



# CODE OF CONDUCT

Our values in practice, the heart of our institution.

## A MESSAGE FROM KRIS FORTMAN, CEO



Dear Colleagues,

At MHIF we are constantly making new discoveries through research, and we share our findings to improve the lives of patients worldwide. The integrity of our work – *how* our work is done – matters in how we achieve the spirit of our mission, ***to improve the cardiovascular health of individuals and communities through innovative research and education.*** This commitment to integrity means we follow the law, regulatory requirements, and internal standards that help guide our work.

The *MHIF Code of Conduct* is a resource to help guide how we do that work, and it applies to everyone who represents our organization, including employees, physicians, contractors, interns, scholars, fellows, volunteers, and members of the Board of Directors. No matter your role, each one of us is accountable to the MHIF mission and approaching our work with compassion, care, and humility. We work together as a team and hold ourselves to the highest standards of excellence, ethics, and integrity in all that we do. It is important for you to read and understand the *Code of Conduct*, and to use it in your work as a guide for doing the right thing.

Thank you for the opportunity to work alongside you and witness the great work you do every day. You are the heart of the Minneapolis Heart Institute Foundation, and we are grateful for your commitment to our mission.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kristine Fortman". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kristine Fortman, PhD Chief Executive Officer

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# INTRODUCTION/OVERVIEW

The Minneapolis Heart Institute Foundation® (MHIF) is committed to upholding the highest possible standards of ethical behavior as we work to fulfill our mission of improving the cardiovascular health of individuals and communities through innovative research and education. All MHIF personnel, are expected to exhibit behavior aligned with MHIF's core values, which include:

**Integrity:** We do what we say we are going to do, and we do what is right, even when it's hard.

**Innovation:** We continuously seek to understand, find better ways of doing things, and practice curious solution-seeking.

**Collaboration:** We operate as a team, seeking out diverse and unique perspectives and engaging in healthy dialogue and disagreement to generate ideas and solutions.

**Excellence:** We are accountable and results-oriented, focused on progress and understanding expectations. We are committed to continuous improvement and challenging ourselves to do better. We practice resilience and flexibility to stay the course in all circumstances.

The MHIF Code of Conduct is an integral part of the organization's Compliance Program. It provides a comprehensive picture of how MHIF views compliance generally and is comprised of principles which address potential compliance risks. It establishes guidelines for our behavior and decision-making and explains expectations for acting with integrity. It is a tool, intended to provide guidance to help you understand your what is expected of you in your role at MHIF.

## Who does the Code of Conduct apply to?

The MHIF Code of Conduct applies to all MHIF personnel, including but not limited to employees, physicians, contractors, interns, volunteers, and members of the Board of Directors.

## What am I responsible for?

MHIF personnel must always perform their work in a way that is reliable, honest, fair, and morally responsible, and must always act in the best interests of the organization and the individuals and communities we serve. MHIF's ability to further

its mission depends on a workforce with a strong grounding in ethics and compliance. All MHIF personnel are responsible for:

- Knowing and complying with the Code of Conduct and organizational standards as they apply to your job.
- Not engaging in illegal, unethical, noncompliant, or otherwise improper activities.
- Demonstrating accountability for your actions and decision-making.
- Asking questions when you have them.
- Reporting issues, concerns, noncompliance, and/or potential violations of the Code of Conduct and participating in inquiries and investigations in good faith.

Our work is complex and highly regulated, and it can be difficult to know the right thing to do in every situation. Honest mistakes happen. When they do, it is important to speak up, so that appropriate action can be taken to fix potential problems and minimize harm and risk as quickly as possible. MHIF is committed to maintaining an environment in which all personnel are comfortable coming forward when mistakes are made.

MHIF is committed to deterring any form of intentional noncompliance. Failure to comply with the Code of Conduct, applicable laws and regulations, and organizational standards, including policies and procedures, may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment, and possible legal action, including referral to law enforcement.

## What if I have questions or concerns?

MHIF is committed to ensuring all personnel can ask questions and voice concerns in a safe environment. Situations may arise that are not covered in the Code of Conduct. If you have questions or concerns about anything covered, are unsure about the expectations of you or your colleagues, have a general question or something to report, there are various channels available, including speaking with your manager, any leader, Human Resources, the MHIF Compliance Department, or the Compliance Hotline, which offers the option of anonymous reporting.

