



MONTANA STATE HOSPITAL POLICY AND PROCEDURE

EMPLOYEE CONDUCT

Effective Date: January 15, 2019

Policy: HR-06

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- I. PURPOSE:** To provide standards for employee conduct that promote quality patient care and reflect the expectations of the citizens of Montana for public employees who provide care to people with disabilities.
- II. POLICY:** All Hospital employees are expected to provide job services in accordance with the definitions and standards set forth in this policy. An employee who violates the expectations for conduct set forth in this policy will be subject to disciplinary action which may include termination of employment. Not every situation can be anticipated and included in policy. Employees are expected to understand the fundamental expectations governing conduct and apply them to situations that may arise.
- III. DEFINITIONS:**
 - A. Guiding Principles:** The Hospital has established the following principles to guide organizational and employee behavior:
 - Keep people safe
 - Treat people with respect, trust, and dignity
 - Consider all patient needs with sensitivity
 - Utilize a holistic approach for provision of care
 - Assist patients toward achieving greater levels of self-sufficiency and autonomy
 - Support informed choice and decision making
 - Advance the mission of the hospital through teamwork
 - Ensure public trust through personal and professional integrity
 - B. On-the-Job Conduct:** The employee's response to any assigned duty, responsibility, expectation, obligation or behavior required of the employee by the employer or the position.
 - C. Off-the-Job Conduct:** The employee's off-duty behavior which maintains expected ethical standards and does not discredit or adversely impact the Hospital's image, agency embarrassment, or public trust.
 - D. Public Trust:** The holding of state employment is a public trust, created by the confidence the citizens have in public employees. Therefore, the ultimate employer of the state employee is the citizens of Montana. Each public employee is vested with part of the whole of public trust in the performance of job responsibilities. This trust requires adherence to integrity, responsible performance, and correctness in conduct both on and off the job.

IV. RESPONSIBILITIES:

- A. **Employees** are responsible for their conduct and behavior both on and off the job.
- B. **Supervisors** are responsible for ensuring employees understand the expectations for conduct outlined in this policy and appropriate follow up action is taken if expectations for conduct are breeched.

V. PROCEDURE:

The following list is intended to be a partial list of guidelines for conduct. It is not intended to be exhaustive or to anticipate any situation that may arise. Employees are expected to rely on their training and knowledge of Hospital policy, and when possible, should consult with their supervisor or co-workers to address questions about whether a behavior is acceptable.

A. *Expectations for Employee Conduct:*

1. Promote and model cooperation, collaboration and teamwork.
2. Utilize Hospital Guiding Principles as a basis for performing job duties and providing patient care.
3. Demonstrate respectful behavior toward patients and their families. Provide patient care in an empathetic professional and consumer friendly manner.
4. Maintain patient confidentiality. Patient information and the provision of patient care are subject to HIPPA and Hospital guidelines.
5. Uphold and reinforce the rights of patients.
6. Maintain self-control and utilize appropriate conflict resolution strategies when in confrontational situations. Utilize proper crisis intervention techniques in the event of a physical altercation.
7. Refrain from sharing significant personal information about yourself, your family, or your co-workers with patients.
8. Maintain therapeutic boundaries with patients and former patients. Do not engage in any type of socialization or relationship that may be outside of the professional role of care provider. If in doubt, seek advice from supervisors or treatment team members.
9. Inform supervisory personnel if a person is admitted with whom you have had a relationship with outside the hospital. Request a modification in your assignment if a personal relationship with a patient may compromise your ability to provide quality, objective care.
10. Provide care for patients using the techniques and procedures taught in orientation and in-service education programs.
11. Report to work on time and as scheduled. Only leave your work area when properly relieved and with your supervisor's approval.
12. Promptly report safety hazards and take prompt action to prevent injury to others until the problem can be corrected.

