept, any compensation, favor, gift, promise or other items of value (whether tangible or intangible) in return for influencing, attempting to influence, rewarding or not rewarding an official action or decision; or,

C. Participates in a Navajo County action while negotiating prospective employment with a person who has a financial interest in the negotiation.

14.3 APPEARANCE OF IMPROPRIETY

A situation can sometimes make it appear that a conflict of interest exists but does not meet the technical definition. The appearance of a conflict may be just as damaging to the County's reputation as an actual conflict. All individuals are encouraged to avoid situations that create even the appearance of a conflict of interest. An example of such a situation might be a supervisor or manager engaging in a close personal or business relationship with a subordinate.

14.4 VOTING CONFLICTS

A voting conflict occurs when a member of a board, commission, or selection committee is in a position to vote on an issue or employment that will involve a conflict of interest. If this occurs, the individual should abstain and remove him or herself from participation in the discussion pertaining to the item and not vote or attempt to influence the vote. If the issue does not present a conflict of interest but creates an appearance of impropriety, the individual should, at a minimum, disclose the nature of the concern to the other members of the body prior to the vote. Failure to do so jeopardizes the public perception of the outcome of their vote. No employee should sit on a selection committee if they have been listed as a reference by any candidate under consideration by that committee or if they have a close personal relationship with any candidate under consideration by that committee.
14.5 GUIDELINES

Common sense and good judgment will dictate the proper course of action in most situations. However, remember that if there is a question in your mind of even a slight conflict of interest, others will tend to exaggerate it. The best policy is to resolve such questions by addressing them at the outset so they will not become embarrassing problems later. Such matters can easily be addressed by discussing them with your supervisor.