# 500.115 ETHICAL STANDARDS/CONFLICT OF INTEREST STANDARDS POLICY

All Wenatchee Valley College employees serve the public interest and hold a special public trust to uphold the highest ethical standards, demonstrate honesty and integrity in all aspects of their work, and to avoid even the appearance of impropriety. If questions arise as to whether a particular action is ethical, employees are expected to take personal responsibility, and make choices that maintain the public trust. Each employee’s actions reflect on the employee and on the entire college community.

Wenatchee Valley College employees are obligated to use their official powers and duties, and the resources of the college, only to advance the public interest. This obligation requires that all employees protect the integrity of the college by being independent and impartial in the exercise of their duties; not use their positions for personal gain or private benefit, including compliance with limits imposed by state law on the acceptance of gifts; promote an environment free from fraud, abuse of authority, and misuse of public property; treat members of the campus community and of the community at large with respect, concern, courtesy, and responsiveness; protect confidential information to which employees have access in the course of their duties; and create a work environment that is free from all forms of harassment and discrimination.

The state of Washington established the [ethics in public service law](https://apps.leg.wa.gov/RCW/default.aspx?cite=42.52&full=true), revised code of Washington (RCW), Chapter 42.52, to help state employees understand their ethical obligations. This law directs the actions of all Wenatchee Valley College employees. Employees are expected to understand and must comply with the state ethics law. Penalties for failing to comply include, but are not limited to, disciplinary action up to and including termination, monetary fines of up to $5,000 or the amount of damage sustained by the state or up to three times the amount involved in the ethical violation. ([RCW 42.52.480](https://apps.leg.wa.gov/RCW/default.aspx?cite=42.52&full=true#42.52.480); [RCW 42.52.520](https://apps.leg.wa.gov/RCW/default.aspx?cite=42.52&full=true#42.52.520))

Employees who need assistance or have questions about a particular decision should contact their supervisor or executive director of human resources. There are numerous resources available at the [executive ethics board website](https://ethics.wa.gov), including training options, frequently asked questions, advisory opinions and the ethics rules.

## A. ETHICAL STANDARDS

The following list of [ethical standards](http://a.cms.omniupdate.com/10/#oucampus/Wenatchee/www-2016/preview/humanresources/policies-procedures/media/documents/ethical-policy-ethical-standards.docx) describes major principles from the ethics law that apply to all employees of Wenatchee Valley College.

### 1. Conflict of Interest.

### 2. Gifts.

### 3. Honoraria.

### 4. Compensation for Official Duties or Nonperformance.

### 5. Compensation for Outside Activities.

### 6. Use of State Resources for Personal Benefit.

### 7. Use of Public Resources for Political Campaigns.

### 8. Confidential Information.

### 9. Financial Interest in Transactions.

### 10. Assisting in Transactions.

### 11. Special Privileges.

### 12. Post State Employment.

### 13. Publisher’s Samples.

## B. REPORTING VIOLATIONS

Employees seeking advice regarding potential conflict of interest issues are encouraged to contact the executive director of human resources. Employees may also report or file an alleged ethical violation by a Wenatchee Valley College employee internally, within the college, by contacting the executive director of human resources.

Alternately, complaints may be filed by an individual (personally or by his or her attorney) with the [Washington State Executive Ethics Board](https://ethics.wa.gov/). Complaints shall state the name of the person alleged to have violated the ethics law or rules adopted under it and the particulars involved, and may contain other information necessary to the investigation. ([RCW 42.52.410](https://apps.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=42.52&full=true#42.52.410))

In addition, employees may make complaints with the [Washington State Auditor’s Office](https://www.sao.wa.gov/report-a-concern/how-to-report-a-concern/whistleblower-program/) under the provisions of the Whistleblower Act.

## C. DISSEMINIATION OF INFORMATION AND ANNUAL REVIEW

The human resources department will make all employees aware of this policy and accompanying procedure on an annual basis. In addition, all employees will receive a copy of the Wenatchee Valley College Code of Ethics brochure. New employees will receive a copy during employee orientation conducted by the human resource office.

Supersedes 2.P.85; moved from old manual

Revised (complete rewrite); approved by the president’s cabinet: 11/22/11

Adopted by the board of trustees: 2/15/12

Last reviewed: 8/30/19

Related policies, procedures and other resources

500.090 [Workplace Civility & Respect Policy](https://www.wvc.edu/humanresources/policies-procedures/500-human-resources/500.090-workplace-civility-respect.html)

500.100 [Standards of Employee Conduct Policy](https://www.wvc.edu/humanresources/policies-procedures/500-human-resources/500.100-standards-of-employee-conduct.html)

500.125 [Intellectual Property Policy](https://www.wvc.edu/humanresources/policies-procedures/500-human-resources/500.525-intellectual-property.html)

Ethical conduct/standards of employee conduct [examples](http://a.cms.omniupdate.com/10/#oucampus/Wenatchee/www-2016/preview/humanresources/policies-procedures/media/documents/ethical-conduct-policy-examples.docx) outline situations that may arise and help further explain some parts of the ethics law.

Complete list of [definitions](https://apps.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=42.52&full=true#42.52.010) of the ethics law per RCW 42.52.010