Greater Ottawa County United Way is committed to the highest ethical standards. Indeed, based on the unique trust placed in Greater Ottawa County United Way to serve the public good, we have a special obligation to act ethically. The success of the United Way system and our reputation depend upon the ethical conduct of everyone affiliated with Greater Ottawa County United Way. Staff and key volunteers (including the Board of Directors, Funds Distribution and Campaign volunteers) set an example by their pursuit of excellence and high standards of performance, professionalism, and ethical conduct.

This Greater Ottawa County United Way Code of Ethics is based on our mission and guided by our fundamental values. This policy communicates key guidelines and will assist Greater Ottawa County United Way Staff and key volunteers in making good decisions that are ethical and in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

1. PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL INTEGRITY – A personal commitment to integrity in all circumstances benefits each individual as well as the organization. We therefore:

* Strive to meet the highest standards of performance, quality, service and achievement in working towards the agency’s mission.
* Communicate honestly and openly and avoid misrepresentation.
* Promote a working environment where honesty, open communication and minority opinions are valued.
* Exhibit respect and fairness towards all those with whom we come into contact.

1. ACCOUNTABILITY – Greater Ottawa County United Way is responsible to its stakeholders, which include funding recipients, donors and others who have placed faith in our organization. To uphold this trust we:

* Promote good stewardship of Greater Ottawa County United Way resources, including grants and other contributions that are used to pay operating expenses, salaries, and employee benefits.
* Avoid using organizational resources for non-Greater Ottawa County United Way purposes.
* Observe and comply with all laws and regulations affecting Greater Ottawa County United Way.

1. SOLICITATIONS AND VOLUNTARY GIVING – The most responsive contributors are those who have the opportunity to become informed and involved. We therefore:

* Promote voluntary giving of time and money in dealing with donors and vendors.
* Avoid any use of coercion in fundraising activities.

1. DIVERSITY AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITY – Greater Ottawa County United Way is an equal opportunity employer and is committed to the principle of diversity. We therefore:

* Value, champion, embrace diversity in all aspects of Greater Ottawa County United Way activities and respect others without regard to gender, age, marital status, race, disability, disabled veteran status or Vietnam veteran status.
* Support affirmative action and equal employment opportunity.
* Refuse to engage in or tolerate in any other form of discrimination or harassment.

1. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST – To avoid any conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest which could tarnish the reputation of Greater Ottawa County United Way, as well as undermine the public’s trust in Greater Ottawa County United Way:

GREATER OTTAWA COUNTY UNITED WAY STAFF AND REPRESENTATIVES WILL:

* Avoid any activity or outside interest which conflicts or appears to conflict with the best interest of our organization, including involvement with a current or potential Greater Ottawa County United Way vendor, grantee, or competing organization unless disclosed to and not deemed to be inappropriate by the Greater Ottawa County United Way President and the Board of Directors Executive Committee.
* Ensure that outside employment and other activities do not adversely affect the performance of their Greater Ottawa County United Way duties or the achievement of the agency’s mission.
* Ensure that travel, entertainment and related expenses are incurred on a basis consistent with the mission of Greater Ottawa County United Way and not for personal gain or interests.
* Decline any gift, gratuity or favor in the performance of Greater Ottawa County United Way duties except for promotional items of nominal value, and any food, transportation, lodging or entertainment unless directly related to Greater Ottawa County United Way business.
* Refrain from influencing the selection of staff, consultants or vendors who are relatives or personal friends or affiliated with, employ, or employed by a person with whom they have a relationship that adversely affects the appearance of impartiality.

GREATER OTTAWA COUNTY UNITED WAY KEY VOLUNTEERS:

* Should not knowingly take any action, or make any statement, intended to influence the conduct of Greater Ottawa County United Way in such a way to confer any financial benefit on themselves, their immediate family members or an organization in which they or their immediate family members have a significant interest as stakeholders, directors or officers.
* Should disclose all known conflicts or potential conflicts of interest in any matter before the Board of Directors, if they are Board members, or any committee upon which they serve and withdraw from voting in connection with such matter.

1. CONFIDENTIALITY AND PRIVACY – Confidentiality is a hallmark of professionalism. We therefore:

* Ensure that all information, which is confidential, privileged or nonpublic, is not disclosed inappropriately.
* Respect the privacy rights of all individuals in the performance of their Greater Ottawa County United Way duties.

1. POLITICAL CONTRIBUTIONS – Greater Ottawa County United Way encourages individual participation in civic affairs. However as a charitable organization, Greater Ottawa County United Way may not make contributions to any candidate for public office or political committee and may not intervene in any political campaign on behalf of or in opposition to any candidate for public office.

We therefore:

* Avoid making any contributions to any candidate for public office of political committee on behalf of Greater Ottawa County United Way.
* Avoid making any contributions to any candidate for public office or political committee in a manner that may create the appearance that the contribution is on behalf of Greater Ottawa County United Way.
* Avoid using any organizational financial resources, facilities or personnel to endorse or oppose a candidate for public office.
* Clearly communicate that we are not acting on behalf of the organization, if identified as an official of Greater Ottawa County United Way, while engaging in political activities in an individual capacity.
* Avoid engaging in political activities in a manner that may create the appearance that such activity is by or on behalf of Greater Ottawa County United Way.

1. GUIDANCE AND DISCLOSURE – Staff and key volunteers are encouraged to seek guidance concerning the interpretation or application of this Code of Ethics. Any known or possible breaches of the Code of Ethics should be disclosed. Staff should contact a member of the management team. Key volunteers should contact the Board of Directors Chair or a member of the Executive Committee. Reports of possible breaches will be handled in the following manner:

* All reports of possible breaches will be treated in confidence as much as the organization’s duty to investigate and the law allow. If confidentiality cannot be maintained, the individual disclosing the possible breach will be notified.
* All reported breaches will be investigated and, if needed, appropriate action taken based upon the policies of the organization.
* Retaliation against a person who suspects and reports a breach in good faith will be treated as an independent breach of the Code of Ethics.
* Greater Ottawa County United Way affirms prompt and fair resolution of all reported breaches.

1. ANNUAL VERIFICATION – Staff and key volunteers shall annually provide written verification that the Code of Ethics has been reviewed and shall provide written disclosure of all known potential conflicts of interest.

CERTIFICATE

I acknowledge that I have received and read my personal copy of Greater Ottawa County United Way’s Code of Ethics. I understand that each Greater Ottawa County United Way staff member and key volunteer, which includes the Board of Directors and Funds Distribution volunteers, is responsible for adhering to the principles and standards of the Code of Ethics, and I confirm that I have conducted myself in accordance with the principles and standards of the Code of Ethics. The certification process is mandatory for all Greater Ottawa County United Way staff and key volunteers.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_