Conflict of Interest Policy – MaineHousing Partners *

To maintain the continued confidence of Maine citizens in carrying out our joint mission to assist Maine people in obtaining and maintaining quality affordable housing, MaineHousing Partners must avoid situations which are, or appear to be, at odds with their responsibilities to MaineHousing. Maine law and federal regulations (when federal funding is involved) govern conflicts of interest.

MaineHousing Partners must ensure that **no** person who is an employee, agent, or consultant of the Partner – *and* who performs any functions with respect to any MaineHousing program – may obtain a personal or financial interest or benefit (other than their earnings) from MaineHousing programs, either for themselves or for those with whom they have family, business, or close personal ties. As soon as the Partner becomes aware of a potential conflict of interest:

- The Partner must disclose to MaineHousing all personal and business relationships between Partner's employees and any contractors, agents, or consultants who work on MaineHousing programs.
- The Partner must disclose to MaineHousing all employees (including temporary employees and volunteers) of the Partner who are applicants for MaineHousing programs administered by the Partner.
- The Partner must disclose to MaineHousing anyone who will be paid for work on MaineHousing programs who is a current or former MaineHousing employee or commissioner – or has family, business, or close personal ties with a current or former MaineHousing employee or commissioner (within the last year.)

Conflict of Interest Definitions

A ***conflict of interest*** arises when the personal interest of an employee (or a family member, friend, or business associate of the employee) conflicts or potentially conflicts with the employee's work duties or responsibilities to MaineHousing. Conflicts of interest can occur when actions may be improperly influenced by a secondary motive, such as:

- financial gain,
- professional advancement, or
- desire to do favors for family and friends.

An ***appearance of a conflict of interest*** exists if circumstances are believed to create a risk that decisions may be improperly influenced by other motives. It is important to note that a conflict of interest may exist, regardless of whether any unethical or improper act has taken place.

A ***direct interest*** occurs when the employee individually, or through a majority stakeholder position in an entity, owns or is a party to any contract, business agreement, project, or property. Individuals with management, control or other decision-making responsibilities, or voting rights for an entity, are also considered to have a direct interest.

***** This policy applies to all individuals and organizations who receive funding from or who have a business or contractual relationship with MaineHousing. Pertinent partners include, but are not limited to: Grantees, Subgrantees, Sub-recipients, Community Action Agencies, Shelters, Developers, Applicants, Contractors, Administrators, and Vendors.

An ***indirect interest*** occurs when family members, friends, or business associates of the employee have ownership or contractual rights in any contract, business agreement, project, or property. Shares in an entity by the employee or commissioner through an investment vehicle, a trust or estate arrangement, mutual fund, or other intermediary also meets the definition of an indirect ownership interest. Additionally, any ownership interest in a related entity (such as a parent company or subcontractor) that plans to do business with MaineHousing is considered an indirect interest.

Family members are defined broadly, and include spouse/partner, mother, father, son, daughter, mother-in-law, father-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, brother, sister, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, nephew, niece, uncle, aunt, first cousin, grandparent, grandchild. Family members also include all "half" or "step" relatives (e.g. half-brother or step-daughter).

Conflict of Interest Procedures

Personal or Business Relationships Involving Employees

As soon as a Partner becomes aware of a personal or business relationship involving an employee that could give rise to perceived partiality, an appearance of a conflict of interest, or an actual conflict of interest in connection with MaineHousing programs, **the Partner shall disclose the relationship to MaineHousing in writing, with a description of the Partner's plan to manage the potential conflict.** Once reviewed and approved by MaineHousing's Director of Audit, the plan must be signed by the employee and representative(s) of the Partner and submitted to MaineHousing. Plans must be reviewed and re-signed once a year.

Employees as Applicants for MaineHousing Programs

If eligible, Partner employees (including temporary staff and volunteers) are encouraged to apply for MaineHousing programs administered by the Partner. However, approval of any program application by a partner employee **requires two levels of signature**, including the Director or other Senior Executive of the Partner.

Copies of signed applications must be submitted to MaineHousing, and maintained by the Program Department in accordance with required Records Retention periods. The Partner must also retain original signed and approved applications in accordance with required Records Retention periods.

Compliance with the Partner Conflict of Interest Policy and Procedures will be monitored by MaineHousing staff and subject to periodic program audits.

If you are unsure whether a situation constitutes a conflict of interest, please consult with your contact at MaineHousing, or email MaineHousing's Director of Audit, Kim Whitley, at **kwhitley@mainehousing.org.**

MaineHousing
MAINE STATE HOUSING AUTHORITY

MaineHousing Partners
Conflict of Interest Disclosure Form

I have read and understand the *Conflict of Interest Policy – MaineHousing Partners.*

☐ **YES**

☐ **NO**

Do you (or any of your principals or affiliates, or anyone who will be paid for work in connection with the project, program, contract or services at hand), have business ties, family relationships, or other close personal relationships with a current MaineHousing commissioner or employee or anyone who was a MaineHousing commissioner or employee within the past year?

☐ **NO**

☐ **YES (please describe below, or attach)**

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Printed Name: _____ Title: _____