B. Unacceptable Conduct:

1. Neglect or failure to properly carry out duties, responsibilities, or assignments.
2. Abuse, mistreatment or neglect of any patient.
3. Theft, willful damage, misappropriation or neglect of patient property or property of the Hospital.
4. Insubordination or refusal to follow verbal or written instructions of a supervisor.
5. Any conduct such as use of alcohol, or use or sale of drugs, either on or off the job which adversely impacts the employer's operation (including absence from work) or brings discredit upon the employer's mission or public trust.
6. Willful, intended, or threatened harm to patients, family members, co-workers, or others.
7. Falsification of Hospital records; e.g., time sheets, patient records, travel expenses, omission of pertinent data, giving false testimony, etc.
8. Behavior that creates or poses a hostile work environment or disrupts operations.
9. Failure to report or disclose information concerning allegations of possible patient abuse, neglect, or other wrongdoing.
10. Improper disclosure of confidential information.
11. Willful violation of law, contract, policy, or directives. Failure to carry out assignments or responsibilities.
12. Improper or illegal use of the Hospital's telephone, radio, or computer network system. Improper use of the Hospital's copy machines.
13. Unauthorized use of state time, equipment, or facilities for private business or personal use.
14. Sleeping on the job.
15. Failure to abide by the Hospital's dress code or maintain personal hygiene in a manner acceptable to the Hospital environment.
16. Failure to appropriately respond in an emergency situation.
17. Unauthorized duplication or inappropriate use of keys. Loaning or providing keys to others without authorization.
18. Developing a relationship with a patient that violates established patient-staff boundaries and therapeutic principles. Failing to report a personal relationship with a patient or former patient outside of the work setting.
19. Performing special favors for patients that are outside the therapeutic process, without authorization from the patient's treatment team.
20. Failure to treat patients, visitors, co-workers, and the public in a courteous, productive, respectful, and otherwise acceptable manner.
21. Failure to follow safe work procedures.
22. Off-the-job conduct that may discredit the Hospital's image and the public trust.
23. Use of profane or vulgar language (as commonly considered) in a manner others find offensive.

C. Discipline:

Discipline and corrective action procedures for violations of the employee conduct policy will be handled in accordance with Hospital and DPHHS Policies and applicable

collective bargaining agreements. Discipline will be commensurate with the severity of the violation, particularly the impact upon patients. Serious infractions, whether occurring on-the-job or off-the-job may result in dismissal from employment.

- VI. REFERENCES:** MSH Policy HR-18 Attendance, Work Hours, Absence from Work. DPHHS Human Resources Policy 200 Guidelines for Employee Conduct.
- VII. COLLABORATED WITH:** Hospital Administrator, Director of Nursing.
- VIII. RESCISSIONS:** HR-06, *Employee Conduct* dated October 18, 2016; HR-06, *Employee Conduct* dated December 30, 2013; HR-06, *Employee Conduct* dated November 2, 2009; HR-06, *Employee Conduct* dated July 9, 2009; HR-06, *Employee Conduct* dated August 28, 2006; HR-06, *Employee Conduct* dated December 18, 2002; HOPP 12 – 04C. 031379, *Conduct, Guiding Principles* dated November 1995.
- IX. DISTRIBUTION:** All hospital policy manuals.
- X. ANNUAL REVIEW AND AUTHORIZATION:** This policy is subject to annual review and authorization for use by either the Administrator or the Medical Director with written documentation of the review per ARM § 37-106-330.
- XI. FOLLOW-UP RESPONSIBILITY:** Director of Human Resource.
- XII. ATTACHMENTS:**
A. Montana State Hospital Organizational Code of Ethics.

