

# UHN Policies and Codes

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## Context and Instructions

Document last updated: July 15, 2025

This booklet includes UHN Policies and Codes that need to be reviewed by every new employee prior to beginning their employment. Each of these policies is an integral basis of UHN's philosophy. This document is separated into

Part 1: Code of Workplace Ethics

Part 2: Corporate and Administrative Policies

Part 3: People and Culture Policies

Part 4: Research Policies. *Note, only applies to individuals hired into Research roles.*

**Once reviewed and by signing and returning your Offer Letter, you have agreed to adhere to all policies within.**

Once you commence your employment, you will be expected to be familiar with all of our Corporate and Departmental policies, which can be accessed via the UHN intranet in the top toolbar called "Policies" ([click here](#)).

**Note:** The links within the policies are only valid when the policy is being read and reviewed inside of UHN. Please refer to these links again once your employment has commenced ([click here](#)).

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## **Part 1: UHN Code of Ethics**

## A message from UHN's President and Chief Executive Officer

University Health Network (UHN) is committed to supporting a culture which values integrity and ethical leadership. We have a responsibility as Canada's #1 Hospital and the World's #1 publicly funded hospital to lead by example and strengthen our reputation for lawful conduct and responsible governance.

All employees are responsible for our actions and for fostering a culture of respect and integrity. All leaders are responsible for taking concerns raised by our colleagues seriously and seeking solutions for those concerns. Beyond this, we have an obligation to model ethical behaviour in all situations, professional transactions and daily interactions. As UHN's President & CEO, I take this commitment seriously and pledge to lead with respect and integrity.

In return, I ask each member of the UHN community to live our shared values of integrity, safety, compassion, teamwork and stewardship in all of your actions.

As an organization that strives to ensure the needs of patients come first, we must seek to earn the highest level of trust from our communities every day. Ethical issues can sometimes be challenging to navigate and our Code of Workplace Ethics acts as a resource that reflects our values as an organization.

Please read the Code, think about what it means in your own work environment and forward any concerns to me or to Mark Spencer, Executive Vice President – People and Culture.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kevin", written in a cursive style.

Dr. Kevin Smith  
President & CEO UHN

## UHN Code of Ethics

### Introduction

UHN is committed to upholding the highest ethical standards. This Code of Workplace Ethics provides a guide to acting ethically at work, helping to ensure sound decision-making, professional practice, and interpersonal relationships.

### Guiding Principles

The values of Safety, Compassion, Teamwork, Integrity and Stewardship set the following guiding principles:

- Comply with legislation and UHN policies
- Foster a respectful working environment, with regard for civility, diversity, inclusion and professionalism
- Protect the hospital's physical, financial and intellectual assets, and use resources wisely
- Deal transparently and fairly in all business relationships
- Take personal responsibility for the safety of patients and of the workplace, and be open to the feedback of others

This Code also provides guidance and resources to assist in making ethical decisions, and for reporting situations that may harm the hospital's patients, staff, clients, business partners or reputation.

Everyone in the UHN community – employees, physicians, students and volunteers – must comply with the standards established by this code. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action, up to, and including, termination or loss of privilege.

### Complying with Legislation and Policies

The UHN value of *integrity* requires honesty, fairness, and commitment to certain legislation and policies, including, but not limited to the following sets of policies:

- Privacy
- Occupational Health and Safety (note, only viewable once employees have access to the [UHN Policies intranet page](#))
- Fostering Respect
- Conflict of Interest

To ensure that regulatory requirements are met, anyone with questions or concerns is encouraged to speak to your leader, your People and Culture representation or to Legal Affairs.

### Privacy

Everyone at UHN must treat patients' health information with respect and sensitivity. This is done in accordance with UHN privacy policies, the Personal Health Information Protection Act (PHIPA) 2004, and the Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act (PIPEDA) [Click here to review the Privacy and Access policy.](#)

**Conflict of Interest**

A conflict of interest exists when someone has a direct or indirect personal interest in a situation that influences, or appears to influence, a decision or action in his/her favor. This can damage UHN's reputation and relationships with patients, colleagues, or those who do business with the organization.

