



## RIGHTS INSTITUTE FOR SOCIAL EMPOWERMENT- RISE

### CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY

JUNE, 2016

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## **1. Article I -- Purpose**

1. The purpose of this Board and staff conflict of interest policy is to protect RISE's interests when it is contemplating entering into a transaction or arrangement that might benefit the private interests of an officer or director of RISE or might result in a possible excess benefit transaction.
2. This policy is intended to supplement, but not replace, any applicable laws governing conflicts of interest applicable to nonprofit and charitable organizations.
3. This policy is also intended to identify "independent" directors.

## **2. Article II -- Definitions**

**1. Interested person** -- Any staff or board member, principal officer, or member of a committee who has powers and has a direct or indirect financial interest, as defined below, is an interested person.

**2. Financial interest** -- A person has a financial interest if the person has, directly or indirectly, through business, investment, or family:

- a. An ownership or investment interest in any entity with which RISE has a transaction or arrangement,
- b. A compensation arrangement with RISE or with any entity or individual with which RISE has a transaction or arrangement, or
- c. A potential ownership or investment interest in, or compensation arrangement with, any entity or individual with which RISE is negotiating a transaction or arrangement.

Compensation includes direct and indirect remuneration as well as gifts or favors that are substantial.

A financial interest is not necessarily a conflict of interest. A person who has a financial interest may have a conflict of interest only if the Board or Executive Committee decides that a conflict of interest exists, in accordance with this policy.

**3. Independent Director** -- A director shall be considered "independent" for the purposes of this policy if he or she is "independent" as defined in any laws or policies--until such definition is available, the director --

- a. is not, and has not been for a period of at least three years, an employee of RISE or any entity in which RISE has a financial interest;
- b. does not directly or indirectly have a significant business relationship with RISE, which might affect independence in decision-making;

- c. is not employed as an executive of another corporation where any of RISE's executive officers or employees serve on that corporation's compensation committee; and
- d. Does not have an immediate family member who is an executive officer or employee of RISE or who holds a position that has a significant financial relationship with RISE.

### **3. Article III -- Procedures**

**1. Duty to Disclose** -- In connection with any actual or possible conflict of interest, an interested person must disclose the existence of the financial interest and be given the opportunity to disclose all material facts to the executive director, management or Board

**2. Recusal of Self** – Any staff or board member may recuse himself or herself at any time from involvement in any decision or discussion in which the employee or board member believes he or she has or may have a conflict of interest, without going through the process for determining whether a conflict of interest exists.

**3. Determining Whether a Conflict of Interest Exists** -- After disclosure of the financial interest and all material facts, and after any discussion with the interested person, he/she shall leave the staff, management, procurement or Board or meeting while the determination of a conflict of interest is discussed and voted upon. The remaining members shall decide if a conflict of interest exists.

### **4. Procedures for Addressing the Conflict of Interest**

- a. An interested person may make a presentation at any of the meetings, but after the presentation, he/she shall leave the meeting during the discussion of, and the vote on, the transaction or arrangement involving the possible conflict of interest.
- b. The Chairperson of meeting shall, if appropriate, appoint a disinterested person or committee to investigate alternatives to the proposed transaction or arrangement.
- c. After exercising due diligence, management, executive director or board committee shall determine whether RISE can obtain with reasonable efforts a more advantageous transaction or arrangement from a person or entity that would not give rise to a conflict of interest.
- d. If a more advantageous transaction or arrangement is not reasonably possible under circumstances not producing a conflict of interest, the Board or Executive Committee shall determine by a majority vote of the disinterested members whether the transaction or arrangement is in RISE's best interest, for its own benefit, and whether it is fair and reasonable. In conformity with the above determination, it shall make its decision as to whether to enter into the transaction or arrangement.

## **5. Violations of the Conflicts of Interest Policy**

- a. If the management or board has reasonable cause to believe a member has failed to disclose actual or possible conflicts of interest, it shall inform the member of the basis for such belief and afford the member an opportunity to explain the alleged failure to disclose.
- b. If, after hearing the staff or board members response and after making further investigation as warranted by the circumstances, the management or board determines the member has failed to disclose an actual or possible conflict of interest, it shall take appropriate disciplinary and corrective action.

## **4. Article IV – Records of Proceedings**

The minutes of the Board and all committees with board delegated powers shall contain:

- a. The names of the persons who disclosed or otherwise were found to have a financial interest in connection with an actual or possible conflict of interest, the nature of the financial interest, any action taken to determine whether a conflict of interest was present, and the management or board's decision as to whether a conflict of interest in fact existed.

The names of the persons who were present for discussions and votes relating to the transaction or arrangement, the content of the discussion, including any alternatives to the proposed transaction or arrangement, and a record of any votes taken in connection with the proceedings.

## **5. Article V – Annual Statements**

1. Each RISE staff and board member with Board delegated powers shall annually sign a statement which affirms such person:
  - a. Has received a copy of the conflict of interest policy,
  - b. Has read and understands the policy,
  - c. Has agreed to comply with the policy, and
  - d. Understand that RISE is charitable and in order to maintain its existence it must engage primarily in activities which accomplish one or more of its charitable purposes.
2. Each voting member of the Board shall annually sign a statement which declares whether such person is an independent director.
3. If at any time during the year, the information in the annual statement changes materially, the director shall disclose such changes and revise the annual disclosure form.

4. The Executive Committee shall regularly and consistently monitor and enforce compliance with this policy by reviewing annual statements and taking such other actions as are necessary for effective oversight.

#### **6. Article VI – Periodic Reviews**

To ensure RISE operates in a manner consistent with charitable purposes and does not engage in activities that could jeopardize its status, periodic reviews shall be conducted. The periodic reviews shall, at a minimum, include the following subjects:

- a. Whether compensation arrangements and benefits are reasonable, based on competent survey information (if reasonably available), and the result of arm's length bargaining.
- b. Whether partnerships, joint ventures, and arrangements with management organizations, if any, conform to RISE's written policies, are properly recorded, reflect reasonable investment or payments for goods and services, further charitable purposes and do not result in inurement or impermissible private benefit or in an excess benefit transaction.

#### **7. Article VII – Use of Outside Experts**

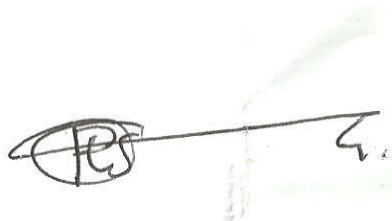
When conducting the periodic reviews as provided for in Article VI, RISE may, but need not, use outside advisors. If outside experts are used, their use shall not relieve the Board of its responsibility for ensuring periodic reviews are conducted.

THIS POLICY IS HEREBY APPROVED AND ENDORSED BY THE RISE BOARD OF TRUSTEES HEREUNDER SIGNED:

Name: Mr. Peter L.S Chikakula

Position: Board of Trustees Vice Chairperson

Signature:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'P.L.S. Chikakula', written over a light green rectangular stamp or watermark.