Signatures:

Kyle Fouts
Interim Hospital Administrator

Holly Callarman
Director of Human Resources

MONTANA STATE HOSPITAL ORGANIZATIONAL CODE OF ETHICS

PREAMBLE

Montana State Hospital is a state operated in-patient psychiatric care facility that provides comprehensive services to individuals with serious and disabling mental illness. This requires a complex internally integrated and externally networked system comprised of multi-disciplinary highly skilled professionals, para-professionals, skilled workers, and support personnel. Each employee has the responsibility to: act in a manner consistent with the ethical principles outlined in this organizational statement and its supporting policies; to perform their duties with integrity, honest, fairness, and diligence; and adhere to the highest principles of dignity and respect for all we serve. We further recognize and understand this responsibility extends to all patients, their families, staff, the community, and a wide network of external systems and providers. We will strive to provide comprehensive, effective treatment and service delivery while applying our ethical standards equally, consistently, and without compromise.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

- We will perform all duties with beneficence (doing good) and non-maleficence (doing no harm).
- We will strengthen the hospital treatment effort by devoting our energy toward the production of quality work.
- We will accept no gifts from patients, their families or friends, vendors, or from any other source associated with the performance of our duties that has any potential to influence or creates a perception of influence.
- We will honor and respect all racial, sexual, ethnic, cultural, and religious differences and refrain from any and all acts of harassment or slurs related to race, sexual orientation, religion, ethnicity, cultural diversity or position within the organization by treating others with courtesy and respect.
- We will, as professionals, perform and fulfill our duties consistent with the principles, values, and obligations established in our applicable professional code of ethics and are subject to sanctions from the same.
- We will responsibly report all ethical violations to appropriate supervisors without fear of retaliation or reprisal.
- We will provide reasonable accommodations for individuals with disabilities as defined in Federal and State law.

PATIENT CARE PRINCIPLES

- We respect and honor the rights, dignity, wellbeing, and privacy of all patients.
- We will respect and protect the emotional vulnerability of all patients and refrain from encouraging, developing, fostering, or maintaining intimate or other inappropriate personal employee/patient relationships.
- We will protect all patients from any form of abuse, neglect, or exploitation.
- We will maintain the highest level of patient confidentiality at all times.

- We will encourage and include, whenever possible and to the extent possible, the family or designated others in the treatment of the patient.
- We acknowledge the patients right to refuse to perform work in or for the hospital.
- We recognize and accept the autonomy of patients and the right of those with capacity to make their own health care decisions, including refusal of treatment.
- We will honor and respect patients advance directives and durable powers of attorney regarding their health care wishes and decisions.
- We will be sensitive, responsive, and respectful in the care of individuals who are dying by fostering the individual's comfort and dignity while addressing the treatment of primary and secondary symptoms, effectively managing pain and responding to the individual's and their family's specific psychosocial, spiritual, and cultural needs and concerns.
- We will respect the right of all patients and staff to refuse to participate in any research or experimentation without first obtaining legally adequate and express written consent and insure no compromised service delivery for refusal to participate.

ADMINISTRATIVE PRINCIPLES

- We recognize our position of public trust and will represent our services and capabilities fairly and accurately to the public.
- We will make decisions about admissions, discharges, and transfers of patients with purely the best interest of the patient in mind.
- We will ensure the integrity of clinical decision making shall be protected and not compromised regardless of any consideration related to the compensation or shared financial risk between the facility and its leadership.
- We will advise patients about their financial responsibility to the hospital, if any, and provide assistance to them in accessing possible resources while never denying admission or pursuing transfer based upon an individual's indigent status.
- We will perform all billing and reimbursement practices with honesty and accuracy utilizing detailed accounting procedures.
- We will provide treatment in the most efficient and effective manner possible and refrain from unrealistic lengths of stay or inappropriate provision of services to our patients.
- We will refrain from contractual agreements with organizations or individuals where there is potential for conflict of interest.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION PRINCIPLES

- We will respect the right of staff members to not participate in any treatment, procedure, or activity approved by the facility that is in violation of, or in conflict with, their specific and identifiable cultural, religious, or ethical beliefs.
- We will promptly and courteously investigate and resolve all complaints from staff, our consumers, the public, or others regarding any aspect of our service delivery.