



HUMAN RESOURCES POLICY & PROCEDURES

DEPARTMENT: HR	POLICY NUMBER: 139
DISTRIBUTION: All Staff	EFFECTIVE DATE: 03/93
SUBJECT: Code of Conduct	REVISION DATE: March 1, 2018 March 28, 2023

POLICY STATEMENT:

It is the policy of Equinox to promote professional conduct on the part of its employees, which is in the best interest of clients served, fellow employees and the agency. Equinox is committed to the highest possible standards for professional conduct and ethical practice.

Failure to adhere to professional and ethical standards constitutes professional misconduct on the part of the employee and may be the basis for disciplinary action.

Equinox expects that each employee will adhere to the standards of conduct and observe and follow agency policies and procedures at all times during work hours and/or as a representative of the agency in the community.

Standards of Conduct:

1. Person-Centered Approach

The primary duty of staff is to the people who receive supports and services from this organization. Staff acknowledge that each person of suitable age must have the opportunity to direct his or her own life, honoring, where consistent with agency policy, their right to assume risk in a safe manner, and recognizing each person's potential for lifelong learning and growth. Staff understand that their job will require flexibility, creativity, and commitment. Whenever consistent with agency policy, staff will work to support the individual's preferences and interests.

2. Physical, Emotional and Personal Well-being

Staff will promote the physical, emotional, and personal well-being of any person who receives services and supports from this organization, including their protection from abuse and neglect and reducing their risk of harm to others and themselves.

3. Respect, Dignity and Choice

Staff will respect the dignity and individuality of any person who receives services and supports from this organization and honor their choices and preferences whenever possible and consistent with agency policy. Staff will help people receiving supports and services use the opportunities and resources

available to all in the community, whenever possible and consistent with agency policy.

4. Self-Determination

Staff will help people receiving supports and services realize their rights and responsibilities, and, as consistent with agency policy, make informed decisions and understand their options related to their physical health and emotional well-being.

5. Relationships

Staff will help people who receive services and supports from this organization maintain or develop healthy relationships with family and friends. Staff will support them in making informed choices about safely expressing their sexuality and other preferences, whenever possible and consistent with agency policy.

6. Advocacy

Staff will advocate for justice, inclusion, and community participation with, or on behalf of, any person who receives services and supports from this organization, as consistent with agency policy. Staff will promote justice, fairness, and equality, and respect their human, civil and legal rights.

7. Personal Health Information and Confidentiality

Staff understand that persons served by my organization have the right to privacy and confidentiality with respect to their personal health information and will protect this information from unauthorized use or disclosure, except as required or permitted by law, rule, or regulation.

8. Non-Discrimination

Staff will not discriminate against people receiving services and supports or colleagues based on race, religion, national origin, sex, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, economic condition, disability, or any other protected class under the law.

9. Integrity, Responsibility and Professional Competency

Staff will reinforce the values of this organization when it does not compromise the well-being of any person who receives services and support. Staff will maintain their skills and competency through continued learning, including all training provided by this organization. Staff will actively seek advice and guidance from others whenever uncertain about an appropriate course of action. Staff will not misrepresent their professional qualifications or affiliations. Licensed staff will be held to the Code of Ethics particular to their licensure. Staff will demonstrate model behavior to all, including persons receiving services and supports.

10. Reporting Requirement

As mandated reporters, staff acknowledge their legal obligation under Social Services Law § 491, as may be amended from time to time or superseded, to report all allegations of reportable incidents immediately upon discovery to the Justice Center's Vulnerable Persons' Central Register by calling 1-855-373-2122.

The following is a non-exhaustive list of examples of conduct that would be in violation of the agency's

standards of conduct:

- Performing below the expectations of the position, including productivity, timely submission of documentation, job knowledge and essential functions.
- Failure to show growth and progress in the job, including work habits and attitudes, conflict resolution, teamwork, and service delivery skills.
- Violating professional ethics as defined by Equinox's Ethical Standards policy, and/or any licensing body applicable to the employee's position.
- Failing to treat both clients and other staff with courtesy, honesty, and respect.
- Reporting to work under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol (prescription, over-the-counter medication, alcohol, or illicit drugs) and controlled substances that may impair the employee's ability to perform his or her job; manufacture, dispensation, possession, sale, distribution, or use of illegal drugs and/or alcohol at any time.
- Possessing of a weapon of any kind on agency property, or while conducting agency business off of agency property.
- Failure to report serious injury, accident, or reportable incident within one (1) business day, as required by each Program's respective government oversight agency.
- Unauthorized removal of Agency records or unauthorized disclosure of confidential information, including client-related, personnel-related, fiscal or proprietary information.
- Theft of property or misappropriation of funds from clients, agency or other employees.
- Insubordination by refusing to perform a work function.
- Leaving work premises without permission while on work time.
- Unauthorized absences/excessive absence or tardiness.
- Intentionally misusing or damaging Agency property or the property of a client or another employee.
- Permitting unauthorized visitors to the workplace.
- Violation of any Equinox policy.
- Obtaining employment under false or misleading information.
- Unauthorized use of Agency vehicles, equipment or property.
- Any other activity which substantially interrupts or distracts the employee from assigned duties.

It is not possible to list all the forms of behavior that are considered unacceptable in the workplace. This is not an exhaustive list; the items above may also be expanded upon in department policies and procedures. This policy does not alter the employment-at-will relationship.