# MHIF COMPLIANCE PROGRAM

MHIF has established and maintains a Compliance Program to ensure that professional best practices and legal, ethical, and organizational standards are met and communicated to all personnel. It is a resource for all and is intended to proactively safeguard the organization against risks and support a culture of integrity and compliance.

A commitment to compliance demonstrates to our donors, patients, business partners, and the public that we are responsible, transparent, and worthy of their trust and support, which we rely on to do our work. Our Compliance Program is comprised of elements which are aligned with the Office of Inspector General's General Compliance Program Guidance adaptation for small entities.

## **Compliance Leadership, Oversight, and Culture**

MHIF has designated and will maintain a contact who is responsible for the oversight of the Compliance Program and the continuous strengthening of our culture of integrity and compliance. The designated individual will routinely report to MHIF's Board of Directors and Chief Executive Officer regarding the status of the organization's compliance activities.

MHIF's leaders believe that a strong culture of compliance starts at the top, and that integrity and compliance are part of everyone's role. Leadership is committed to modeling high standards of conduct in their actions, relationships, and decision-making, and to demonstrating consistency between what they say, do, and expect of all other personnel.

## **Written Policies & Procedures**

MHIF is committed to developing and maintaining organizational standards, including policies and procedures, which are consistent with the Code of Conduct and provide clear guidance on how individuals are expected to act and perform their duties in compliance with legal and regulatory requirements. MHIF personnel who work within Allina Health facilities as part of their work for or on behalf of MHIF are also subject to Allina's policies and procedures, as applicable.

## **Training & Education**

MHIF is committed to providing training and education to all personnel through a variety of means, both initially when an individual joins the organization, and periodically as appropriate when updates are made or reminders are necessary. This includes specific education around MHIF's compliance program.

## **Communication & Reporting, Investigation, Corrective Action**

MHIF values open communication so that all personnel can ask questions and voice concerns in a safe environment, free from retaliation. When concerns are reported, the compliance department takes them seriously and investigates as appropriate. If issues are identified, action is taken and corrective action is implemented to prevent similar issues in the future.

## **Risk Assessment, Risk Management, Auditing & Monitoring**

Risk assessment and risk management helps protect our business and our reputation. MHIF is committed to making continuous, proactive efforts to identify potential risks and implement controls to mitigate those risks. Auditing and monitoring activities help us know that we are following the law, regulations, and organizational standards. Routine auditing and monitoring performed in relation to our work includes routine assessment of the effectiveness of MHIF's Compliance Program.

# ETHICS AND INTEGRITY

All MHIF personnel are expected to conduct themselves with integrity and in compliance with applicable laws, regulations, and organizational standards, to practice and model ethical and responsible behavior in all aspects of their work, and to always tell the truth and work to build trust with each other and those we serve. Everything we do at MHIF must be supported by honest words, honest documentation, and honest action.

## Research Integrity

MHIF is dedicated to improving the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of heart and vascular disease through research – this is the core of our work. Research makes it possible to develop generalizable knowledge that improves human health or the provision of equitable, quality healthcare. As such, we have a solemn obligation to follow the highest standards of scientific and scholarly integrity, human subjects protections, honesty, and diligence when conducting and reporting research activities.

MHIF personnel are expected to follow all legal and regulatory requirements and established ethical principles that apply to research, to minimize risks, maximize benefits, respect human dignity, privacy, and autonomy, and to publish and share data and results, including negative findings, to advance research and scholarship.

