EXT-003

Communicating with Government Officials

Effective Date Wednesday, October 18, 2006

Status Final

Last Revised Friday, February 9, 2024

Policy Type University

Contact Office President (Office of the)

Oversight Executive
President of the University

Applies To Academic Division, the Medical Center, and the College at Wise.

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Reason for Policy

This policy establishes a structure for communication with federal, state, and local government officials and sets forth requirements related to direct communication by faculty and staff with federal, state, and local government officials. The policy supports the University to maintain one voice and agenda in governmental relations work. The policy also aligns and coordinates University engagement with federal, state, and local government officials across the University to maintain compliance with state and federal lobbying laws and restrictions. The University is prohibited by federal tax law as a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization, from participating in any campaign or partisan activities.

Definition of Terms

Terms

Description There are no terms that require definition.

Policy Statement

All employees (i.e., faculty, classified and University staff, professional research staff, Medical Center employees, employees at the College at Wise) are free to communicate with members of the Virginia General Assembly, U.S. Congress, federal and state executive and legislative branch agencies, or elected officials, but in doing so they must clearly distinguish their personal opinions from the positions and policies of the University. It is the affirmative responsibility of all employees not to represent their personal opinions as positions or

policies of the University unless the president has specifically authorized them to do so. Employees should use neither University letterhead nor electronic mail sent through University mail servers to communicate their personal opinions or positions.

1. **Responsibilities:**
   The university president and their designated vice presidents are authorized spokespersons on behalf of the University. The Offices of State and Federal Government Relations manage all University engagement at the state and federal levels, respectively. University communications with state and federal officials must be coordinated in advance with these respective offices. University communications with local government officials and agencies must be coordinated in advance with the executive vice president and chief operating officer.

   The president, through the executive director for federal relations, is responsible for developing all University positions on federal legislation and regulations and for coordinating University relations with Congress, congressional staff, and executive and legislative branch agencies. Faculty solicitations for federal appropriations funding must be made through procedures approved by the vice president for research and the executive director for federal relations, and these solicitations and submissions of proposals should be consistent with University policy and procedures, particularly in the case of research funding requests. These and all other communications with federal government officials and agencies must be coordinated in advance with the University's executive director for federal relations.

   Employees are responsible for informing the Office of the President, through the Offices of State and Federal Government Relations, if they are to testify before the General Assembly or Congress and must note that their testimonies represent personal opinions, unless otherwise authorized by the president.

2. **Compliance with Policy:**
   Failure to comply with the requirements of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination in accordance with relevant University policies.

   Direct questions about this policy to the Office of the President.

Procedures

To manage and coordinate engagement with government officials, please contact:
Academic Division:

- for federal issues, Office of Federal Relations in the Office of the President
- for state issues, Office of State Government Relations
- for local issues, Office of Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer

UVA Health:

- Office of External Affairs for UVA Health

College at Wise:

- Office of the Chancellor

Procedures for Faculty Solicitations for Federal Appropriations Funding, please contact the Office of Federal Relations.

Related Information

Research Regulations
Use of Electronic Communications and Social Media (DHRM Policy 1.75)
Political Activity

Major Category External Relations

Next Scheduled Review Tuesday, February 9, 2027

Revision History

Revised 2/9/24; Added Compliance section 7/19/21.

Supercedes Policy Text

4.11 Governmental Relations.

Approved By President of the University

Approved Date Wednesday, October 18, 2006