



American Society of Clinical Oncology

**Conflict of Interest Policies:
Implementation Policy for ASCO Leadership¹**

I. Background and Applicability

The American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) is dedicated to advancing the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of cancer and the quality of cancer survivorship. To assure the independence, objectivity, fair balance, and scientific integrity of ASCO educational and scientific programs and products, ASCO has adopted its Revised Conflict of Interest Policy (“Revised Policy”).²

The Revised Policy applies to all employees and staff of ASCO as well as all persons who participate on the ASCO Board of Directors, committees, and task forces, or in any volunteer activity in an official capacity for the Society (Revised Policy, Section III.A). The Revised Policy is intended to be adapted for implementation in connection with particular roles or activities (Revised Policy, Section V).

All ASCO Leadership must maintain a high standard of loyalty and fairness to the Society and avoid even the appearance of conflict of interest in carrying out their responsibilities for ASCO. ASCO Leadership must avoid using their position for personal gain or advantage, or to obtain a favored status with any particular group. Consistent with this standard, ASCO’s Corporate Conflict of Interest Policy (“Corporate Policy”) helps identify actual or potential conflicts and protect the Society’s interest when it is contemplating entering into a transaction or arrangement that might benefit the financial or professional interest of a Board Member or Officer.

This Implementation Policy interprets and implements the Revised Policy and the Corporate Policy (together, “Conflict Policies”) as they relate to those in leadership positions within and for ASCO (“ASCO Leadership”). Specific decisions made in accordance with the Conflict Policies are memorialized in this document. Issues not specifically addressed herein will be managed on a case-by-case basis consistent with ASCO policies and procedures.

II. ASCO Leadership

Many volunteers and staff members play important leadership roles in ASCO activities. However, this Implementation Policy applies specifically to ASCO’s Board Members and Officers, Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Vice Presidents, Senior Directors, and Directors, and the editors-in-chief of the *Journal of Clinical Oncology (JCO)* and *Journal of Oncology Practice (JOP)*. The President or Chief Executive Officer may from time to time designate other groups or offices as ASCO Leadership for purposes of this Implementation Policy.

¹ Originally adopted by the ASCO Board of Directors on June 1, 2006. Amended September 9, 2009 and June 3, 2010.

² American Society of Clinical Oncology: Revised Conflict of Interest Policy. *J Clin Oncol* 24:10.1200/JCO.2005.04.8926. Also available at www.ASCO.org/conflictinterest.

III. Disclosure of Financial Interests and Relationships

All ASCO Leadership are required to disclose in accordance with the Revised Policy. The Revised Policy relies chiefly on disclosure of financial and other interests to identify and manage potential conflicts (Revised Policy, Section I). All ASCO Leadership must disclose the financial interests and professional relationships described in Section IV of the Revised Policy. Disclosure must extend to interests in and relationships with any entity having an investment, licensing, or other commercial interest in a product or service used in the science or practice of oncology (including but not limited to pharmaceutical, biotechnology, and medical device companies). In addition, ASCO Leadership must disclose service (with or without compensation) as an officer, director, or trustee of any professional or advocacy organization relating to science or health care.

In accordance with the Corporate Policy, Board Members and Officers are also required to disclose relationships with any entity in which they hold an employment, leadership, compensation, or ownership interest, including relationships with non-profit entities and entities that are not oncology-related. Disclosure under the Corporate Policy covers employers, stocks, leadership positions in other societies, and leadership positions in or compensation from journals, universities, and other medical education providers. The Corporate Policy does not require disclosure of physician services, mutual funds, or blind trusts.

Disclosure should be made at the beginning of service, then annually. Disclosure should be updated when there are material changes in the information disclosed. Disclosure should include financial interests and relationships held by the individual's spouse, domestic partner or dependent child.

IV. Management of Conflicts

The management of actual or potential conflicts of interest will depend on the particular circumstances, including the nature and extent of the financial interest or relationship. ASCO Leadership should recuse themselves from decisions in situations where they have a conflict of interest or a potential conflict. Participation in discussions and deliberations, and speaking publicly on behalf of ASCO, may be permissible as long as the financial interest or relationship is disclosed.

V. Restriction on Financial Relationships

The President, President-Elect, and Immediate Past President, the CEO, and the Editors-in-Chief of *JCO* and *JOP* may not, during their terms of office, accept any gift, honorarium, salary, fee, or other compensation from any for-profit entity having an investment, licensing, or other commercial interest in a product or service used in the science or practice of oncology.

This restriction does not apply to scientific research, including service as an investigator in a trial, research funding, or compensation for research effort. This restriction does not apply to direct clinical services.

