



October 18, 2022

The decision of the IHMM Professional Standards Committee Concerning the Submission of the Conflict of Interest Policy and Report Form by Matt Wenger, ITPG

Submitted on: October 10, 2022

Committee Informed on: October 12, 2022

Committee Met and Determination Rendered: October 18, 2022

The IHMM Professional Standards Committee met on the above date and reviewed the submission of Matt Wenger of ITPG concerning a potential conflict of interest.

Committee Decision: No conflicts were found, and no further action was needed.


Eugene A. Guilford, Jr., CAE
IHMM Executive Director
October 18, 2022



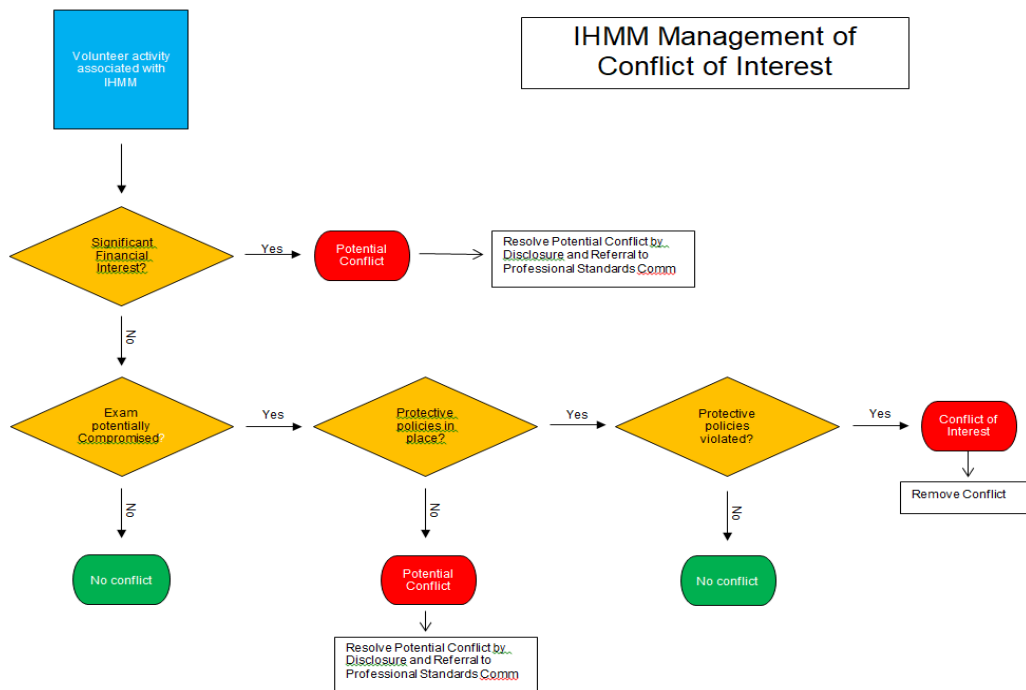
IHMM Conflict of Interest Report Form IHMM Committee on Professional Standards

IHMM has a Conflict of Interest Policy found here > <https://ihmm.org/volunteer-service-agreement/> in §VII of the Volunteer Service Agreement that every IHMM Board member and Committee member has to have read and signed acknowledging adherence to the policy.

1. **Conflict of Interest, Defined.** A situation in which a person has a duty to more than one person or organization, but cannot do justice to the actual or potentially adverse interests of both parties. This includes when an individual's personal interests or concerns are inconsistent with the best of IHMM and its certificants, or when an IHMM official's personal interests are contrary to his/her loyalty and duty to serve IHMM.

If a potential conflict has arisen, the party or parties involved in identifying or participating or about to participate in an activity that may violate this Conflict of Interest Policy shall fill out and remit this form to the IHMM Executive Director, who will then refer it to the [IHMM Professional Standards Committee](#) for review and adjudication.

2. **The following graphic depicts how a potential conflict of interest may arise, and then be considered by the Professional Standards Committee:**



The primary interest of the IHMM Board of Directors in creating this process and delegating it to the Professional Standards Committee to execute the process and policy is to have an open and transparent process of [a] identifying potential conflicts, [b] clarifying what the issue may be, [c] have the Professional Standards Committee consider whether a person or person[s] has a significant financial interest which may constitute a conflict with the mission, purposes, and guidance of IHMM, and [d] whether the process of developing exams and item banks that serve exams has been, or could be, compromised under the potential action to be reviewed.

3. Objective Standards of Consideration by the Professional Standards Committee

There are seven [7] steps in considering a potential conflict of interest as pursued by the IHMM Professional Standards Committee:

- Identify the issues.
- Understand everyone's interests.
- Determine if a potential or real conflict does or may exist.
- Evaluate the options.
- Select an option or options for corrective action to mitigate the potential or real conflict using objective conflict resolution strategies [*see the next section*].
- Document the agreement(s) between IHMM and the party [ies] involved in mitigating the conflict if one does or may exist.
- Agree on contingencies, monitoring, and evaluation.

