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Ethical Duties

University employees must comply with Alabama's public ethics statute, known as the Code of Ethics for Public Officials and Employees. This statute is found in Chapter 25, Title 36 of the Alabama Code. A central theme running through this law is the avoidance of conflicts of interest between the official duties and the private interests of a public official or employee. Under the provisions of this law, University employees may not (1)

use their positions for direct personal gain for themselves, their families, or businesses with which they or their family members are associated, unless authorized by law, or (2) solicit or receive anything of value, including gifts, favors, services, or promises of future employment, etc., for the purpose of influencing official action.

Appreciation for the accomplishments of University faculty and staff by those outside the institution is deemed to reflect positively on the institution. University policy accordingly allows UAH faculty and staff to accept awards and prizes from external organizations or other entities that are given in recognition of outstanding teaching, research, or service performed in the course of their employment with the University. Such an award or prize should not be accepted, however, if to do so would subject the recipient to a conflict of interest between his/her official and his/her personal interests. Moreover, if the award or prize includes money or some other tangible benefit valued at more than \$100, the recipient must report it to the Provost or the appropriate vice president prior to acceptance. If the recipient is the Provost or a vice president, the report should be made to the President. Under the circumstances set forth above, acceptance of an award or prize is regarded as fully consistent with the limitations imposed by the Alabama ethics law.

An additional feature of the ethics law requires certain University officials and employees to complete and file annually a financial disclosure form known as the "statement of economic interests." This reporting requirement applies to any public employee who occupied, during the previous year, a position with a base annual salary rate of \$50,000 or more and, in addition, certain other, specifically designated employees. Forms for the report are mailed

to employees each year by the Ethics Commission and are due to be filed with the Commission by April 30. Failure to comply with this financial disclosure requirement will subject an employee to criminal prosecution.

Firearms and Other Weapons

Firearms or other weapons (including explosives) are not to be kept or brought onto University property by anyone, whether holding a firearms license or not, except police officers and other law enforcement officials in the exercise of their lawful duties. Faculty or staff personnel who violate this regulation are subject to adverse employment action, including dismissal and/or arrest and prosecution, as appropriate.

Although security measures are in force, the University depends on the cooperation of all employees in order to maintain a safe and harmonious environment in which to work. Employees are asked to report promptly any unusual or suspicious activity to their supervisor or department head or to the Public Safety Office at 824-6596.

Fire Prevention

The importance of fire prevention cannot be overemphasized. Carelessness and thoughtlessness are the two main causes of fire disasters. Fire hazards or suspected fire conditions should be reported immediately to the Public Safety Office at 824-6596. Some major fire hazards that employees should report are:

- Smoking in prohibited areas
- Inflammable liquids or material left uncovered after use