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January 23, 2008

TO: IC Directors
IC Executive Offices
OD Office Directors
Directors of Extramural Research
Scientific Directors
Deputy Ethics Counselors

FROM: Deputy Director, NIH
Deputy Director for Extramural Research, NIH
Deputy Director for Intramural Research, NIH

SUBJECT: NIH Official Duty Activity Policy

This memorandum is an update to the Official Duty Activity policy that Dr. Kington distributed by e-mail to IC Directors and Executive Officers on [June 9, 2006](#). Since that time we have updated the documents based on significant input from IC Directors and NIH staff.

NIH staff engage in a myriad of official duties with outside organizations. These activities are critical to the continuing professional and scientific development of our staff and often are an important motivation for scientists to seek employment with NIH. However, official duties with outside organizations must be managed effectively to ensure that conflicts do not arise that impact an employee's ability to carry out other NIH responsibilities. The attached documents provide guidance to assist you in managing your or your employees' official duties. The table describes types of approvals necessary prior to engaging in an official duty with an outside entity and issues that may result from such an arrangement. We also have provided case studies that should be helpful in this effort.

An NIH Manual Chapter on Conflict of Interest including the Official Duty Activity policy is in preparation. In the interim, we are transmitting this guidance reminder and updated material.

This memorandum includes four elements:

- * [Official Duty Policy](#)
- * [Conflict Assessment for Proposed Official Duty Activities](#)
- * [Official Duty Table](#)
- * [Case Studies](#)

Please review and utilize these updated documents effective immediately. Please contact your IC Deputy Ethics Counselor, the NIH Ethics Office, or Sally Rockey of the Office of Extramural Research (301-496-1096) if you have any questions.

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Attachments