



Ethical Code of Conduct

This Document was reviewed by: Lindsey Kyle

This Document was reviewed on: 6/22/2022

This Document was approved by: Jeriesha Hodge

This Document was approved on: 6/22/2022



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.

- **Comportment:** 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.
- **Nondiscrimination:** 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.
 - 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.
- **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.
- **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.
- **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.
- **Solicitation, Distribution and Fund Raising**
 - To avoid unnecessary avoidances and work interruptions, solicitation and personal fundraising by a staff member of another staff member or client is prohibited while either person is on working time.
 - Staff member distribution of literature, including handbills, in work areas during the work hours of any staff member involved is prohibited.
 - Trespassing, soliciting or distribution of literature by non-staff member on these premises is prohibited at all times.
 - Relational Excellence, LLC does not participate in organizational fundraising to benefit 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.
- 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.

Procedures for Investigating and Acting on Violations of the Code of Conduct:

- a. When any client, family member, authorized representative, advocate or other person believes that an ethical violation has occurred within the operations of the organization, they may report such suspicion directly to any staff member, or management staff.
- b. When staff members believe a violation of the Code of Conduct has occurred, they are obligated to report the violation in one of the following ways:
 - i. Immediate notification of the incident or violation through the organization's corporate compliance program and reporting mechanisms.
 - ii. Immediate reporting to their supervisor or to corporate compliance officer if the suspected violation involves their supervisor.
- c. Supervisors who have been informed of a suspected violation are required to immediately inform the corporate compliance officer of the suspected violation.
- d. If the violation involves a direct and immediate threat to the safety of a patient, staff member, or clinic visitor, staff members are obligated to report the alleged violation immediately to their supervisor.
- e. Staff is required to report any suspected violation of the Code of Conduct; however, they are not required to investigate or know for certain that a violation has occurred.
- f. Once the questionable behavior has been brought to the attention of the supervisor or reported through the corporate compliance procedures, staff reporting the situation will no longer have a responsibility for being involved with the investigation other than providing additional information through a requested interview by the investigator.



- g. Staff must report each suspected violation of the Code of Conduct separately, should a violation that has been reported occur again.
- h. When any suspected violation of the Code of Conduct is reported to a supervisor, program sponsor or the corporate compliance officer, the corporate compliance officer will begin an investigation of the matter immediately. While investigating the complaint, the following issues should be considered, and action taken depending on the situation:
 - a. Is any client in any harm or potential harm because of this behavior?
 - b. Does the complaint require immediate action to remove the staff member from contact with a client?
 - c. Does the complaint put Relational Excellence, LLC or its staff member in a potentially liable situation that needs legal consultation?
 - i. Code of Conduct investigations will follow the guidelines outlined in the Relational Excellence, LLC' Corporate Compliance Policy and Procedure. An investigation will begin within 24 hours of the alleged violation. The investigation will be completed within 6 business days. If the investigation takes longer than 6 business days, the Corporate Compliance Officer/Designee will provide a daily verbal report on the status of the investigation until it is concluded.
- o Any employee reporting a violation of the code of ethics in good faith will be protected by the Relational Excellence, LLC "No Retaliation" provision of the Ethics Violation Policy