Any conflict of interest must be disclosed to management or to Human Resources in a timely manner. Once reported, management will take action to assist staff in the management of the conflict, including removing the conflicted individual from the situation, if appropriate.

[Click here to review the Conflict of Interest policy.](#)

[Click here to review the Relationship Attestation and Disclosure policy.](#)

**Fostering a Respectful Working Environment**

Respect, civility and professionalism are foundational to UHN's culture. The UHN value of teamwork means that we are firmly committed to maintaining a workplace where individual rights and dignity are upheld, diversity is valued, and where everyone's voice is heard.

UHN's Fostering Respect in the Workplace Policy, along with the many supportive provisions in other policies about appropriate conduct, and the training, tips and tools offered through UHN's Respect, Civility & Professionalism @Work program, all serve to assist TeamUHN to speak up for themselves, and for others.

Everyone at UHN shares in the responsibility to maintain a respectful culture, free of incivility, harassment, discrimination and violence.

[Click here to review the Fostering Respect in the Workplace policy.](#)

**Protecting Hospital Assets**

Adhering to UHN's value of stewardship requires that resources are used wisely – responsibly, efficiently, and effectively. Care must be taken to ensure that UHN does not incur unnecessary cost or inconvenience.

Hospital assets, or property, may be physical, financial or intellectual. Physical assets include equipment, computers, supplies, and tools. Intellectual property includes business methods, brands, software, patents, copyrights, trademarks and written materials. Financial assets include cash, and benefits received as part of compensation. Theft or fraud involving any of these assets will not be tolerated, and anyone who believes that others are engaged in questionable conduct should report to management or to the contacts listed in the [Reporting a Breach of the Code](#) section of this document. Additionally, the mention of UHN on social media must be done with caution and consideration of public perception. The use of the UHN logo must have prior authorization from the Communication and Brand Strategy team.

[Click here to review the Administrative: Intellectual Property Protection and Commercialization policy.](#)

[Click here to review the Appropriate Use of Information & Information Technology policy](#)

### Acting Ethically in all Business Relationships

It is expected that business relationships with external stakeholders – vendors, contractors, consultants and agents acting on behalf of UHN – carried out with honesty and fairness, and that all commitments and agreements are honoured, as is consistent with the values of *integrity* and *stewardship*.

UHN members should not accept or solicit, directly or indirectly, gifts for personal benefit from third parties, including vendors (including, but not limited to, meals, industry sponsored dinners or events, entertainment, favours, goods or services).

### Taking Responsibility for Patient and Employee Safety

UHN's value of *safety* requires vigilance to ensure that nothing compromises a patient's care or a co-worker's physical or psychological safety.

Each one of us is entrusted with fostering an environment where speaking up for ourselves, our colleagues, or for our patients, is expected and welcomed. In such an environment, errors are prevented, staff feel empowered and supported, and everyone stays safe.

This means that we must be open to accepting feedback about our actions. It can be about how we perform our work or how we act towards our colleagues. By hearing out others, we build better relationships, learn about ourselves and improve our performance and success at work.

### Reporting a Breach of this Code

When we have little information about a difficult situation or our values seem to be in conflict with each other, we can find ourselves at an ethical crossroads. It is important to make a decision that considers all the consequences, including possible harms. But, it isn't always easy to determine the right course to take.

