

**ASSOCIATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND  
RESOURCE ECONOMISTS**

**AERE**

**GOVERNANCE POLICIES**

**January 2010**

## **Whistleblower Policy**

If any employee, volunteer, or member reasonably believes that some policy, practice, or activity of AERE is in violation of law, a written complaint may be filed by that employee with the President. It is the intent of AERE to adhere to all laws and regulations that apply to the organization, and the underlying purpose of this Policy is to support the organization's goal of legal compliance. AERE will not retaliate against an employee, volunteer, or member who, in good faith, has made a protest or raised a complaint against some practice of AERE, or of another individual or entity with whom AERE has a business relationship, on the basis of a reasonable belief that the practice is in violation of law or a clear mandate of public policy. AERE will not retaliate against an employee, volunteer, or member who discloses or threatens to disclose to a supervisor or a public body any activity, policy, or practice of AERE that the individual reasonably believes is in violation of a law, or a rule, or regulation mandated pursuant to law or is in violation of a clear mandate or public policy concerning health, safety, welfare, or protection of the environment. Retaliation is defined as adverse job actions (such as termination, denial of bonus, reduction in salary, transfer to a lower position, or suspension), termination of membership, threats or subtler forms of harassment.

- *Disclosure to the Board or Committee.* In most cases, it is expected that the possibility of subjectivity or bias will be sufficiently offset by disclosing the “other interest” to the entire Board or Committee. The Board or Committee will be expected to take the individual’s “other interest” into consideration when discussions, debates, or decisions occur.
- *Recusal.* In some instances it may be determined that the avoidance of conflicts of interest, or even the mere appearance of conflicts of interest, will dictate that the disclosing individual should avoid discussions, debates, and decision making on subjects related to the disclosure. The individual will remain a member of the Board or Committee but will withdraw from portions of meetings or activities appropriately.
- *Resignation.* There could be situations, expected to be rare, in which the Board or Committee member’s “other interest” is so extensive or pervasive that, in the view of the Board, the Committee, or the AERE membership, the individual’s involvement in discussions, debates, or decision making on any subject will be adversely affected. In that case the individual will be asked to resign. If resignation is not forthcoming, the Board will decide on alternatives consistent with AERE’s bylaws and governing state law.

## **Apparent Authority Policy**

It is the policy of AERE that any communication on behalf of the AERE may only be made at the direction of the President, Board or Executive Director. No public statements may be made, either verbal or written, that conflict with the official position or policy of the AERE. Leadership should understand that by virtue of their position, their statements may be perceived by the public as official and made on behalf of the AERE. Accordingly, when making public statements, an AERE volunteer leader should clearly state whether he or she is speaking on behalf of AERE and when he or she is speaking in his or her personal capacity. To control official communications, stationery and business cards shall be solely for the use of the

President, Executive Director and association management staff. Other officers and members of the Board or committees may not use AERE stationery. Staff will prepare letters sent on behalf of the organization while retaining a copy in official AERE files. Exceptions may be made to the policy as long as the purpose of the letter is made known and approved by the President and Executive Director in advance. If the exception is approved, a copy of the correspondence will be provided to staff within 24 hours of dissemination for permanent file retention.

### **Document Retention Policy**

In the normal course of business it is expected that documents will be routinely discarded according to an orderly and lawful retention schedule and this practice will continue. However, it is the policy of AERE that there will be no destruction, alteration or mutilation of documents when the Association knows or suspects that there will be a federal investigation of the Association or a policy or program of the Association. This policy is applicable to Board members, staff and all volunteers involved in the administration of programs and services on behalf of the Association. AERE will follow the document retention schedule that is accepted by VanDer Management and is deemed to be in line with association best practices.