

# **The Journal of Molecular Diagnostics**

## **Scientific Integrity Policy: Editor Conduct**

Complete JMD Scientific Integrity Policy available online at  
<http://jmd.amjpathol.org/content/integrity>

**The Journal of Molecular Diagnostics** has developed a formal Scientific Integrity Policy in an effort to define more clearly issues of scientific misconduct in journal publishing. This document defines the common issues relating to appropriate scientific conduct as well as the procedures that will be followed should misconduct issues arise. In addition the Instructions to Authors (<http://jmd.amjpathol.org/authorinfo>) and Instructions to Reviewers (<http://jmd.amjpathol.org/content/forReviewers>) reflect these policies.

The policy is based on recommendations from the Uniform Requirements for Manuscripts Submitted to Biomedical Journals (<http://www.icmje.org>), the CSE White Paper on Promoting Integrity in Scientific Journal Publications ([http://www.councilscienceeditors.org/editorial\\_policies/white\\_paper.cfm](http://www.councilscienceeditors.org/editorial_policies/white_paper.cfm)), and the US Department of Health and Human Services' Office of Research Integrity (<http://ori.dhhs.gov>). It should be noted that willful misconduct does not include incidents of honest misjudgment or inadvertent error. Any questions regarding the official policy of the Journal should be directed to the Editorial Office at 301-634-7959 or [jmd@asip.org](mailto:jmd@asip.org).

### **Editor Conduct**

**Peer Review Process.** The Editor-in-Chief, Senior Associate Editor, and Associate Editors, are expected to take their obligation seriously and to maintain the highest standard of ethics during the peer-review process. Editors should perform their editorial duties without bias for or against any person or institution. Any delays in completing the disposition of a manuscript should be brought to the immediate attention of the Editorial Office so that the situation may be resolved. It is considered a violation for Editors to communicate directly with authors regarding their manuscript outside of normal editorial practices. It is also a violation for the Editors to reveal Reviewers' names to authors without Reviewer consent; as the Journal conducts a blinded peer-review process, such revelations are extremely rare. Any deliberate ethical violation during peer review of a manuscript is considered to be actionable misconduct, the potential results of which may be reporting of conduct to the Editor's governing institution, dismissal as an Editor for the Journal, and/or the denial to consider any future submissions to the Journal.

Editors should respect author requests to exclude specific reviewers due to prior collaborations, known conflicts of interest, or direct competition when such requests are well-founded; however, Editors have the authority to utilize such a reviewer if they feel it is necessary for expert peer review. Such decisions should be made only after careful consideration and after other options have been exhausted

**Confidentiality.** The Editors are subject to the same confidentiality requirements as Reviewers. Further, Editors must not disclose information about manuscripts (including their receipt, content, status in the reviewing process, Reviewers' comments, or final disposition) to anyone other than the authors, Reviewers, and Journal staff. Editors should not retain copies of submitted manuscripts for personal use after completing their disposition. Editors are not

allowed to make any use of the work described in the manuscript or take advantage of the knowledge gained by reviewing it until and unless it is published.

**Financial Disclosure and Conflicts of Interest.** Editors must also carefully consider whether there exist any current or former relationships held by the editor or an immediate family member (eg, employment, consultancies, board membership, stock ownership, funding, honoraria, expert testimony, patents or royalties, travel reimbursements, etc.) with any organization or entity having a direct financial or personal interest in the subject matter or materials discussed in the manuscript that could bias their opinions of the manuscript. Editors should also consider potential conflicts of interest arising from personal relationships or academic competition. Personal relationships include family members, colleagues (such as collaborators, mentors, students, or trainees), or associates at the Editor's institution. At least three years should elapse between the ending of such a relationship and participation in any review. However, for certain relationships such as student-mentor, three years may not be sufficient time, especially if both investigators continue to work in the same field. Thus, Editors must err on the side of caution and decline any assignments in which the suggestion of a conflict or bias could be raised. By agreeing to review a manuscript, the Editor implicitly affirms that conflicts do not exist. In cases where the Editor-in-Chief has a conflict of interest, the Senior Associate Editor or another Associate Editor will handle the full disposition of the manuscript.