

SECTION 1.17 CODE OF CONDUCT, ETHICS & CORPORATE COMPLIANCE

Jefferson County Board of Developmental Disabilities (JCBDD) has established a Code of Conduct & Ethics, a set of principles and practices that provides personnel with a set of parameters and provides guidance for employment conduct and decision-making. The Code of Conduct & Ethics is reflective of the organization's core values, ethical principles and expectations of personnel's corporate responsibility. In addition to JCBDD Code of Conduct & Ethics, there are many other sources of information about ethical thinking that should be considered in decision making including but not limited to laws, regulations, Agency policies and procedures, and other professional sources of ethical code. The employees of JCBDD are required to act in accordance with the highest ethical principles and standards of personal and professional integrity and honesty in the performance of their duties and responsibilities. This high ethical standard includes the handling of actual or apparent conflicts of interest. JCBDD Code of Conduct & Ethics provides standards for employee behavior in accordance with JCBDD's values, mission, and organizational policies. JCBDD's corporate compliance officer is the office of the Superintendent. The role of the compliance officer is to monitor matters pertaining to corporate compliance, conducts corporate compliance risk assessments, and reports on matter pertaining to corporate compliance.

DUTY OF CARE & PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCY

Employees must exercise reasonable care within the scope of their personal and professional competency in decision-making as stewards of JCBDD. Reasonable care is the duty of care that an ordinary prudent person with similar experience and expertise would exercise in a like position and under similar circumstances.

Professional competency requires employees to act in accordance with the highest standards of professional integrity. This duty also requires employees to obey the law and regulations that govern County Board of DD's (ORC 5123) and the organization's internal rules and regulations. It is the duty of employees to have a total commitment to provide the highest quality of care to those who seek our services. Employees must continually assess their personal strengths, limitations, biases and effectiveness. They shall strive to become and remain proficient in professional practice and the performance of professional functions.

Under the Duty of Care & Professional Competency, I affirm that:

- I will report any alleged, suspected, or actual occurrence of an incident when there is reason to believe the health or safety of a person may be adversely affected or a person may be placed at a likely risk of harm, if the person is receiving services through the DD service delivery system or will be receiving such services as a result of the incident.

- I shall seek appropriate professional assistance for my own personal problems or conflicts that are likely to impair my work performance.

CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY OF INDIVIDUAL EMPLOYEES

- Uphold the highest legal, ethical and moral standard in the delivery of services.
- Be in service to the organization and persons served.
- Be informed about JCBDD mission, vision, values, services, policies, and procedures.
- Maintain respect for Agency policies, procedures and management decisions and will take the initiative toward improvement of such policies; procedures and decisions when it will better serve the best interest of the persons served.
- Act to prevent and eliminate discrimination and harassment in the workplace.
- Report any unethical conduct, suspected fraudulent activities, or violations of Code of Ethics through your supervisor or directly to the Superintendent.
- Abstain from retaliation. The organization has a zero-tolerance for retaliation against employees who report concerns in good faith.
- Advocate for persons served and the organization.
- Follow conflict of interest and confidentiality policies.
- Work to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of services provided by the agency.
- Use the resources of the Agency only for the purpose for which they are intended and to minimize waste.
- Fulfill any and all commitments made by me to the Agency.
- Support the integrity and reputation of the Agency.

ETHICAL STANDARDS FOR BEHAVIOR & CONDUCT

RESPONSIBILITY TO PERSONS SERVED

As an active and engaged JCBDD employee who is committed to the highest legal, ethical and moral standard in the delivery of services, I affirm that I shall:

- Treat all individuals with respect and maintain their integrity and dignity.
- Treat each individual in a caring and respectful fashion, mindful of individual differences and cultural and ethnic diversity.
- Not discriminate against or refuse professional services to anyone on the basis of race, color, creed, age, sex, religion or national affiliations.
- Elevate service to our client population above self-interest. I shall not use my professional relationship with persons served to further my own interest.
- Notify my supervisor and, as appropriate persons served, in the event that a conflict of interest arises which may interfere with the exercise of professional discretion or impartial judgment.

