



CODE OF ETHICS  
AND  
PROFESSIONAL  
BOUNDRIES



## Ethical Code of Conduct

### PURPOSE:

To reinforce the fact that Relational Excellence, LLC maintains high standards for professional behavior from its employees in the performance of their job duties and responsibilities.

To address ethical issues in the business provision of service delivery, professional responsibilities, billing, marketing, exchange gratuities, personal fundraising, personal property, contractual relationships, admissions practices and human resources.

### POLICY

All employees are expected to maintain acceptable job performance and to conduct themselves in a professional and courteous manner. Professional service providers are expected to comply with any codes for professional conduct or ethical behaviors adopted by their respective licensure or certification authorities. These policies apply to all employees, contractors, interns/volunteers affiliated with Relational Excellence, LLC.

The organizational ethical codes of conduct statement shall be posted and communicated to all members of the workforce, persons served, and other stakeholders.

- **Compartment:** All employees are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner appropriate for performing their position responsibilities at any given time.
- **Attire:** All employees are expected to present themselves in a professional manner appropriate for performing their position responsibilities at any given time.
- **Client and participant welfare:** All employees are expected to respect the integrity and protect the welfare of the person or group with whom the employee is working.
- **Transition / Discharge of Persons Served:** Be willing to recognize when it is in the best interest of the client, to discharge them from Relational Excellence, LLC services or to refer them to another program or individual.
- Demonstrate a genuine interest in all clients and dedicate themselves to the best interest of the client and their needs.



- **Confidentiality:** All employees are expected to maintain confidentiality of client identifying information, and to abide by all applicable federal, state, or local laws and regulations which address issues of privacy or confidentiality of records. Paramount among these laws is the Federal Confidentiality Regulations, 42 CFR Part 2, Confidentiality of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Patient Records, and the HIPAA Privacy Regulations, and 45 CFR Parts 160 and 164.
- **Non-discrimination:** All employees are expected to refrain from discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity, age, color, religion, creed, gender, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, veteran status, financial condition, handicap, developmental disability, and HIV infection, AIDS - related complex or AIDS. This includes discrimination against other agency employees, any current, former, or potential clients or service recipients, and others in the community with whom an employee may interact.
- **Professional Standards:** All licensed, certified or other credentialed staff are bound by the Code of Ethics of their discipline. The ethical standards from the State Licensing Boards will apply in addition to this Ethical Code of Conduct.
- **Professional relationships:** All employees are expected to maintain a professional relationship with clients and others participating in agency services. Sexual advances or sexual activity with clients or service recipients is not permitted.
  - Personnel shall maintain clear therapeutic boundaries with persons served and avoid dual relationships (e.g., business, financial, social, or romantic). Personnel shall not engage in personal social-media interactions/DMs with persons served, accept 'friend' requests, or transport individuals in personal vehicles unless explicitly authorized by policy for safety/clinical reasons. Boundary concerns must be reported to a supervisor immediately.

## **Professional Boundaries**

Remain alert and sensitive to situations which could result in actions by any employee, regardless of position, which are illegal, unethical, or in violation of the standards of the agency and relevant professional Code of Ethics



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- **Scope of practice:** Professional service providers are expected to function within the scope of their licensure or certification, and in accordance with any specific areas of competence or other such declarations defined through their licensing or certifying authority.
  - Have a commitment to assess their own personal strengths, limitations, biases, and effectiveness on a continuing basis; shall continuously strive for self-improvement; have a personal responsibility for professional growth through further education and training.
- **Professional Services:**
  - The basis for reimbursement for services rendered is the records that are prepared. Employees are to take care to ensure that records:
    - Present a true and accurate representation of what services are offered.
    - Are appropriately dated, accurately reflect content of service and provide the actual time spent in rendering the service.
    - Indicate the name(s) of the provider and/or supervisor responsible for the provision/supervision of services.
    - Are completed, data entered, accurately billed and filed in a timely manner.
- **Human Resources:**
  - Relational Excellence, LLC's management will ensure that all policies and procedures related to human resources are implemented fairly and consistently.
  - Relational Excellence, LLC's management will ensure that the agency non-discrimination policy is followed in all aspects of employment practices.
- **Employees are to ensure that they:**
  - Provide timely and accurate reports of time that is expended in agency-related activities.
  - Claim only those expenses, which are authorized and/or are reasonably related to their job descriptions.
  - Do not shift time or costs to inappropriate contracts or programs.
  - All employees are expected to participate cooperatively with supervision, peer review and quality assurance/improvement requests and activities.