ASCO Leadership may accept reimbursement of travel expenses related to non-prohibited activities.

ASCO Vice Presidents, Senior Directors, and Directors are subject to restrictions on outside activities as set forth in the ASCO Employee Handbook and related ASCO policies.

VI. Leadership Ineligible for Grants Awarded by ASCO or The ASCO Cancer Foundation (TACF)

ASCO and TACF are committed to maintaining an objective and independent process for selecting grant recipients. In order to avoid actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest, ASCO Board Members and Officers are not permitted to apply as principal investigators (PIs) on grants awarded by ASCO or TACF, or to have a funded effort in such grants, for applications submitted from the time they are elected until the conclusion of their Board terms. ASCO Board Members and Officers may be involved in the research under such grants only in a manner that is not funded by the grant. For example, ASCO Board Members and Officers are permitted to serve as mentors for grant and award recipients as long as grant funds are not designated or used for mentor salary support.

However, individuals from the same institution, department, or practice as a Board Member or Officer are free to apply for grants awarded by ASCO or TACF during the same period. A Board Member or Officer may continue to be funded by a grant or award for which he/she was selected before being elected.

A Board Member or Officer may vote on a slate of proposed grant recipients where one or more of the recipients is from his/her institution or practice, provided the Board Member or Officer would not be involved in the grant research. Board Members and Officers who are involved in the grant research in a manner that is not funded by the grant are required to recuse themselves from discussion and voting on all Board and Committee decisions related to those grants.

VII. Leadership Ineligible for ASCO Special Awards

Board Members and Officers are not eligible to receive Special Awards from the time they are elected through the end of the calendar year in which their Board terms conclude.

VIII. Leadership Ineligible to Serve as Committee Chairs

Given ASCO's complex range of activities, Board and Committee service carry significant responsibilities and require a substantial time commitment. ASCO depends on Committee Chairs to be advocates and champions for their Committees' programs and priorities, and on Board Members to oversee the Society's broader goals. In view of these considerations, it is ASCO policy that a volunteer may not serve as Chair-Elect or Chair of a Committee of the Society, or as Editor-in-Chief or Associate Editor of an ASCO journal, while he or she is serving as an elected Board Member or Officer.

If a volunteer is elected to serve as a Board Member or Officer while he or she is Chair-Elect of a Committee of the Society, he or she can serve the remainder of the year as Chair-Elect, but will not become Chair. The volunteer will resign as Chair-Elect upon taking the Board or Officer seat at the Annual Business Meeting. The President who selected the resigning Chair-Elect will select an alternate Chair for Board approval. The resigning Chair-Elect may choose to remain a member of the Committee of the Society, but not in a leadership position, for the remainder of his or her Committee term, or may resign from the Committee altogether.

If a volunteer is elected to serve as a Board Member or Officer while he or she is Chair of a Committee of the Society, he or she can serve the remainder of the year as Chair. Upon taking the Board or Officer seat at the Annual Business Meeting, he or she may resign from the Committee altogether or may choose to continue as a member of the Committee, but not in a leadership role. The position of Immediate Past Chair will be vacant.

If a volunteer is elected to serve as a Board Member or Officer while he or she is Editor-in-Chief of an ASCO journal, he or she will resign as Editor-in-Chief upon taking the Board or Officer seat at the Annual Business Meeting unless requested by the Board to remain in place until a successor Editor-in-Chief is selected.

A Board Member or Officer in his or her final year of service may be selected to become Chair-Elect of a Committee of the Society or Editor-in-Chief of an ASCO Journal at the end of his or her Board/Officer term.

Board Members and Officers do serve as Liaisons to Committees of the Society and as members of Committees of the Board. An ASCO Board Member or Officer may serve as a director, officer, or committee member of The ASCO Cancer Foundation if he or she is comfortable with the time commitment and the dual role.

IX. Leadership Excluded From Independent Satellite Symposia (ISS)

ASCO Board Members and Officers are among the ASCO volunteers excluded from participating in ISS in any capacity, except as an attendee who receives no honorarium or reimbursement. Restricted activities include but are not limited to serving as an ISS faculty member, presenter, session chair, consultant or any other role. ASCO's Policy on Leadership Excluded from Participation in Independent Satellite Symposia does not permit exceptions.

X. Questions and Exceptions

Questions about this Implementation Policy should be directed first to ASCO's Associate Counsel, Ethics and Compliance. Questions requiring further review, and requests for exceptions to this Implementation Policy, will be referred to the Ethics Committee or the ASCO Board of Directors, as appropriate. Exceptions will be granted only in rare circumstances and with a convincing demonstration of need.