JACKSONVILLE STATE UNIVERSITY

Manual of Policies and Procedures

POLICY NO.: I:05:04 **DATE: January 2020**

REVIEW/REVISION DATES: May 2024

SUBJECT: Code of Conduct and Ethics

APPROVED: Dr. Don C. Killingsworth, Jr., President

PURPOSE

Jacksonville State University (Jax State) is committed to conducting its affairs in ways that promote mutual trust and public confidence. All employees are responsible for sustaining the highest ethical standards of excellence, integrity, honesty, and fairness and for integrating these values into teaching, research, business practices, and other services. Ethical conduct is a fundamental expectation for every employee. Employees must exercise good judgment and wise discretion to conduct all activities ethically and in compliance with applicable law; protect Jax State from risks; and assist in the preservation and enhancement of the assets and reputation of Jax State for the education and betterment of current and future generations. This Code of Conduct and Ethics (Code) has been established to work in conjunction with relevant laws, regulations, and Jax State policies, providing the general guidelines for how an employee conducts his/her affairs.

POLICY

The following is JSU's Code of Conduct and Ethics (the "Code")

Preliminary Statement:

This Code illustrates the shared accountability each employee has in conducting JSU business with honesty and integrity. This Code is intended to assist in making ethical and legal choices.

If there are questions or situations that are not specifically addressed by this Code, an employee should bring them to the attention of his/her supervisor.

This Code does not purport to address every situation relating to ethical and appropriate workplace conduct. JSU employees should also always comply with Alabama law including the Alabama Ethics Act and general ethical business practices.

1. Report illegal or unethical behavior.

If an employee becomes aware of a situation in which he/she believes that the Code has been violated or that he/she is being pressured or being asked to compromise the principles set forth in this Code, Alabama law or otherwise engage in unethical conduct, it is the employee's responsibility to communicate this concern through the appropriate channels, as described below. An employee will not be disciplined, lose his/her job, or be subject to retaliation in response to asking questions or voicing concerns about Jax State's ethical or legal obligations, so long as the employee is acting in good faith.
Good faith does not necessarily mean *being correct,* but it does imply that the employee subjectively believes the information communicated is correct.

Your Role:

Report any Code violations, wrongdoing, unsafe condition, or suspicious activity in person or anonymously.

Listed below are the ways by which an employee can ask questions or voice concerns.

1. **In person**--An employee's supervisor is the most immediate resource. He/she may have the information needed or may be able to refer the question to another appropriate source. The Chief Internal Auditor may also be contacted in person as an alternative.

2. **Via email--**Jax State has an email account whistleblower@jsu.edu where an employee can send a message with a question or concern.

3. **Via phone--**The Whistleblower Hotline (1-256-782-TALK or 8255) is a number where callers can remain anonymous, if they desire.

4. **Via mail--**Confidential mail can be sent to:
   Jax State
   310 Angle Hall
   700 Pelham Road North Jacksonville AL 36565
   Attn: Chief Internal Auditor

5. **Via campus mail--**Confidential mail can be sent to:
   Jax State
   310 Angle Hall
   Attn: Chief Internal Auditor

In all cases, when a question or concern is raised, all reports will be:

- Handled promptly, discreetly, and professionally. In the event discussions and inquiries occur; confidentiality will be kept to the extent appropriate or permitted by law;
- Investigated by those with appropriate independence and objectivity; and
- Kept securely and confidentially on file so that the reporting person can obtain certain follow-up information about how Jax State addressed the report or concern.

When an investigation is initiated, employees are expected to cooperate fully and answer any questions truthfully and to the best of their ability. Failure to cooperate or concealing or covering up an ethical or legal violation is a major violation of the Code. If an employee fails to cooperate or engages in concealing or covering up violations in the absence of significant, serious, mitigating circumstances, the employee will be subject to sanctions as described in section 10 of this policy.

2. Provide quality education and research.

Jax State is committed to providing outstanding, high-quality services to our students, faculty, staff, families, visitors, business partners, colleagues, affiliates, and the community ("Jax State Community"), whether those services are provided through teaching, research, business interactions, or other services. In performing duties, employees are expected to:

- Act with high ethical and professional standards of conduct;
- Be honest in performing his/her duties;
- Ask questions and request assistance when information is needed to properly perform one's duties;
- Be personally accountable for his/her actions and admit mistakes when they occur;

Your Role:

Execute your affairs in compliance with and in the spirit of the Code and be a model for all other employees.

