



Tompkins County Workforce Development Board Transparency and Integrity Policy

The purpose of the policy is to prevent the personal interest of board and committee members from interfering with their duties, or result in personal financial, professional, or political gain on the part of such persons at the expense of other stakeholders. It is also in place to prevent board and committee members from using confidential information to their (or an affiliated party's or relative's) advantage. Workforce boards must also provide a level of stewardship and oversight with respect to the use of federal workforce system funds in a manner that preserves public trust.

CONFIDENTIALITY

In order to protect confidential information to be disclosed during a meeting, board and committee members agree to:

1. Hold the confidential information received in strict confidence and to exercise a reasonable degree of care to prevent disclosure to others.
2. Not disclose either directly or indirectly the confidential information to others.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Board and committee members also should not take any official action if the following applies:

- Their own financial interests, or the financial interests of immediate family members, business partners, private employers, or organizations for which they serve as an officer, director, partner, or trustee conflicts.
- Any other circumstance, or in appearance, make it difficult to exercise independent, objective judgment, or perform effectively.
- Their organization stands to benefit from a contract, transaction, or situation.
- The subject of discussion is a contract, transaction, or situation in which there may be a perceived or actual conflict of interest. However, they may be present to provide clarifying information in such a discussion or debate unless objected to by any present board or committee member.
- In a position to make decisions about spending resources– who also stands to benefit from that decision – has a duty to disclose

If one of these matters comes up for consideration at a committee meeting, the member should leave the room during the discussion, and make sure the minutes of the meeting reflect their recusal.

TEGL No. 35-10, TRANSPARENCY AND INTEGRITY IN WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD DECISIONS

The intent of TEGl No. 35-10 was to communicate ETA's expectation that state and local workforce boards and officials will make decisions with transparency and integrity and in a manner consistent with all conflict of interest requirements. Members are required to abide by following Federal laws and regulations:

- *“Sunshine provision” regulations* (20 CFR 661.307) require local boards to conduct business in an open manner and, upon request, to make board activities available to the public, including the development of specific policies and minutes of formal board meetings.
- *Uniform Administration Requirements* for procurement (29 CFR 97.36 and 29 CFR 95.42) set the standards, including those for conflict of interest that all Federal grantees (both government and non-government) must follow. These requirements, codified in the Code of Federal Regulations, describe specific instances that constitute a conflict of interest, characteristics to be considered when making awards to contractors, and the procedural requirements for procurement protests.
- *Conflict of interest regulations* for those entities receiving WIA Title I funds [20 CFR 667.200(a)(4)] specifically mandate that a LWIB member or Youth Council member must neither cast a vote, nor participate in decision-making, on the provision of services by that member or any organization which that member directly represents. The LWIB member or Youth Council member also must not cast a vote, nor participate in decision-making, on any matter that would provide direct financial benefit to that member or a member of his/her immediate family.
- *The Hatch Act and its regulations* (5 CFR 151) restricts political activity of individuals principally employed by state and local executive agencies and who work in connection with programs financed in whole or in part by Federal grants or loans. Among other things, covered state and local employees may not use their official authority or influence to interfere with or affect the results of an election or nomination; or directly or indirectly coerce, attempt to coerce, command, or advise a state or local officer or employee to pay, lend, or contribute anything of value to a party, committee, organization, agency, or person for political purposes.

The full text of TEGl No. 35-10 can be found here:

http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/attach/TEGL/TEGL_35-10-Acc.pdf

Additionally, local workforce boards are also governed in their decision-making by relevant state and local statutes, regulations and policies that include, but are not limited to:

- New York State General Construction Law (GCL) §41
- Open meetings Law (Public Officers Law (POL), Article 7)

Alleged Violations to the Hatch Act will be recorded by Tompkins County Workforce Investment Board Staff and reported to the Tompkins County Compliance Officer. The Tompkins County Compliance Officer will contact the U.S. Office of Special Counsel to request an Advisory Opinion.

Allegations of violations to the Conflict of Interest regulations will be recorded and referred to the Tompkins County Ethics Advisory Board to investigate and report on the alleged violation. Penalties may include removal from the Board, loss, or disqualification from contracts.