## Ethical Business Practices

At MHIF, we rely on the trust of our community, patients, partners, and donors to do our work and advance our mission. To maintain this trust, it is critical that we demonstrate our dedication to ethical business practices, transparency, and accountability. This includes, but is not limited to, the following commitments:

- MHIF creates, securely and appropriately maintains, and reports thorough, timely, and accurate research and business records and other documentation, whether in paper, electronic, or other formats.
- MHIF is obligated to responsibly manage our financial resources and adhere to sound accounting principles that produce reliable financial information, ensure fiscal responsibility, and build public trust.
- MHIF is committed to transparency in our work and to preventing, detecting, and reporting all fraud, waste, and abuse (i.e., compliance with Anti-Kickback laws, the Sunshine Act, Fair Market Value practices, etc.).
- MHIF personnel support our physician partners in following all laws with respect to referral practices, and MHIF will not solicit, accept, or offer anything of value in relation to patient referrals.
- MHIF purchases goods and services based on objective criteria and conduct business at arm's length.
- MHIF acts with integrity in negotiating contracts and collaborations and is not inappropriately influenced by gifts, promises of future business, or anything else of value from current or future research sponsors, vendors, suppliers, or others with whom we do business.

## Conflicts of Interest and Commitment

As a nonprofit institution, MHIF has both an ethical and a legal obligation to guard against any actual or potential conflicts of interest or commitment. Conflicts of interest are relationships or interests which could influence or appear to influence the integrity of an individual's actions, judgment, and decision-making in their role at MHIF. Conflicts of commitment arise when an individual's external activities interfere with their duties and obligations to MHIF and usually relate to time allocation. Actual or potential conflicts must be appropriately disclosed, assessed, and managed or eliminated. Examples of common situations that could give rise to potential conflicts include:

- Holding outside employment in addition to your role at MHIF
- Stock/ownership interest in a third party with whom MHIF does business
- Serving on the board of directors or in an advisory role for another research or healthcare related entity
- Speaking or consulting relationships

MHIF maintains internal policies and procedures addressing potential conflicts of interest. In addition,



MHIF research personnel must follow and comply with the Allina Health Outside Interests and Conflicts Management Policy, which includes research-specific disclosure and management requirements. Most outside activities and interests can be managed, so if you are unsure whether an activity, interest, or relationship you hold outside your role at MHIF could create even the appearance of a Conflict of Interest, the best thing to do is disclose it.

### **Gifts & Entertainment**

MHIF recognizes that gifts and entertainment can help foster business relationships and may even be an expected social courtesy in certain circumstances. But they can also create conflicts of interest and a perception of unfairness, cause reputational harm, erode trust, damage relationships, and undermine the organization's compliance culture. The risks in this area are higher for higher-level personnel who have the discretion to make decisions on behalf of the organization. MHIF expects personnel to keep the following best practices in mind and always reach out to the Compliance Department when offered anything of value from an individual or entity with whom we do business:

- MHIF personnel may not solicit gifts, entertainment, or any other business courtesies from individuals or entities with whom MHIF does business.
- Personnel may generally accept gifts of nominal value (less than \$50) but are prohibited from accepting cash or cash equivalents, such as gift cards. Exceptions may be made on a case-by-case basis in consultation with the Compliance Department.
- Business courtesies, including meals, entertainment, travel, and lodging, may be accepted if they are customary and common, are not excessive in value, and are given and accepted with the understanding that personnel are in no way obligated by their acceptance.
- Personnel should use good judgment and consider the type of entertainment or gift offered as a reflection on the organization – inappropriate gifts and entertainment which are inconsistent with MHIF's mission, values, and expected behaviors are prohibited.

- Use caution and be aware of third-party policies when offering gifts, entertainment, or business courtesies to MHIF's business partners.
- Personnel must consult with the Compliance Department before providing anything of value to government officials. The United States and other countries maintain strict laws that govern providing gifts, meals, and entertainment to government officials and employees.

### **Government Interactions**

MHIF is committed to establishing and maintaining effective relationships and open, constructive, and professional communication with public officials, government agencies, and our regulators. When we receive inquiries from a government agency, we respond in an appropriate and timely manner. MHIF does not tolerate bribery or any form of corruption and prohibits offering, authorizing, or providing anything of value, either directly or indirectly, to or for a government official or other representative, to influence official action, win business, or obtain improper advantage.

### **Political Activities**

Because of our tax-exempt status, there are strict limits on MHIF's participation in policy work and political activities. Personnel are prohibited from making contributions from MHIF funds to or on behalf of a political party, committee, candidate or official. MHIF encourages personnel to take part in politics as private individuals but prohibits participation on behalf of the organization or using company time and resources.