- Be aware of Jax State's obligations towards the Jax State Community;
- Conscientiously fulfill obligations towards all the Jax State Community; and
- Communicate to others ethical standards of conduct and responsibilities under this Code through instruction and example.

Employees are not to:

- Fabricate information;
- Change or knowingly omit information to misrepresent events, circumstances, results, or outcomes in relevant records; or
- Take credit for another's work or work product as his/her own without permission.

With respect to teaching and research, Jax State community members are expected to:

- Promote academic freedom, including the freedom to discuss all relevant matters in the classroom or in a scheduled appointment and to explore all avenues of scholarship, research, and creative expression for which there is a legitimate academic basis;
- Propose, conduct, and report research with integrity and honesty;
- Protect people and humanely treat animals involved in teaching or research;
- Undertake human subjects research only in accordance with approved protocols;
- Learn, follow, and demonstrate accountability for meeting requirements of regulatory bodies, sponsors, and partners;
- Faithfully transmit research findings;
- Protect rights to individual, Jax State, and third-party intellectual property;
- Ensure originality of his/her work and provide credit for the ideas of others upon which work is built;
- Be responsible for the accuracy and fairness of information reported and/or published; and
- Fairly assign authorship credit based on significant contributions.

3. Act in the best interest of Jax State and avoid all conflicts of interest.

A conflict of interest occurs when an individual's personal interests interfere, or appear to interfere, in any way with the interests of Jax State. Employees of Jax State must avoid situations that present potential or actual conflicts between individual interests and the interests of Jax State.

The following are examples of actions that would constitute a conflict of interest:

- Investing in, or serving as a director of, any company that sells products or services to Jax State, or any company doing or seeking to do business with Jax State, other than relatively small investments in securities of publicly held companies;
- Borrowing money from companies doing or seeking to do business with Jax State, other than on generally available terms;
- Accepting bribes or kickbacks of any kind;
- Hiring or supervising a relative (as defined in policy I.02.23);
- Having a personal relationship with another employee or vendor that affects an employee's ability to do his/her job or that disrupts the workplace;
- Accepting gifts, gratuities, benefits, awards, and prizes from external entities not in compliance with federal and state laws and Jax State policies and standards;

If an employee encounters a situation in which he/she is unsure whether an action represents a conflict of interest, he/she should discuss it with a supervisor, the Chief Internal Auditor, the University Counsel, or a member of the President's Cabinet.

Your Role:

When executing your role as a Jax State employee, do not engage in any activity that could be perceived as putting your own interests ahead of Jax State's interest.

4. Respect and maintain the confidentiality of information entrusted to you by Jax State.

Employees are required to treat Jax State proprietary information with respect. Information generated is an asset. Protecting this information plays a vital role in Jax State's continued growth and ability to compete. Employees who have access to proprietary and confidential information are obligated to appropriately safeguard it from unauthorized access and follow these additional guidelines:

- Share this information only with other Jax State employees as appropriate for them to do their job;
- Do not disclose this information to persons who do not work at Jax State absent express approval from a member of the President's Cabinet or the University Counsel. Exercise caution when discussing Jax State business in public places where conversations can be overheard, like restaurants or on airplanes. Recognize the potential for eavesdropping on cellular telephones; and
- Do not use this information for personal benefit or the benefit of persons outside of Jax State.

Your Role:

All confidential information should be kept appropriately secure. Consult your supervisor or the University Counsel if you have any questions.

Consult the Chief Internal Auditor prior to disposing of documents.

Employees are expected to:

- Follow all laws, Jax State policies, and agreements with third parties regarding access, use, protection, disclosure, retention, and disposal of public, private, and confidential information;
- Respect the privacy of all information records, whether student, employee, or Jax State;
- Follow Public Universities of Alabama Records Disposition Authority Guide for document retention and disposal;
- Maintain information security using appropriate electronic and physical safeguards; and
- Fulfill any applicable requirements when the employee relationship to Jax State is terminated. The obligation to preserve confidential information continues even after one's employment and/or relationship with Jax State ends.

Written approval from a member of the President's Cabinet or the University Counsel is required before confidential or proprietary information can be released outside of Jax State.

