



**EUFAC**  
EMERGENCY ULTRASOUND  
FELLOWSHIP ACCREDITATION COUNCIL

<b>Policy Title: Conflict of Interest Policy</b>
Policy Number: EUFAC – C 3.0
Effective Date: 09/12/2022
Purpose: Identification, disclosure of and action on conflicts of interests.

### **Background**

Individuals who support the Emergency Ultrasound Fellowship Accreditation Council (EUFAC) activities may be asked to review an Advanced Emergency Medicine Ultrasonography (AEMUS) fellowship program that would present a conflict of interest. The following policy is intended to guide current Council members when faced with potential conflicts of interest.

### **POLICY**

It is the policy of EUFAC that current Council members shall avoid all conflicts of interest. A ‘conflict of interest’ is a direct or indirect financial, personal, or other interest, which would or could reasonably be perceived as limiting the individual’s ability to serve the best interest of the EUFAC without discrimination or favoritism. Indirect interests include the individual’s relatives and institutions, associations, businesses, or other organizations, whether or not for-profit, which employ or hold some other claim to the individual’s primary loyalty.

Each individual has the personal responsibility of identifying when a conflict of interest exists or appears to exist, and for taking appropriate action to eliminate the conflict or the appearance of the conflict. If the individual is unsure whether a conflict exists, all relevant information should be disclosed to the EUFAC Chair, EUFAC Executive Director and/or staff to address.

At a minimum, when EUFAC is reviewing a fellowship program from a state within which the Council member lives or works, the Council member will remove him or herself from the discussion room and provide no input, including answering questions or rendering an opinion with regard to accreditation decisions. Doing so will ensure fairness in the review process for those programs that would not have Council members able to speak to the program’s application.

Once appointed, Council members no longer represent their sponsoring organization, but rather are independent decision makers whose duty is to the Council. Accreditation discussions are based on only the merits of the application and must not attempt to reflect the opinion or preferences of any of the EUFAC’s sponsoring organizations.

Council members are forbidden from serving as mentors, advisors, or consultants (paid or unpaid) for AEMUS programs that are seeking accreditation or wish to improve their application. This type of guidance must be deferred to existing AEMUS membership organizations in order for EUFAC to maintain a fair and equitable review process for all AEMUS fellowship programs.

Council members will be required to sign a statement attesting that they have no conflict of interest at the current time or that they have or may have an existing conflict of interest.

Prior to each review meeting, Council members will be asked to identify any potential conflicts of interest that were not previously identified within the signed statement. If new conflicts of interests are identified, Council members are asked to update and sign their COI form in writing and return it to the EUFAC Administrative office to be kept on file.

Prior to moving into the review portion of a EUFAC meeting, the EUFAC Chair will present a list of programs to be reviewed and any COIs identified and query the council whether there are any additional COIs not already listed.

If no conflict of interest exists, then Council members are required to attest that they will notify the EUFAC Chair, Executive Director, and staff if one should develop (or is perceived) in writing.

### **PROCESS FOR HANDLING CONFLICTS**

- All potential conflicts of interest on the basis of the Conflicts of Interest policy will be submitted to the EUFAC Chair, EUFAC Executive Director, and staff.
- The EUFAC Chair and the EUFAC Executive Director will determine the best means of handling the situation.
- Staff will implement the decision.
- The EUFAC Chair will bring the situation to the EUFAC Council for resolution under the following circumstances:
  - The Chair and Executive Director do not agree on a clear course of action
  - The Chair and Executive Director are unclear as to whether a conflict of interest exists
- If it is necessary to bring the situation to the EUFAC Council, the Committee will make the final decisions regarding any potential conflicts of interest based on a majority vote.
- EUFAC deliberations when Council members are conflicted
  - The conflicted Council Member shall not participate in or be permitted to hear the EUFAC's discussion regarding a matter related to the conflict of interest except to disclose material facts and to respond to questions. The Council member shall not attempt to exert his or her personal influence with respect to EUFAC decisions regarding the matter, either at or outside the meeting.
  - The conflicted Council member may not vote on any matter related to the conflict of interest and shall not be present in the meeting room when the vote is taken.

### **Failure to Disclose Conflict and Duality of Interest**

If the EUFAC has reasonable cause to believe (based on information from the EUFAC Chair and Executive Director other sources that a Council member has knowingly and deliberately failed to disclose an actual, apparent or potential conflict or duality of interest, it shall inform the Council member of the bases for such belief and afford him or her an opportunity to explain the alleged failure to disclose. If, after hearing the response of the Council member and making such further investigation as may be warranted in the circumstances, the Council determines that the Council member has in fact knowingly failed to disclose an actual, apparent or potential conflict or duality of interest, it shall recommend appropriate action or sanctions.

### **EXCEPTION**

None