



**MONTANA STATE HOSPITAL
POLICY AND PROCEDURE**

**CODE OF ETHICS
FOR EMPLOYEES OF MONTANA STATE HOSPITAL**

Effective Date: November 21, 2013

Policy #: HR-05

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- I. PURPOSE:** To set forth a code of ethics prohibiting conflict between public duty and private interest as required by the constitution of Montana while ensuring ethical standards of service delivery are consistently maintained.
- II. POLICY:** All Montana State Hospital (MSH) employees shall act in a manner consistent with ethical principles established in this policy and all hospital policies. Employees shall perform their duties with integrity, honesty, fairness, and diligence; and adhere to the highest principles of dignity, respect, and confidentiality for a wide variety of people they come in contact with to include patients, families, staff members, community representatives, and a network of external providers.
- III. DEFINITIONS:**
- A. Employee – means any temporary, part time, or permanent employee of MSH.
 - B. Financial Interest – means an interest held by an individual as a personal asset.
- IV. RESPONSIBILITIES:**
- A. All employees will be responsible for adhering to ethical guidelines as established in this policy.
 - B. Supervisors will ensure their employees are in compliance with this policy.
- V. PROCEDURE:**
- A. Employees will reference and adhere to general, patient care, administrative, and conflict resolution principles outlined in the MSH Organizational Code of Ethics (Attachment A).
 - B. Employees may not:
 - 1. use state time, facilities, or equipment for private business purposes,
 - 2. engage in a substantial financial transaction for private purposes,
 - 3. or assist any person for a fee or other compensation in obtaining a contract, claim, license, or other economic benefit from the agency.

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 that 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, well being, 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 that 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.