

## Houston Striders

### Conflict of Interest Policy

*Focus: Accountability & Transparency*

#### Purpose

The purpose of this Conflict of Interest Policy is to maintain the trust of the public, sponsors, and members by ensuring that decisions made by the board members, officers, race director, and key volunteers of the Houston Striders are based solely on the best interests of the organization. This policy promotes accountability and transparency in the governance of the club and helps prevent the appearance or reality of personal gain at the expense of the club's mission.

#### Scope

This policy applies to all:

- Officers
- Board directors
- Race manager
- Key volunteers who participate in decisions involving finances, vendors, or partnerships

#### Definition of a Conflict of Interest

A conflict of interest occurs when a person in a position of authority may benefit directly or indirectly- from a decision they influence in their official capacity. This includes:

- Financial gain
- Favoritism toward family or business associates
- Personal or professional advancement within or outside of the club

Even the appearance of a conflict can undermine trust and much be avoided.

#### Duty of Loyalty and Accountability

Decision-makers in the club must:

- Act with loyalty to the organization's mission
- Put the interests of the club ahead of personal interests
- Be accountable for maintaining high ethical standards
- Disclose any situation that could impair their objectivity

#### Disclosure Requirements

All covered individuals must:

- Promptly disclose any potential, actual, or perceived conflicts of interest
- Complete and sign an annual [Conflict of Interest Disclosure Form](#)
- Update the disclosure if circumstances change

Disclosures should include:

- Relationships with vendors, sponsors, or contractors
- Ownership or employment in businesses related to club activities
- Family or household ties to anyone who might benefit from club decisions

## **Board Review and Response**

If a conflict is disclosed:

1. The person must recuse themselves from discussion and voting.
2. The remaining board members will evaluate the situation.
3. The board may:
  - Approve the action with safeguards,
  - Seek alternatives (e.g, additional bids),
  - Decline the transaction if it's not in the club's best interest

All actions must be documented in the minutes.

## **Use of Confidential or Inside Information**

To maintain transparency and fairness:

- No individual may use non-public information obtained through the club for:
  - Personal gain
  - The benefit of family or affiliated organizations
- Examples of confidential information
  - Sponsorship negotiations
  - Members contact lists
  - Pending financial decisions or vendor contracts
- Information shared during board or committee meetings must remain confidential unless approved for public release.

## **Financial Transactions and Contracts**

- Any board member or officer involved in a transaction must fully disclose their interest and abstain from related decisions.
- The board must verify that the terms of any contract or agreement involving a conflict are fair, reasonable, and in the club's best interest.

## **Enforcement and Accountability**

- Violations of this policy may result in :
  - Formal reprimand
  - Removal from leadership or committee roles
  - Termination of volunteer involvement
  - Legal action if the club suffers harm

## **Documentation and Transparency**

The board must maintain accurate meeting minutes showing:

- Disclosures made
- Actions taken to address conflicts
- Voting results with names of those abstaining

The policy, along with a summary of the current disclosures, can be made publicly available to demonstrate transparency.

## **Annual Review and Certification**

All covered individuals must:

- Read and acknowledge this policy annually
- Sign the [\*\*Conflict of Interest Disclosure Form\*\*](#)
- Reaffirm their commitment to ethical service