



Conflicts of Interest Policy

Conflicts of interest refers to any situation in which ACHENA volunteers stand to gain materially from their association with ACHENA. ACHENA takes the following steps to minimize potential conflicts of interest, over and above what is outlined in its *Bylaws* and *Policies and Procedures Manual*:

- ACHENA limits, when possible, the number of *Commissioners* serving the board who concurrently represent a single accredited or candidate institution/program.
- ACHENA *Executive Officers and Staff* shall remain independent of an accredited or non-accredited candidate institution/program (i.e. school owner, administrator, faculty and/or student stakeholders) at the time of their formal recruitment and tenure. Full disclosure of any such anticipated or actual conflicts shall also be disclosed in writing and reflected in Executive Committee and/or Board minutes at any time during their tenure.
- ACHENA Commissioners, Peer Reviewers, Site Visitors, Committee Volunteers, Advisors and/or Staff who have a COI with a specific institution/program cannot be assigned to nor participate in any written and/or verbal assessments or review processes of any accreditation-related matter related to that school (i.e. Eligibility Packet Reviews, Self-Study Report Reviews and/or Site Visits, Annual Reports Reviews). Conversely, school owner, administrator, faculty and/or student stakeholders may not be assigned nor participate.
- ACHENA Advisors, who do not serve on the Board of Commissioners, are trained by ACHENA to act as third-party reviewers in order to reduce potential or actual conflicts of interest and/or bias in the accreditation decision-making process whenever possible.
- Every meeting of the Board and Executive Committee begins with a request of all participants to declare any conflicts of interest in relation to all agenda items, especially accreditation recommendations. They remove and/or recuse themselves from the meeting while that agenda item(s) is discussed or voted upon. Voting members may share their concern regarding a potential conflict of interest of other voting members prior to the beginning of any discussion of the matter in question.
- All Commissioners, Peers Reviewers, Site Visitors, Committee Volunteers, Advisors and Staff receive instruction in ACHENA's Code of Ethics and must sign an

acknowledgement of ACHENA's Conflicts of Interest, Confidentiality and Whistleblower Policy and Procedures. They complete annual renewal of their agreements and are regularly informed and updated of their fellow members' conflicts of interest. Signed statements are maintained in ACHENA's business files.

- During any assessment and review process for a specific institution/program, verbal or written communication between ACHENA and that institution/program is channeled through Commissioners, Peer Reviewer, Site Visitors, Advisors or Staff who do not have a conflict of interest with that institution/program.
- During any assessment and review process for a specific institution/program, all working documents are electronically stored in a separate location that is accessible only to those directly involved with that review who do not have a conflict of interest with that institution/program.
- During the assessment and review process for a specific institution/program, discussions are held only among those directly involved with that review (who do not have COI with that institution/program), only after which the reviewers' verbal and written recommendations are discussed with the Executive Committee and the Board of Commissioners.

For more information about ACHENA, our scope, our policies, or how you can get involved in homeopathy education accreditation, don't hesitate to reach out!

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