



AMERICAN SOCIETY OF
PLASTIC SURGEONS®



THE PLASTIC SURGERY
FOUNDATION®

Executive Office

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Instructions for Filing a Conflict of Interest Inquiry

To guard against the American Society of Plastic Surgeons (“Society”) and The Plastic Surgery Foundation (“Foundation”) decisions and actions being unduly influenced by any special interests of individual members, the Society and Foundation Board of Directors have adopted the Conflict of Interest (“COI”) Policy.

The Society and Foundation Board of Directors adopted the COI Governing Documents to assist each officer, director, trustee, committee chair, committee member, senior administrative staff member, the editor and members of the editorial boards of the Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery Journal and Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery – Global Open, and others holding leadership positions in the Society and Foundation (“Volunteer Leaders”) to manage potential conflicts of interest.

Filing a COI Inquiry

A Conflict of Interest (“COI”) inquiry may be initiated by a member of the Society, by the COI Committee or by any third party. All COI inquiries shall be submitted in writing to the Chair of the COI Committee at COI-Inquiry@plasticsurgery.org (preferred method) or at the address below, with the inquiring party identified. The COI Committee will not address anonymous inquiries.

ASPS COI Committee Chair
444 East Algonquin Road
Arlington Heights, Illinois 60005-4664

Inquiries filed with the ASPS COI Committee should identify the Volunteer Leader’s potential conflict of interest and provide supporting documentation to assist the COI Committee in evaluating the concern. Documentation should include the name of the affected Volunteer Leader, his/her leadership position, and how the inquirer believes the Volunteer Leader is using or may use the special interest to inappropriately shape or influence Society or Foundation actions or policies.

Whenever possible, the inquiring party will remain anonymous to the affected Volunteer Leader.

Addressing the Inquiry

The Chair of the COI Committee will review the inquiry. If it is determined that the inquiry is without merit or is outside the purview the COI Committee, the Chair will notify the inquiring party and the matter will be closed.

If it is determined that the inquiry may have merit, then the concern will be addressed. A COI Committee member will be assigned to look into the concern and the affected Volunteer Leader will be notified of the inquiry. Additionally, the Chair will advise the inquiring party of the COI Committee’s recommendation for resolving the conflict. Depending on the urgency of the situation, it may take the COI Committee up to three (3) months to finalize its recommendation.

The COI Committee and Legal Counsel may discuss their recommendations with the affected Volunteer Leader or with the Board of Directors, Executive Committee, Committee or Task Force, or with the Trustees, as appropriate.

The inquiring party will be advised if the conflict of interest has been resolved with the affected Volunteer Leader. If the conflict is not resolved, additional steps will be taken consistent with the Society's COI Governing Documents, including seeking the member's resignation or, in appropriate circumstances, referring the matter to the Ethics Committee for its consideration.

Resolving the Conflict

Recusal

If the potential conflict concerns a committee meeting topic, the COI Committee may recommend that the Volunteer Leader should:

1. remain in the room, participating fully in the discussion involving the conflict but not vote;
2. remain in the room while the matter is being discussed but not speak or vote;
3. provide his or her opinion and leave the room while the matter is considered and voted upon; or
4. remain out of the room while the matter is being considered and voted upon.

Dissociation

In some instances, a Volunteer Leader's affiliation with another organization may cause such conflict with the Society or Foundation policy that the COI Committee may recommend that the Volunteer Leader should sever his or her relationship with the organization or resign his or her Volunteer Leader position.

A two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Board of Directors will be required to approve the recommendation of the COI Committee. If the Board of Directors decides upon dissociation or resignation from the leadership position, the Leader may appeal the decision to the Trustees where a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Trustees will be required to uphold the recommendation of the COI Committee as approved by the Board of Directors. The Trustees will have thirty (30) days after their review to make their decision, and their decision will be final and binding.