Personnel are expected to be aware of how their conversations and behaviors at work regarding politics could be perceived as part of our commitment to respecting the diversity of beliefs within our workforce and may not participate in political-related activities or display clothing or other items that interfere with or disrupt the workplace in any way or violate MHIF's nondiscrimination policy. In addition, personnel running for public office may not use the MHIF brand in association with any political or campaign activity without MHIF's written permission.

## Reporting Suspected Misconduct (Whistleblower Policy)

All MHIF personnel have a personal responsibility to report any activity that appears to violate or potentially violate the Code of Conduct or any applicable laws, regulations, or organizational standards. Failure to report noncompliance could result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

The freedom to raise questions and report concerns without fear of retaliation, retribution, or harassment is essential to maintaining and strengthening the culture of compliance at MHIF. Retaliation against any individual for raising questions or

concerns or participating in good faith in any inquiry or investigation of suspected violations, non-compliance, or wrongdoing is prohibited and will not be tolerated. Any instances of retaliation should be immediately reported to your manager, any leader, Human Resources, the MHIF Compliance Department, or the Compliance Hotline.

The MHIF Compliance Hotline allows for anonymous reporting and can be reached at 1 (877) 767-7781, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, or by sending an email to [MHIF@getintouch.com](mailto:MHIF@getintouch.com). Unless you indicate otherwise, your name and contact information will be removed from any report before it is forwarded to the MHIF Compliance Department for handling.

# CONFIDENTIALITY, PRIVACY, AND SECURITY

MHIF personnel have access to a variety of sensitive information related to their work and are expected to take all necessary precautions against unauthorized use or disclosure. Sensitive information includes Protected Health Information, as well as personnel and confidential business information, and may come in a variety of formats, such as written, electronic, or verbal. Personnel are expected to follow the guidelines below to ensure the privacy and security of the sensitive information entrusted to us.

## Confidentiality of MHIF Information and Intellectual Property

- Do not share information outside the organization unless you receive explicit authorization to do so.
- Only share information internally if there is a specific business need.
- Protecting the confidentiality of business information and respecting intellectual property rights is required. Examples of confidential business information and intellectual property include but are not limited to:
  - > Non-public information about MHIF
  - > Financial and business planning information

- > Contract terms, insurance, other arrangements
- > Processes, policies, and procedures
- > Training methods, manuals, and materials
- > Databases, programs, software, other technology
- > Sales and marketing technique
- > Donor/supplier/vendor lists or information

## Information/Data Privacy

- Only utilize the minimum amount of protected health information as is necessary to accomplish the intended use, disclosure, or request.
- Compliance with HIPAA, state, US, and international privacy laws, regulations, and organizational policies is always required, including Allina Health policies and procedures, as applicable.
- Contact MHIF Compliance for guidance if you need to access data or information from an international partner, as privacy and data protection laws are changing rapidly and vary greatly from country to country.
- Do not look up, use, or in any way access anyone else's personal information (including patients, colleagues, and family members) unless you have a specific business need to do so.



- Do not talk about confidential research or other sensitive information with anyone who doesn't have a right to know, including friends or family, and do not gossip about research participants, donors, business partners or others generally, even with colleagues.

### IT/Data Security

- Lock your computer when you step away by pressing CTRL+ALT+DELETE, then hit ENTER.
- Use strong passwords that are easy for you to remember and difficult for others to guess.
- Never share passwords, even with your manager or another leader.
- Do not leave devices (i.e., laptops, tablets, smartphones) unlocked or unattended, whether business or personal – always make sure they are secure and within your control to avoid unauthorized access or theft.
- Report missing devices immediately.
- Use only MHIF-approved devices and MHIF or Allina email for work purposes.

- Never email, download, or copy confidential or protected information to a personal device or a device unauthorized people can access.
- Communicate and send patient information securely through encrypted email or another approved security tool, and never through social media or unauthorized third-party apps.
- Be on the lookout for phishing attempts and other scams and report them as applicable to Emerson Technologies at (651) 454-7729 / [help@emersontech.net](mailto:help@emersontech.net) (for MHIF email) or Allina Health at [security@allina.com](mailto:security@allina.com) (for Allina email).
- The following are prohibited: introducing viruses or intentionally destroying or modifying files on the network, intentional misuse of data or equipment, and collection and/or transmission of materials in violation of any federal, state, or local law.