5. Provide a safe environment.

Jax State employees have a shared responsibility to promote a safe, secure, and healthy environment for all Jax State students, faculty, staff, volunteers, and visitors (Jax State community). The Jax State community is expected to:

- Promote personal safety and follow safe workplace practices, including participating in applicable education and training sessions, using appropriate personal safety equipment, and reporting accidents, injuries, and unsafe situations;
- Promote and protect human health in those areas for which they are responsible;
- Maintain security, including securing Jax State assets;
- Maintain a professional work and educational environment;
- Report unsafe conditions to the University Safety Manager;
- Report suspicious activities to the University Police Department; and
- Protect the environment, including carefully handling hazardous waste and other potentially harmful agents, materials, or conditions.

Your Role:

Execute your duties with safety in mind, be a model for others, and report unsafe or suspicious activities.

6. Report all financial information accurately.

Many employees are involved with financial transactions of some kind – such as preparing time sheets, expense reports, approving invoices, signing for receipt of purchased materials, preparing a purchase order, or requesting a quote. While not all employees need to be familiar with accounting procedures, everyone does need to make sure that all business records are accurate, complete, and reliable.

In short, employees need to ensure that records they generate, or otherwise touch, are truthful and accurate. False, misleading or incomplete information impairs Jax State's ability to make good decisions, undermines trust and in some cases may be illegal.

In addition, no employee shall directly or indirectly take any action to fraudulently influence, coerce, manipulate, or mislead an accountant engaged in the performance of an audit or review of the financial statements.

Your Role:

Ensure all transactions and records are accurate and filed on a timely basis.

Report any concerns of wrongdoing.

As a public university, Jax State must place critical importance on the accuracy of its financial reports. Depending on his/her position with Jax State, an employee may be called upon to provide information to assure that Jax State's public reports are complete, fair and understandable. Jax State expects all employees to take this responsibility very seriously and to provide prompt and accurate answers to inquiries related to Jax State's financial reports.

All Jax State employees are bound by the following by accepting employment with Jax State and each agrees that he/she will:

- Act with honesty and integrity, avoiding actual or apparent conflicts of interest in personal and professional relationships;
- Provide information that is accurate, complete, objective, relevant, timely, and comprehensible to ensure full, fair, accurate, timely, and understandable disclosure in reports and documents that Jax State files with, or submits to, government agencies and in other public communications;
- Comply with rules and regulations of federal, state, and local governments, as well as other appropriate regulatory agencies;
- Act in good faith, responsibly, with due care, competence, and diligence, without misrepresenting material facts or allowing his/her independent judgment to be subordinated;
- Respect the confidentiality of information acquired in the course of his/her work, except when authorized or otherwise legally obligated to disclose;
- Proactively promote and be an example of ethical behavior as a responsible partner among peers, in the work environment and in the community;
- Achieve responsible use of and control over all assets and resources; and
- Promptly report any conduct that appears to be in violation of law or ethics or of any provision of the Code.

7. Properly utilize and protect all Jax State assets.

Every employee is a steward of Jax State assets. Protecting Jax State assets against loss, theft, and misuse is everyone's responsibility. Inventory, equipment, samples, tools, and supplies have been acquired solely for Jax State use. They may not be used for personal benefit, sold, loaned, given away, or disposed of without proper authorization. Employees should not have any expectation of privacy when using Jax State assets and services such as the Internet, email, and the telephone.

Your Role:

Protect Jax State assets, which have been entrusted to you.

Use Jax State 's assets for legitimate purposes.

8. Comply with all laws, rules and regulations.

All business at Jax State should be conducted in accordance with the appropriate local, state, and federal laws and regulations. Additionally, as a member of the National Collegiate Athletic Association, Jax State and its employees must be in compliance with applicable NCAA bylaws and rules as applicable.

This Code is implemented in addition to all requirements of the Alabama Ethics Law, AL Code 36-25-1 et. seq. This includes the requirement for certain Jax State employees to file a Statement of Economic Interest with the Alabama Ethics Commission on an annual basis.

Your Role:

Comply with all state and federal laws and regulations and NCAA bylaws and rules.

9. Sanctions for violations of the Code of Conduct and Ethics Policy.

Jax State sanctions may include, initiating procedures for training, reprimand, restitution, loss of pay, suspension, or dismissal.

RESPONSIBILITY

The Chief Internal Auditor is responsible for this policy.

EVALUATION

This policy will be reviewed at least every five (5) years.