Decision Making Help	Ethics Checklist
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify the facts</li> <li>Determine the ethical principles in conflict: what values represent the different directions you wish to go?</li> <li>Explore options</li> <li>Act on your decision</li> </ul>	<p>For each possible decision: consider how you might answer each of the following questions:</p> <p>Does it fit UHN's values?</p> <p>Does it fit my profession's values?</p> <p>Is it fair?</p> <p>Can I justify it?</p> <p>Will it reflect poorly on UHN?</p> <p>Is it legal?</p>

When you find yourself in an ethical dilemma, you can speak with your manager or People and Culture for guidance. If you need to speak to someone confidentially, you can call the Ethics and Civility Helpline, available Monday to Friday, 9 to 5 pm: 14-3344, 416-340-3344



**Whistleblower Line**

If the situation is of a serious nature (i.e., cases of theft, fraud, harm to equipment, serious conflict of interest, data falsification, violation of procurement policy) and you are concerned about revealing your identity, you can access UHN's anonymous whistleblower line:

- ClearView Connects: 1-800-344-4491 or through [www.clearviewconnects.com](http://www.clearviewconnects.com)

The ClearView whistleblower system allows you to make a report and upload any supporting documents you may have. The information you provide is then sent, without any identifiers, to a number of investigators at UHN who can continue to communicate with you through ClearView, as necessary, all without knowing your identity. Although UHN cannot guarantee that your identity may be guessed, all efforts to safeguard your identity will be made, unless disclosure is required by law.

**Investigations**

The more information is provided, the better the investigation. Examples of information that you can report include details about the individuals involved, witness names, location, times, and dates. The ClearView whistleblower system also allows you to upload documents and images. The system is very secure, and only a few people, designated by the Executive Vice President People and Culture, have access to its information.

Investigations will be conducted in a timely and robust manner by the people designated to do so. Whistleblowers themselves should not attempt to investigate, only to provide information.

Regardless, UHN will comply with any legal reporting requirements such as those associated with the Occupational Health and Safety Act, environmental protection, or patient safety.

**Whistleblower Protection**

UHN is committed to protecting whistleblowers and does not tolerate acts of reprisal against anyone who makes a good faith report of known or suspected ethical or legal misconduct. A "good faith" report means that you have provided all of the information you have and you believe it to be true.

Reprisal is any act that you may experience as a penalty for coming forward. Examples of reprisal include reprimands, intimidation, threats to fire or demote you, and exclusion. Those who engage in reprisal may face disciplinary action up to, and including, termination or loss of privileges. If you believe you experience reprisal, report it immediately through whatever means you used to first report a breach of this Code.

[Click here to review the Whistleblower policy](#)

## Part 2: Corporate and Administrative Policies

## Confidentiality Agreement

1. During my association with University Health Network (UHN), I will have access to information and material relating to patients, medical staff, employees, other individuals, or UHN, which is of a private and confidential nature.
2. At all times, I shall respect the privacy and dignity of patients, employees, and all associated individuals. Specifically with respect to personal health information, I acknowledge that any such personal health information maintained by UHN is subject to the Personal Health Information Protection Act and its regulations and I am familiar with and agree to comply with the Act's provisions related to access, disclosure, retention and disposal.
3. I shall treat all UHN administrative, financial, patient, employee and other records as confidential information, and I will protect them to ensure full confidentiality, including, but not limited to, de-identifying the data, whenever possible. I shall not read records or discuss, divulge, or disclose such information about UHN, unless there is a legitimate purpose related to my association with UHN. This obligation does not apply to information in the public domain. I shall not remove confidential information from UHN premises except when necessary for the provision of health care. When in transit, I shall securely store and ensure the confidential information is in my custody and control at all times. If confidential information must be removed from UHN, I shall ensure it is de-identified, where possible.
4. I shall ensure that confidential information is not inappropriately accessed, used, or released either directly by me, or by virtue of my signature or security access to premises or systems.
5. Violations of this policy include, but are not limited to:
  - accessing information that I do not require for job purposes;
  - misusing, disclosing without proper authorization, or altering patient or personnel information,
  - disclosing to another person your user name and/or password for accessing electronic records.
6. I shall only access, process, and transmit confidential information using hardware, software, and other authorized equipment, as required by the duties of my position. I shall store all electronic confidential information on a UHN secure network. Where electronic confidential information is stored on the local drive, I shall ensure it is de-identified, where possible. I shall report any tools or software requiring hard drive storage for patient care functions to the UHN Privacy Office.