Finally, if you're not sure, ask! Speak up if something looks suspicious, and don't be afraid to ask questions about the best ways to keep information and devices safe and secure.

## CONTRIBUTING TO A SAFE AND PRODUCTIVE WORKPLACE

MHIF is committed to providing and maintaining a safe and healthy working environment for all. Personnel are expected to behave in a way that respects the rights and dignity of others. This expectation also applies to any outside parties with whom MHIF does business, such as vendors, donors, sponsors, and research participants.

### Respect for Others

MHIF prohibits intimidation and maintains a zero-tolerance policy regarding all types of discrimination, including based on race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, pregnancy, marital status, disability, socioeconomic status, age, familial status, genetic information, local commissions activity, veteran or uniformed servicemember status, or other classifications protected by federal, state, or local law.

MHIF also prohibits and maintains a zero-tolerance policy regarding threats or harassment of any kind, including, without limitation, verbal harassment (abusive, intimidating, or derogatory statements, slurs, teasing, jokes, epithets, and innuendo), physical harassment (sexual and personal touching, assault, physical interference with normal work), and visual harassment (posters, cartoons, drawings, computer materials, sexual gestures).

MHIF encourages individuals to be advocates for their personal sense of physical and mental safety in the workplace. If you or a colleague experience any of the above related to your work at MHIF, please report it immediately to your manager or any leader, Human Resources, the MHIF Compliance Department, or the Compliance Hotline. Violations of such policies could result in immediate termination.

## **Substance Use + Smoke Free Workplace**

As part of our commitment to a safe and healthy working environment, we maintain a drug and smoke-free workplace.

- Smoking and tobacco use are not allowed at MHIF facilities.
- The use, possession, purchase, sale, distribution, manufacturing, transport or dispensing of illegal drugs, or prescription drugs not properly obtained or used in accordance with a valid prescription, is prohibited.
- MHIF personnel may not report to a MHIF facility or perform work for or on behalf of the organization, regardless of their physical location, while under the influence of alcohol, marijuana, or illegal drugs.
- Personnel taking prescription or over-the-counter medications which could reasonably interfere with the safe and effective performance of their work should immediately notify Human Resources.

MHIF may sponsor and/or host events where alcoholic beverages are served, and personnel may be permitted to consume alcohol at such events but are expected to use good judgment, maintain professional behavior, and should not drink in a way that endangers the safety of others or violates the law.

Resources and support for MHIF employees concerned about their alcohol or drug use are available through the Employee Assistance Program. Utilization of these services is confidential.

## **Physical Safety and Security**

MHIF prioritizes the protection of our most valuable asset – our workforce – and will not tolerate any actions or behaviors that endanger personnel. Personnel are expected to be familiar with and participate in all training related to workplace safety and to report any incident that compromises workplace safety, including threats or unsafe working conditions, injuries, accidents, safety breaches or other hazards, to a manager or Human Resources immediately.

MHIF prohibits carrying or possessing firearms or other weapons at any MHIF facility, regardless of an individual's legal right to own, possess, or carry. Any individual in possession of a firearm or other weapon while on MHIF property or while performing work for or on behalf of MHIF is subject to disciplinary action,

up to and including termination. Third parties may be removed from the property and reported to the authorities.

## **Responsible Stewardship of Resources**

MHIF is committed to the responsible stewardship of our resources. We owe it to our donors and to the individuals and communities we serve to ensure that MHIF's assets are used only for legitimate purposes related to MHIF's research and educational mission. MHIF's Board of Directors and Finance and Audit Committee of the Board play an oversight role by guiding high-level stewardship of our financial resources. Personnel are expected to promote efficient operations and ensure that organizational assets used in their role are protected from misuse, loss, improper disclosure, and destruction. MHIF personnel should always strive to use our resources in accordance with our values and keep in mind the following:

