

Chapter:	Human Resource Management		
Title:	Standards of Conduct		
Policy: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Procedure: <input type="checkbox"/>	Review Cycle: Triennial Author: HR Specialist	Adopted Date: 08.2020 Review Date: 07.2024	Related Policies: Commitment to Non-Violence Progressive Discipline Staff Relationships with Clients

Purpose:

To ensure safe, efficient, and harmonious operations and to fully inform all employees of their responsibilities, Hopeful Horizons (HH) has adopted a policy on expected standards of conduct.

Scope:

This policy applies to

- All HH Staff Selected HH Staff, as specified:
 HH Board Members HH Volunteers
 Other:

Policy:

Maintaining the highest level of professional conduct is the responsibility of every employee, volunteer and Board member at HH. Individuals covered in the scope of this policy are expected to operate efficiently, promote a favorable image of the organization, and exhibit harmonious relationships among co-workers, clients, community partners/stakeholders and contactors.

Individuals covered in the scope of this policy are required to know and comply with HH policies and procedures. The following list of behaviors and conduct provides additional examples of HHs' expectations for conduct. This is not intended to be an exhaustive list of expected conduct for which noncompliance could result in discipline. Furthermore, the employment relationship between HH and its employees is at will, as such, the employment relationship can be terminated with or without cause at any time.

- A. **General Standards of Conduct:** HH reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to determine appropriate disciplinary action for these and all other offenses based upon the nature, frequency and severity of the offense(s) and the employee's work performance, disciplinary and attendance record.
1. Discourteous, unprofessional, threatening, intimidating, coercive, abusive or vulgar language or abusive treatment of clients, employees or others having business with HH.
 2. Falsifying client records or documents, employment application information, timesheets, travel expenses, or other documents or records belonging to Hopeful Horizons.
 3. Unauthorized possession of HH or employee property, removal or attempt to remove HHs' property, as well as damaging or destroying HHs' property through careless or willful acts.
 4. Disruptive activity, fighting, throwing things, horseplay, practical jokes, or other disorderly conduct which may endanger the well-being of any employee or disrupt HHs' operations.
 5. Engaging in acts of dishonesty, fraud, theft, embezzlement, or sabotage.
 6. Making false or malicious statements about employees, agents, the organization or its services, clients, contractors, vendors or visitors at any time.
 7. Insubordination or refusal to comply with instructions or failure to perform reasonable duties which are assigned.
 8. Unauthorized absence from work area during the workday.

9. Unauthorized/improper use of telephones, mail system, email or information system, or other employer-owned equipment.
10. Unauthorized possession, distribution, sale, transfer, use of alcohol or illegal drugs in the workplace, while on duty or while operating employer-owned vehicles or equipment.
11. Unsatisfactory performance of job duties/assignments or conduct.
12. Failing to conduct oneself in a professional manner including, but not limited to, missing deadlines or failing to respond to communications in a timely manner (usually within two business days). If deadlines or communication timelines cannot be met, failing to provide notice of necessary or known delays.
13. Unauthorized disclosure of confidential information/breach of client confidentiality.
14. Conviction of a criminal offense other than minor traffic infractions.
15. Failure to maintain harmonious relations with co-workers, supervisor, clients or others having business with the organization.
16. Negligence in observing health and safety rules, policies and requirements.
17. Gambling on organization premises or while conducting work of the organization.

B. Standards of Conduct with Clients: Staff shall consistently comply with HHs Staff Relationship with Clients policy and adhere to the following additional standards of conduct:

1. Clients shall receive services regardless age, disability, race, color, sex, gender identity (or expression), sexual orientation, pregnancy, religion, national origin, genetics, military or veteran status, or any other basis prohibited by law.
2. Employees and volunteers shall adhere to appropriate boundaries governing physical contact as outlined by the organization.
3. Employees and volunteers shall avoid physical contact with clients that cannot be observed by others.
4. Employees and volunteers shall adhere to appropriate and inappropriate verbal interactions with clients as outlined by HH.
5. Employees and volunteers shall not have sexually oriented materials, including printed or online pornography, on HHs' property. This provision excludes evidence that may be part of an abuse investigation and pertinent to a forensic interview being conducted by HHs' staff
6. Employees and volunteers shall not keep secrets with clients.
7. Employees and volunteers shall comply with HHs' policies regarding interactions with clients outside of our programs.
8. Employees and volunteers shall adhere to organizational policies regarding electronic communication and social media with clients.
9. Employees and volunteers will adhere to organizational policies regarding working one-on-one with clients in a private setting.
10. Employees and volunteers will not abuse, neglect or exploit clients in anyway including (but not limited to) the following:
 - a. Physical abuse: hitting, spanking, shaking, slapping, unnecessary restraints
 - b. Verbal abuse: degrading, threatening, cursing
 - c. Sexual abuse: inappropriate touch, exposing oneself, sexually oriented conversations that are outside the clients disclosure of abuse.
 - d. Mental abuse: shaming, humiliation, cruelty
 - e. Neglect: withholding food, water, shelter

C. Professional Ethics and Standards: Employees who are working in a professional capacity, under licensure and/or professional standards or ethics are also expected to comply with those

guidelines unless they violate HH policies and procedures, laws or other grant contract requirements. When there is a conflict between professional standards/ethics and HH policies or compliance requirements, the employee and their supervisor shall endeavor to reach a mutually agreeable manner by which to eliminate the conflict.

Communication and Training:

The Board shall receive a copy of the policy at the time of periodic review and will have an opportunity to ask clarifying questions during the approval process. Employees and volunteers shall receive notice of the Board’s policy review and approval including notice of any substantive changes. The notice will provide a link to the policy located on the HH website.

Definitions:

1. At-Will Employment: At-will means that an employer can terminate an employee at any time for any reason, except an illegal one, or for no reason without incurring legal liability. Likewise, an employee is free to leave a job at any time for any or no reason with no adverse legal consequences.
2. Forensic Interview: A recorded interview designed to elicit a child’s unique information when there are concerns of possible abuse or when the child has witnessed violence against another person. The forensic interview is conducted in a supportive and non-leading manner by a professional trained in the National Children’s Advocacy Center Forensic Interview model. Interviews are remotely observed by representatives of the agencies involved in the investigation (such as law enforcement and child protective services).

Other Related Materials:

Progressive Discipline Procedure

References/Legal Authority:

NA

Change Log:

Date of Change	Description of Change	Responsible Party
09.2023	Updates to the new template; eliminates redundancy to existing approved policies and/or procedure; adds requirements for professional ethics compliance; adds communication and training, definitions and other related materials.	N. Miller, Prog. Eval Consultant in consultation with R. Lucovich, HR Specialist
07.2024	Updates the policy to address an insurance audit and related compliance requirements including the addition of more detailed standards related to interactions with clients.	N. Miller, Prog. Eval. Consultant