



# Code of Ethics

**A Message from the United Way of Transylvania County  
Board of Directors  
December 2003**

As volunteers, employees and representatives of United Way of Transylvania County, we have a responsibility to uphold the highest of ethical standards, both for ourselves and for the benefit of our community. We believe these standards go beyond compliance with laws and regulations, calling us to fulfill higher obligations as stewards of the public trust.

This Code of Ethics is an important way for us to reaffirm our ethical commitments. It sets forth the principles and standards that guide our decisions and actions. It is a way of connecting our values and ideals with the work we do every day. The Code is not just about what we should do, but why we do it.

Of course, no document can give us all the answers to ethical questions. This Code is meant to help us advance the discussion of ethics in our organization. It encourages us to seek guidance and clarification when questions arise about applying the principles and standards. By working together on these issues, we can ensure that United Way of Transylvania County fulfills its commitment to the community, by building and maintaining the public trust in all we do.

# Code of Ethics

The mission of United Way of Transylvania County (UWTC) is to build a stronger Transylvania by mobilizing our community to empower people to improve their lives. Our focus is to save and change lives through health and human services. Our mission and focus require that all of us involved in the UWTC must assume the responsibility of earning public trust. Accordingly, United Way of Transylvania County plays a unique role both as a leader in the health and human services sector and as a major resource to member organizations to build trust through all that we do. This bond of trust goes far beyond legal or regulatory requirements.

United Way of Transylvania County is committed to the highest ethical standards. The success of the United Way system – and our reputation in the community – depend upon the ethical conduct of everyone affiliated with the UWTC. Volunteers, staff and representatives set an example for each other and for member UW agencies, by pursuing excellence in high standards of performance, professionalism and ethical conduct. While no document can anticipate the many challenges that may arise, the Code communicates key guidelines. It should assist volunteers, staff and representative in making good decisions that are ethical and in accordance with applicable legal requirements. To fulfill our unique obligation, the UWTC has adopted the following Code of Ethics to serve as the foundation on which we base our actions and decisions. The Code is an adaptation of the *Code of Ethics 2002* adopted by the United Way of America. All are encouraged to discuss any questions or concerns they have with the Executive Committee of the UWTC.

## **1. PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL INTEGRITY**

A personal commitment to integrity in all circumstances benefits individuals and the organization. We therefore

- ✓ Strive to meet the highest standards of performance, quality, service and achievement in working toward our mission.
- ✓ Communicate honestly and openly and truthfully.
- ✓ Promote a working environment where honesty, open communication and minority opinions are valued.
- ✓ Exhibit respect and fairness toward all with whom we interact.

## **2. ACCOUNTABILITY**

UWTC is responsible to all its stakeholders, including member agencies, donors and others who have placed trust in us. To merit this trust we

- ✓ Promote good stewardship of UWTC resources.
- ✓ Use UWTC resources only for UWTC purposes.
- ✓ Ensure that funds are expended to maximize benefit to the community.
- ✓ Observe and comply with all laws and regulations affecting UWTC.

## **3. SOLICITATIONS AND VOLUNTARY GIVING**

The most responsive contributors are those who have the opportunity to become informed and involved. We therefore

- ✓ Promote voluntary giving in dealing with donors and vendors.
- ✓ Maintain the highest level of professionalism in our solicitations.

## **4. DIVERSITY AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITY**

UWTC is an equal opportunity employer and is committed to the principle of diversity. We therefore

- ✓ Support affirmative action and equal employment opportunity programs throughout UWTC.
- ✓ Refuse to engage in or tolerate any other form of discrimination or harassment.
- ✓ Value, champion, embrace and respect diversity in all aspects of UWTC activities, and abide by all applicable federal and state statutes.

## **5. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

To avoid any conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest which could tarnish the reputation of UWTC or undermine the public trust in United Way agencies, UWTC staff and representatives

- ✓ Avoid any activity or outside interest which conflicts or appears to conflict with the best interest of UWTC. This includes involvement with a current or potential UWTC grantee or competing organization unless disclosed in writing and deemed allowable by the Executive Committee of UWTC. Members of the Board will file an annual written disclosure of all known potential conflicts of interest to the Executive Committee of UWTC.
- ✓ Ensure that outside employment and other activities do not adversely affect the performance of UWTC duties or the attainment of our mission.
- ✓ Ensure that travel, entertainment and related expenses are directly related to the mission of UWTC, and not for personal gain or interest.
- ✓ Decline any gift, gratuity or favor in the performance of UWTC duties except for promotional items of nominal value; and decline any food, lodging or entertainment unless directly related to UWTC business.
- ✓ Refrain from influencing the selection of staff, consultants or grantees who are relatives or personal friends or in any position that affects or appears to affect impartiality.

## **6. UWTC VOLUNTEERS**

Confidentiality is a cornerstone of professionalism. We therefore

- ✓ Ensure the protection of all information which is confidential, privileged or private.
- ✓ Respect the privacy rights of all individuals in the performance of their UWTC duties.

## **7. POLITICAL CONTRIBUTIONS**

UWTC encourages individual participation in civic affairs. However, as a charitable organization, UWTC may not make contributions to any candidate for public office or political committee on behalf of UWTC. We therefore

- ✓ Refrain from making contributions to public candidates on behalf of UWTC or that may create the appearance that the contribution is on behalf of UWTC; and refrain from participating in political activities that may create such appearance.
- ✓ Clearly communicate that we are acting in our individual capacity and not on behalf of the organization while engaging in political activities.
- ✓ Refrain from using any organizational financial resources, facilities or personnel to endorse or oppose a candidate for public office.

# Code of Ethics Certificate

I acknowledge that I have received and read a copy of the United Way of Transylvania County Code of Ethics. I understand that each volunteer, staff member and representative is responsible for adhering to the principles and standards of the Code. I confirm that I will conduct myself in accordance with the principles and standards of the Code.

PRINTED NAME \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_