- The MHIF name, acronym, logo, and branding (i.e., the red heart) are the visual representation of the organization's identity and mission and should be used only for business purposes and with authorization.
- Personnel are expected to follow the MHIF Brand Style Guide and must contact the Marketing and Communications Department for guidance before utilizing MHIF's branding and logo.
- Personnel are expected to utilize the organization's financial resources and other company property, equipment, and supplies in effective and efficient ways.
- MHIF is committed to ensuring appropriate, agreed upon donor recognition and acknowledgment and honoring donor intent with respect to gifts.
- All rights in and ownership of any ideas, opportunities, or work product of any kind (written, invented, designed or created) produced during employment with MHIF, either alone or with others, belong exclusively to MHIF unless another agreement, policy, or law applies.
- Personnel are expected to maintain strict confidentiality regarding the organization's assets even after their relationship with MHIF has ended, regardless of the reason.

# RESPONSIBLE AND EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

At MHIF, we communicate with integrity and in good faith, and we are open and honest with each other and the individuals and communities we serve. We present information in a clear, truthful, and professional manner. We have an open-door policy, which means everyone can ask questions or raise concerns to any leader within the organization, up to and including our Chief Executive Officer and Board of Directors.

MHIF personnel are expected to always be clear in public communications (including social media) that the views expressed are theirs individually and do not reflect the views or endorsement of MHIF. Personnel should only speak on behalf of MHIF if authorized to do so as part of their job or if they have received express permission from an authorized individual. Any inquiries from the media should always be directed to the MHIF Marketing and Communications team.

## Social Media Use

In the age of social media and around-the-clock access to mechanisms that allow for nearly instant communication anywhere across the world, we expect MHIF personnel to become familiar with and follow the best practices and rules outlined below to maximize the benefits and minimize the risks of these tools to our work.

- Remember that your social media activities, both professionally and outside your work at MHIF, should be consistent with MHIF's high standards of professional conduct, values, and associated behaviors.
- Work with the MHIF Marketing and Communications, Regulatory, and/or Compliance team(s) to ensure coordination and compliance with regulatory requirements and organizational standards if you utilize social media as a part of your work at MHIF or are invited to speak at a public or professional event.

- Never share confidential information on social media, including information about MHIF business, donors, research participants, or research studies.
- Be cautious when personally connecting with individuals and entities we do business with on social media and when considering whether to connect with colleagues.
- Personal social media connections between study team members and active study participants is prohibited, and should be avoided in most circumstances even after the study has ended.
- MHIF personnel are ambassadors of the MHIF brand and culture and may share and engage with content from MHIF social media accounts. Content must be shared in a way that is consistent with our brand and what is shared on MHIF social media accounts, and MHIF social media accounts should take the lead in making new announcements.

## A Word on Artificial Intelligence

Much like the rest of the healthcare industry and every other field of human endeavor, MHIF is working to define its Artificial Intelligence (AI) policy and assessing how it can be responsibly and ethically integrated into business systems and functions. The field is evolving rapidly, and legal, ethical, and regulatory standards are beginning to take shape.

MHIF recognizes that advanced technologies such as AI introduce the potential for value-add which must be thoughtfully balanced against a deep understanding of their complexity and risk. As we work to articulate our position in this space, we will continue to be guided by our values of Integrity, Excellence, Innovation and Collaboration, as we are in all aspects of our work.

# REPORTING RESOURCES

MHIF is committed to ensuring all personnel can ask questions and voice concerns in a safe environment without fear of retaliation – this “speak up” philosophy is critical to maintaining and strengthening the culture of integrity and compliance at MHIF. You may report concerns or potential wrongdoing in any of the following ways:

- Reach out directly to your manager or any leader.
- Contact the MHIF Human Resources Department.
- Contact the MHIF Compliance Department.
- Report concerns to the MHIF Compliance Hotline, which allows for anonymous reporting and is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, at (877) 767-7781 or by sending an email to [MHIF@getintouch.com](mailto:MHIF@getintouch.com).
- Report information security concerns to:
  - > MHIF’s Information Security Committee
  - > Emerson Technologies at (651) 454-7729 / [help@emersontech.net](mailto:help@emersontech.net) or Allina Health at [security@allina.com](mailto:security@allina.com), as applicable.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT & ATTESTATION

My signature below represents that I have received, read, and understand my responsibilities as outlined in the MHIF Code of Conduct.

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

Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_