Personnel **do not witness legal documents** for persons served (e.g., powers of attorney, guardianship, advance directives) unless permitted by law and organization policy, with prior supervisory approval and documentation.

- **Witnessing of Documents**

- Personnel shall not act as a witness to documents such as Power of Attorney, guardianship, advance directives, and/or agency contracts without the expressed written approval of the Chief Administrative Officer.
- Personnel are authorized to countersign documents such as intake forms authorizations, (i.e. release of information form), treatment plans, etc. as directly related to their job duties.

- **Use of Social Media**

- The organization's use of social media shall not be used to denigrate clients, potential competitors or stakeholders and will not be used to promote false impressions of the organization.
- All employees will abide by the Relational Excellence, LLC Social Media Policy.

- **Business Practices**

- Relational Excellence, LLC will utilize the Corporate Compliance Officer to ensure that it conducts business in an ethical manner and ensure that any business practices that are questionable are thoroughly investigated.
- All financial, purchasing, personnel, facility development and information technology practices shall comply with local, state and federal law and guidelines.

- **Marketing Practices**

- Relational Excellence, LLC will conduct marketing practices in an honest and factual manner. Marketing materials and practices will in no way mislead the public or misrepresent Relational Excellence, LLC's abilities to provide services.
- Relational Excellence, LLC will not claim any service outcomes unless represented by valid and reliable outcome data and/or research studies.
- Relational Excellence, LLC will not utilize monetary rewards or gifts to any potential client in an attempt to entice them to enter programs.

Relational Excellence, LLC employees will be honest and truthful in all marketing and advertising practices pertaining to the business practices of the organizations service delivery system



- **Contractual Relationships:**

- All aspects of this Code of Ethics will apply to all contractual employees of Relational Excellence, LLC.
- Relational Excellence, LLC will engage in fair business practices in establishing all contractual relationships.
- Relational Excellence, LLC and any contractor will abide by the terms of the contract, with mutual accountability for the terms agreed to.

- **Potential Conflicts of Interest:**

- No client will be hired or placed in an employee/employer relationship with Relational Excellence, LLC while an active participant in programming.
- Any programming that involves a work task, and remuneration for the task, will be therapeutic in nature and will be documented as such by programming guidelines based on theoretical constructs.
- Relational Excellence, LLC employees will not engage in outside professional behavioral health services that are incompatible or in conflict with job duties within the organization.

- **Coding, Billing, and Accounting:**

- Relational Excellence, LLC employees involved in coding, billing, documentation and accounting for client care services for the purpose of governmental, private or individual payers will comply with all applicable state and federal regulations and organizational policies and procedures.
- Relational Excellence, LLC will only bill for services rendered and shall seek the amount to which it is entitled.
- Supporting clinical documentation will be prepared for all services rendered. If the appropriate and required documentation has not been provided, then the service has not been rendered.
- Relational Excellence, LLC manages its finances in a manner that supports their mission and demonstrates long-term solvency.

- **Exchanges of Gifts, Money and Gratuities**

- No Personnel or other persons associated with Relational Excellence, LLC will accept gifts of money or material values, favors, remuneration, or other consideration from any client, individual, or organization that does business with Relational Excellence, LLC.

- **Personal Property**

All personnel shall respect and safeguard the personal property of clients, visitors, and other personnel as well as the property of Relational Excellence, LLC. Employees will not use or allow the use of Relational Excellence, LLC property or equipment other than activities approved by the organization. Theft and destruction of property may be addressed through treatment planning (clients), disciplinary action (personnel),



and/or by contacting law enforcement, as appropriate. Relational Excellence, LLC is not responsible for personal property that is not safeguarded or is left unattended.