- Not engage in dual or multiple relationships with current or former persons served, in which there is a risk of exploitation or potential harm to the person served.
- Not engage in physical contact, intimate relationships, sexual activities or sexual contact with any current or former person served whether such contact is consensual or forced. I shall not engage in sexual activities or sexual contact with relatives or with whom persons served maintain a close personal relationship when there is a risk of exploitation or potential harm to the individual.
- Not accept from or give gifts, goods, or services to persons served or their relatives. I shall not engage in bartering or loan arrangements with persons served or their relatives.
- Not engage in or condone any form of harassment.
- Seek to enhance the capacity of persons served and promote socially responsible self-determination.
- Ensure to the best of my ability that services are provided with valid informed consent by the service recipient. I shall use clear and understandable language to inform clients of the purpose of services, the risks related to services, limitations of services, relevant costs, reasonable alternatives, and the individual's right to refuse or withdraw consent to services in accordance with JCBDD policies.
- Assist persons in obtaining and / or accessing additional services through advocacy, while encouraging the individual to further develop their self-advocacy skills.
- Not abandon or neglect persons served without making reasonable arrangements for the continuation of supportive services.
- Evidence a genuine interest in all persons served, and do hereby dedicate myself to the best interest of persons served and to helping them help themselves.

RESPONSIBILITY TO COLLEAGUES

As an active and engaged JCBDD employee who recognizes the importance of interpersonal relationships and is committed to diversity and respect in the workplace, I affirm that I shall:

- Respect the rights and views of my fellow professionals and treat them with fairness, courtesy and good faith.
- Not engage in or condone any form of harassment or discrimination.
- Extend respect and cooperation to colleagues of all professions.
- Respect the confidences of my co-workers with the exceptions of violations to the Agency's Code of Ethics.
- Avoid unwarranted criticism of colleagues in communication with persons served or with other professionals.

- Make every effort to avoid dual relationships that could impair my professional judgment. I shall avoid engaging in sexual relationships with colleagues when there is potential for a conflict of interest. In the event that I become or anticipate becoming involved in a sexual relationship with a colleague, I shall transfer professional responsibilities, when necessary, to avoid a conflict of interest.
- Be aware of my potential influence on interns and co-workers and will not exploit their trust.
- Not assume professional responsibility for the clients of a colleague without appropriate consultation with that colleague. I shall not permit students or fellow employees to perform or present themselves as competent to perform services beyond their training and/or level of experience.
- When I replace a colleague or I am replaced, I shall act with consideration for the interest, character and reputation of the other professional.
- If I have the responsibility for employing and evaluating the performance of other staff, I shall do so in a responsible, fair, considerate and equitable manner.
- If I know first-hand that a colleague has violated ethics standards; I shall report the unethical activity to my supervisor or directly to the Superintendent.

PRIVACY & CONFIDENTIALITY (HIPPA)

In accordance with my professional oath, State and/or Federal laws and regulations, I affirm that I shall:

- Respect the right of all persons served (active and inactive) to privacy and shall not solicit private information from persons served unless it is essential to providing services. Once private information is shared, I shall uphold the organization's policy and procedures regarding confidentiality of information.
- Limit confidential information shared between employees of the organization and third-parties to the least amount of information necessary to achieve the desired purpose and appropriate provision of services.
- Not disclose information to any person or entity outside the organization without valid, informed consent from the person served or person legally authorized to consent on behalf of the individual, except for compelling professional reasons, as required by law or regulation, or where I am a defendant in a civic, criminal or disciplinary action arising from services (in which case client confidences may only be disclosed in the course of action).
- I understand that the general expectation of confidentiality does not apply when disclosure is necessary to prevent serious, foreseeable, and imminent harm to an individual or other identifiable person; however only information that is directly relevant to the purpose for which the disclosure is made shall be revealed.
- Adhere to the organization's protocols regarding environmental and technological protections to ensure the confidentiality and physical integrity of

written and/or electronic client records. I shall be responsible to store or dispose of records in ways that maintain confidentiality in accordance with the organization's policy and procedures, State and Federal laws and regulations.

- Possess a professional attitude which upholds confidentiality towards persons served, colleagues, applicants and any sensitive situation arising within the agency.
- I, upon my termination, shall maintain all persons served and co-worker confidentiality and I shall hold confidential information about sensitive situations within JCBDD.

PUBLIC STATEMENTS

Because of my ability to influence and alter the lives of others, I shall exercise special care when making my professional recommendations or opinions public through testimony or other public statements, including social media outlets. I affirm that I shall:

- Support the integrity and reputation of the Agency.
- Portray JCBDD through public and private statements that are forthright and factual as it is unethical to engage in false and deceptive advertising.
- Accurately represent my education, training, experiences, and competencies as they relate to my profession.
- Refer all media questions to the office of the Superintendent or receive permission from the office of the Superintendent to make statements to the media.
- If serving as a supervisor, I shall make certain that the qualifications of persons under my supervision are accurately represented.

Replaces Previous Section 4.1 adopted 02/18/1999

New Policy Approved and Adopted 01/21/2021