Conflict Resolution Strategy #1: Avoiding

Avoiding is when people just ignore or withdraw from the conflict. They choose this method when the discomfort of confrontation exceeds the potential reward of resolution of the conflict. While this might seem easy to accommodate for the facilitator, people aren't contributing anything of value to the conversation and may be withholding worthwhile ideas. When conflict is avoided, nothing is resolved.

Conflict Resolution Strategy #2: Competing

Competing is used by people who go into a conflict planning to win. They're assertive and not cooperative. This method is characterized by the assumption that one side wins and everyone else loses. It doesn't allow room for diverse perspectives in a well-informed total picture. Competing might work in sports or war, but it's rarely a good strategy for group problem-solving.

Conflict Resolution Strategy #3: Accommodating

Accommodating is a strategy where one party gives in to the wishes or demands of another. They're being cooperative but not assertive. This may appear to be a gracious way to give in when one figures out s/he has been wrong about an argument. It's less helpful when one party accommodates another merely to preserve harmony or to avoid disruption. Like avoidance, it can result in unresolved issues. Too much

accommodation can result in groups where the most assertive parties commandeer the process and take control of most conversations.

Conflict Resolution Strategy #4: Collaborating

Collaborating is the method used when people are both assertive and cooperative. A group may learn to allow each participant to contribute with the possibility of co-creating a shared solution that everyone can support.

A great way to collaborate and overcome conflict is to reach out and touch them.

Conflict Resolution Strategy #5: Compromising

Another strategy is compromising, where participants are partially assertive and cooperative. The concept is that everyone gives up a little bit of what they want, and no one gets everything they want. The perception of the best outcome when working by compromise is that which “splits the difference.” Compromise is perceived as being fair, even if no one is particularly happy with the final outcome.

Which of these strategies is employed in resolving a real or potential conflict is driven largely by the nature of the conflict itself.

- Threats to the security and sanctity of IHMM exams and the entire process involved in creating and maintaining them will be met by swift, decisive and complete preventative action ensuring that IHMM’s exams are protected.
- Appearances of adverse financial interests developing by someone using a privileged position as an IHMM Volunteer [...take my course because as a member of the IHMM committee I have inside knowledge no one else has...] would be met with strong discouragement from behaving in a way that reflects poorly on the actor and IHMM by asserting special advantages that do not exist and should not be made to appear to exist in the public eye.

4. **Reporting a Potential Conflict.** Here, we ask that you identify yourself, your credential and credential number, the position of service within IHMM, your complete contact information, and then a description of the potential conflict.

A. Name: _____

B. IHMM Credential[s] _____ Certificate Number[s] _____

C. Position of Service within IHMM [committee/Board] _____

D. Telephone Number: _____

E. Email Address: _____

F. Mailing Address: _____

G. Describe the circumstances of the real or potential conflict of interest.

Signature of the Party[ies] Submitting This Form: _____

Date form was submitted:

Send this completed form by email only to: info@ihmm.org

This form will be sent to the IHMM Professional Standards Committee for their consideration and decision. The IHMM Professional Standards Committee endeavors to render decisions in writing within 21 business days of receipt of the material herein.

DESCRIPTION OF ETHICAL SITUATION

I am employed by a firm called ITPG, Inc. and serve as Director of our company's division that provides Examinations, Assessments, and Curriculum Development services to our clients, of which IHMM has been one since 2011. I have personally been in the testing business for 31 years and have conducted the required **internal** ANSI compliance annual audit for IHMM for the last 8 years. The audit is intended to independently verify the degree to which the provisions of ISO/IEC 17024(12) are incorporated into the management system and implemented, so that any issues can be remedied prior to formal ANSI audits. ITPG is an independent private-sector firm fully familiar with the standards of best practices in the certification, licensure, and credentialing industry [including those promulgated by ISO/IEC (17024), CLEAR, ICE (NCCA Accreditation Standards) and APA/AERA/NCME (Joint Technical Standards)].

While ITPG has previously also provided tactical sales and marketing support services to IHMM during the past several years, these activities had no connection, interaction, or exposure with the functioning of the professional certifications themselves and thus these activities were not in conflict with any sort of ethical standards. This year, however, ITPG was additionally engaged to provide supplemental staffing for the recertification function of the IHMM certifications. I am submitting this issue to the committee because I'm not sure if this may constitute a conflict if I conduct the 2023 internal ANSI audit (usually conducted in the April – May timeframe each year). On the one hand, a very strict interpretation of the situation would include my examining, as the internal auditor, the degree of IHMM compliance in the recertification function, of which one of the personnel technically also works for my company. That is, would this constitute my auditing our own work? On the other hand, this is such a tiny piece of the hundreds of items examined during an internal audit, I just can't image that it would have any sort of material impact on my decisions or reporting for the audit. I am happy to proceed with whatever the decision of the committee is. I wanted to submit this issue far enough in advance that IHMM can find and engage a different auditor if the situation described is deemed to constitute a conflict. Thank you in advance for your time and consideration of this matter. Warm regards,

Matthew J. Wenger
Director
Examination, Assessment & Curriculum Development Division
ITPG, Inc.
727.738.9294 (Office)
727.415.2912 (Mobile)