- **Responsibility to Society**

- Relational Excellence, LLC embraces the values of corporate social responsibility, which includes being accountable to its employees, providers, and the communities it serves.
- Relational Excellence, LLC promotes accessibility by removing barriers—whether architectural, attitudinal, or financial—that prevent individuals from accessing services and integrating into the community.
- Relational Excellence, LLC engages and collaborates with the broader community to ensure their services are responsive to local needs.
- Relational Excellence, LLC encourages input from persons served, their families, and other stakeholders to ensure its standards remain relevant and meaningful.

The organization prohibits waste, fraud, abuse, and other wrongdoing. Violations may result in corrective action up to and including termination and reporting to appropriate authorities.

## **Prohibition**

- **Other policies and procedures:** All employees are expected to act in accordance with agency policies and procedures, and other personnel directives established by management. Inciting others through false statements, rumors or malicious gossip; willful falsification of records; unauthorized absenteeism; tardiness; theft or embezzlement; or other waste or abuse of materials, property, equipment or working time are not permitted.
- **Discipline and Mandatory Sanctions**
  - The standards of the agency's Code of Ethics, as well as those of professional disciplines, are important to the agency and must be taken seriously by all employees. Accordingly, violations of these standards and/or of those of related disciplines will not be tolerated and, in accordance with agency procedures outlined in the Employee Manual and program policies and procedures, may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.



### **Anti-Retaliation & Whistleblower Policy**

A whistleblower as defined by this policy is any staff member of Relational Excellence, LLC who reports an activity that he/she considers to be illegal or dishonest to one or more of the parties specified in this policy. The whistleblower is not responsible for investigating the activity or for determining fault or corrective measures; appropriate management officials are charged with these responsibilities.

Examples of illegal or dishonest activities are violations of federal, state or local laws; billing for services not performed or for goods not delivered; and other fraudulent financial reporting.

If a staff member has knowledge of or a concern of illegal or dishonest fraudulent activity, the staff is to contact his/her immediate supervisor or the office manager. The staff must exercise sound judgment to avoid baseless allegations. Any staff who intentionally files a false report of wrongdoing will be subject to discipline up to and including termination.

Whistleblower protections are provided in two important areas -- confidentiality and retaliation. To the extent possible, the confidentiality of the whistleblower will be maintained.

However, identity may have to be disclosed to conduct a thorough investigation, to comply with the law and to provide accused individuals their legal rights of defense. Relational Excellence, LLC will not retaliate against a whistleblower.

This includes but is not limited to, protection from retaliation in the form of an adverse employment action such as termination, compensation decreases, poor work assignments, and threats of physical harm. Any whistleblower who believes he/she is being retaliated against must contact the office manager immediately. The right of a whistleblower for protection against retaliation does not include immunity for any personal wrongdoing that is alleged and investigated.

All reports of illegal and dishonest activities will be promptly submitted to the office manager, Medical Director, and CEO in writing. The office manager is responsible for investigating the claim. The CEO and/or Medical Director will determine corrective action based on the report completed by the office manager. Staff with any questions regarding this policy should contact the office manager.



## **Grievance & Investigation Procedures**

Relational Excellence, LLC is committed to ensuring that all company-initiated investigations are conducted in a fair, impartial, thorough, thoughtful manner and in compliance with all applicable laws within the United States.

### **Procedure**

Relational Excellence, LLC will promptly initiate an appropriate investigation into all possible violations of law and Relational Excellence, LLC policies. The office manager, unless involved, will have primary responsibility for investigating complaints relating to staff misconduct.

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The office manager will create a report and present all findings to the CEO within ten working days of receiving notification of the possible violation.

The CEO and/or the Medical Director will meet to discuss the complaint and review the report to determine the appropriate course of action.

### **Corporate Citizenship Link**

This policy reflects Relational Excellence, LLC's commitment to corporate responsibility and citizenship by ensuring ethical, transparent, and socially responsible practices in all operations.