7. I shall immediately report all lost or stolen confidential information to my immediate supervisor and to the UHN Privacy Office.
8. I understand that UHN will conduct periodic audits to ensure compliance with this agreement and its privacy policy.
9. I also understand that should any of these conditions be breached, I may be subject to corrective action up to and including termination of employment, loss of privileges, termination of a contract, or similar action appropriate to my association with UHN. **I understand that a privacy breach is an offence under PHIPA and I may be subject to prosecution by provincial authorities if I am found guilty of this offence.**
10. I understand and agree to abide by the conditions outlined in this agreement, and they will remain in force even if I cease to have an association with UHN. When my relationship with UHN comes to an end, I agree to securely return all property belonging to UHN, including but not limited to keys, devices and any record of personal health information in my possession.

## Confidentiality Policies

Note to CABS team – the following policies should be in this section, the below chart is only for you from a spacing stand point

Name of policy	Link to Policy	Number of pages in policy
Relationship Attestation & Disclosure	<a href="#">Relationship Attestation &amp; Disclosure</a>	9
Privacy and Access	<a href="#">Privacy &amp; Access</a>	16
Intellectual Property Protection and Commercialization Policy	<a href="#">Administrative: Intellectual Property Protection &amp; Commercialization policy 1.20.013 (uhn.ca)</a>	12
Appropriate Use of Information and Information Technology Policy	<a href="#">Administrative: Appropriate Use of Information &amp; Information Technology policy 1.40.012 (uhn.ca)</a>	19
Electronic Monitoring	<a href="#">Electronic Monitoring</a>	4
Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act – Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation	<a href="#">Accessibility Standards for People with Disabilities 1.20.007 (uhn.ca)</a>	9
Scent Free Environment	<a href="#">Administrative: Scent-free Environment policy 1.20.016 (uhn.ca)</a>	2

## Part 3: People and Culture Policies

Note to CABS team – the following policies should be in this section, the below chart is only for you from a spacing stand point

Name of policy	Link to Policy	Number of pages in policy
Conflict of Interest	<a href="#">P&amp;C: Conflict of Interest policy 2.50.002 (uhn.ca)</a>	4
Whistleblower	<a href="#">P&amp;C: Whistleblower policy 2.50.010 (uhn.ca)</a>	3
Photo Identification Cards	<a href="#">Administrative: Photo Identification Cards policy 1.60.007 (uhn.ca)</a>	4
Fostering Respect in the Workplace	<a href="#">P&amp;C: Fostering Respect in the Workplace policy 2.50.005 (uhn.ca)</a>	11
Disconnecting from work	<a href="#">Disconnecting From Work</a>	4

## Part 4: Research Policies

Note to CABS team – the following policies should be in this section, the below chart is only for you from a spacing stand point

Name of policy	Link to Policy	Number of pages in policy
Conflict of Interest of Research Personnel	<a href="#">Research: Conflict of Interest of Research Personnel policy 40.90.002 (uhn.ca)</a>	6
Responsible Conduct of Research	<a href="#">Research: Responsible Conduct of Research policy 40.90.001 (uhn.ca)</a>	14

## Next Steps

Thank you for taking the time to review UHN Policies and Codes. **Once reviewed and by signing and returning your Offer Letter, you have agreed to adhere to all policies within.**

Once you commence your employment, you will be expected to be familiar with all of our Corporate and Departmental policies, which can be accessed via the UHN intranet in the top toolbar called "Policies" ([click here](#)).

We will also review some of these policies in New Employee Orientation, and you will be exposed to additional content when completing your legally mandated training ([click here](#) Legally Mandated Training Guide).

**Please Advise:** The links within the policies are only valid when the policy is being read and reviewed inside of UHN. Please refer to these links again once your employment has commenced ([click here](#)).

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