

# **Veterans Family Fund of America**

## **Statement of Values/Code of Ethics**

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A code of ethics is built on a foundation of shared values. The core beliefs that shape the vision and guide the day-to-day actions of the Veterans Family Fund of America are:

- Commitment to supporting Veterans and their families;
- Respect for the worth and dignity of individuals;
- Commitment to meet the letter of the law while striving to fulfill the spirit of the law;
- Transparency, integrity and honesty;
- Responsible stewardship of resources;
- Accountability to the public; and,
- Commitment to excellence and to maintaining the public trust.

These values are the basis for the Code of Ethics that follows. The values inform and guide the actions that the Veterans Family Fund of America board of directors, employees and volunteers will take for all of the Veterans Family Fund of America's business and are the foundation to all policies and practices.

### **I. Personal and Professional Integrity**

All board members, staff and volunteers of the Veterans Family Fund of America (VFFA) act with honesty, integrity and openness in all their dealings as representatives of the organization. The organization promotes a working environment that values respect, fairness and integrity.

### **II. Mission**

Veterans Family Fund of America has a clearly stated mission and purpose, approved by the Board of Directors, in pursuit of its values:

*The Veterans Family Fund of America is dedicated to raising and dispersing funds to improve the lives and futures of Washington State veterans and their families to include areas not covered by government programs.*

All VFFA programs support this mission. All who work for or on behalf of the VFFA understand and are loyal to the mission and purpose. The mission is responsive to the community served by the VFFA and provides value to the society at large by assisting Veterans and their families in need.

### **III. Governance**

The Veterans Family Fund of America has an active Board of Directors that is responsible for setting the mission and strategic direction of the organization and oversight of the finances,

**Veterans Family Fund of America**  
**Statement of Values/Code of Ethics**

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operations, and policies of the organization. The Board of Directors:

- Ensures that the VFFA conducts all transactions and dealings with integrity and honesty;
- Ensures that policies and procedures of the VFFA are in writing, clearly articulated and officially adopted;
- Ensures that the resources of the VFFA are responsibly and prudently managed;
- Ensures that the VFFA promotes working relationships with board members, staff, volunteers, and program beneficiaries that are based on mutual respect, fairness and openness;
- Ensures that its board members have the requisite skills and experience to carry out their duties and that all members understand and fulfill their governance duties acting for the benefit of the organization and its public purpose;
- Has a Conflict of Interest Policy that ensures that any conflicts of interest or the appearance thereof are avoided or appropriately managed through disclosure, recusal or other means;
- Ensures that the VFFA has the capacity to carry out its programs effectively.
- Ensures that the VFFA is fair and inclusive in its hiring and promotion policies and practices for all board, staff and volunteer positions;
- Is responsible for the hiring, firing, and regular review of the performance of the Executive Director, and ensures that the compensation of the Executive Director is reasonable and appropriate; and,
- Ensures that the Executive Director and appropriate staff provide the Board of Directors with timely and comprehensive information so that it can effectively carry out its duties;

**IV. Legal Compliance**

The Veterans Family Fund of America actively stays abreast of and complies with all laws, regulations and applicable international conventions.

**V. Responsible Stewardship**

Veterans Family Fund of America manages its funds responsibly and prudently, and commits to the following practices:

- Donating 100 percent of interest earned by the Veterans Family Fund CD Program to Veterans and their families in need, as identified by affiliated agencies;
- Soliciting and raising funds apart from the Veterans Family Fund CD Program interest payments to support a reasonable annual administrative, marketing and operating budget;

## ***Veterans Family Fund of America***

### ***Statement of Values/Code of Ethics***

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- Spending an adequate amount on administrative expenses to ensure effective accounting; compliance with current tax laws; systems, internal controls, audits, competent staff, and other expenditures critical to professional management;
- Compensating staff, and any others who may receive compensation, reasonably and appropriately;
- Drawing from any endowment funds consistent with donor intent;
- Ensuring that all spending practices and policies are fair, reasonable and appropriate to fulfill the mission of the organization; and,
- Maintaining financial reports that are factually accurate and complete in all material respects.

#### **VI. Openness and Disclosure**

Veterans Family Fund of America provides comprehensive and timely information to the public, the media, and all stakeholders and is responsive in a timely manner to reasonable requests for information. All information about the organization will fully and honestly reflect the policies and practices of the organization. Basic informational data about the organization, such as the IRS Form 990, reviews and compilations, and audited financial statements and operational documents such as the Code of Ethics and Conflict of Interest Policy will be posted on the Veterans Family Fund of America website, [www.veteransfamilyfund.org](http://www.veteransfamilyfund.org). VFFA maintains a positive public face through nonprofit informational websites such as GuideStar and Foundation Center. All solicitation materials accurately represent the Veterans Family Fund's policies and practices and will respect the dignity and privacy of program beneficiaries. All financial, organizational, and program reports will be complete and accurate in all material respects.

#### **VII. Program Evaluation**

The Veterans Family Fund of America regularly reviews program effectiveness and has mechanisms to incorporate lessons learned into future programs. VFFA is committed to improving program and organizational effectiveness and develops mechanisms to promote learning from its activities and the field. The organization is responsive to changes in its field of activity and is responsive to the needs of Veterans and their families.

#### **VIII. Inclusiveness and Diversity**

Veterans Family Fund of American has a policy of promoting inclusiveness. Its board, staff and volunteers reflect diversity in order to enrich its programmatic effectiveness. VFFA takes meaningful steps to promote inclusiveness in its hiring, retention, promotion, and board recruitment.

**Veterans Family Fund of America**  
**Statement of Values/Code of Ethics**

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**IX. Fundraising**

In raising funds from the public or from donor institutions, Veterans Family Fund of America is truthful in its solicitation materials, respects the privacy concerns of individual donors, expends funds consistent with donor intent, and discloses important and relevant information to potential donors. VFFA follows industry standard ethical practices outlined in the Association of Fundraising Professionals “Statement of Ethical Principles,” dated October 2004 with full details available at [www.afpnet.org/content\\_documents/CodeofEthicsLong.pdf](http://www.afpnet.org/content_documents/CodeofEthicsLong.pdf).

In raising funds from the public, the Veterans Family Fund of America will respect the rights of donors, as follows:

- To be informed of the mission of the Veterans Family Fund of America, the way the resources will be used and their capacity to use donations effectively for their intended purposes;
- To be informed of the identity of those serving on the VFFA governing board and to expect the board to exercise prudent judgment in its stewardship responsibilities;
- To have access to the organization’s most recent financial reports;
- To be assured their gifts will be used for the purposes for which they were given;
- To receive appropriate acknowledgement and documentation for federal and state income tax purposes;
- To be assured that information about their donations is handled with respect and with confidentiality to the extent provided by the law;
- To expect that all relationships with individuals representing organizations of interest to the donor will be professional in nature;
- To be informed whether those seeking donations are volunteers, employees of the organization or hired solicitors;
- To have the opportunity for their names to be deleted from mailing lists that an organization may intend to share; and,
- To feel free to ask questions when making a donation and to receive prompt, truthful and forthright answers.

Approved by Action of the Board of Directors:

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Douglass S. Adams, Secretary

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