



POLICIES

Effective Date: July 1, 2015

Interim Date: July 21, 2015

Revised: July 1, 2015

Approved by: James E. K. Hildreth, Ph.D., M.D.
President and Chief Executive Officer

Subject: Advancement and College Relations – Ethical Collection and Use of Donor Information in Development and Prospect Research

PURPOSE:

This policy is consistent with the basic principles regarding ethics and confidentiality in development and prospect research and the Association of Professional Researchers for Advancement (APRA), and the Commission on Educational Fund Raising of the Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE).

APRA is an association, which was established to foster professional development and promote standards that enhance the expertise and status of prospect research and information service professionals worldwide.

PROCEDURE:

CODE OF ETHICS

It is the policy of Meharry Medical College to ensure that records on individuals and organizations are kept confidential and that those records are to be used only by staff members who need to use them to further the legitimate mission of the institution. The prospect research office must balance the needs of the institution to collect and record information with the prospect's right to privacy. Only information that has to do with the capacity or inclination of an individual to make a gift to Meharry Medical College will be the proper subject of research. While the balance may not always be easy to maintain; the following basic ethical principles shall apply to the Prospect research office of Meharry Medical College:

Fundamental Principles

1. Prospect researchers employed by Meharry Medical College shall seek and record only information that is relevant to the fund raising or marketing efforts of the institution.
2. Prospect researchers shall be truthful with regard to their identity, purpose, and the identity of Meharry Medical College during the course of their work.

3. Confidential information pertaining to donors or prospective donors shall be scrupulously protected so that the relationship of trust between donor and donor and the integrity of the College and prospect research profession is upheld.
4. Prospect researchers shall record all data accurately and such information must be verifiable or attributable to its source.
5. Prospect researchers and solicitors, as well as outside consultants in their capacity as aides to Meharry Medical College are responsible for the ethical ramifications of their individual acts.
6. The Advancement and College Relations office must recognize its ethical responsibility to use information derived from non-public sources only for the benefit of the institution for which and within which the information was derived.
7. Prospect researchers and advancement officers of Meharry Medical College must make certain that information and records will do no harm to individuals or institutions.

Procedures for Collection and Recording

1. The collection and use of information shall be done lawfully.
2. Information sought and recorded may include all public records.
3. Written requests for public information shall be made on institutional stationery clearly identifying the sender.
4. When requesting information in person or by telephone, neither individual nor institutional identity shall be concealed.
5. Prospect researchers shall state information in an objective and factual manner.
6. Documents pertaining to donors or prospective donors shall be properly disposed of when no longer needed e.g., by shredding.

Use of Information

1. Non-public information collected by the prospect research office is the property of Meharry Medical College, and shall not be given to persons other than those who are involved with the cultivation or solicitation effort, or those who need that information in the performance of their duties.

2. Only public or published information may be shared with colleagues at other institutions as a professional courtesy.
3. Information gathered on donors and prospects of Meharry Medical College is the property of the College and shall not be provided to another institution.
4. Prospect information shall be stored securely to prevent access by unauthorized persons.
5. Research documents of Meharry Medical College containing donor or prospective donor information are to be signed for by authorized users and checked in after use with the Office of Prospect Research and Donor Relations.
6. Special protection shall be afforded to all by giving records pertaining to Meharry Medical College's anonymous donors.