

# Code of Ethical Conduct

Dial Help employees, Board of Directors, and volunteers are expected to follow established codes of conduct that protect the interests and safety of the employees, clients, and agency at all times. Conduct that goes against the codes in this document is prohibited, and individuals engaging in inappropriate conduct could be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

The codes below are examples only and not intended to be all-inclusive. Dial Help reserves the right to modify these policies at any time, and to impose discipline at its own discretion.

## **Codes of Conduct: Business**

1. Maintain confidentiality with regard to client information and Agency information.
2. Report to work punctually as scheduled, and give proper notice whenever unable to work or report for work on time.
3. Follow the dress code outlined in the Guide to Service Delivery.
4. Perform assigned tasks efficiently and maintaining cleanliness and order in the workplace.
5. Comply with all agency and departmental rules, policies, and procedures regarding behavior, health, and safety at all times.
6. Adhere to the terms of any contracts (including grants) that your department is involved in.
7. Provide accurate information regarding budgetary expenditures and client statistics/demographics.
8. Treat all clients, client friends or family members, co-workers, volunteers, visitors, and staff from other agencies in a courteous manner. Refrain from discrimination based on race, ethnicity, color, sex, gender identity, national origin, age, sexual orientation, marital status, religion, disability, or other protected class.

## **Codes of Conduct: Service Delivery**

1. Follow Dial Help's empowerment model and provide services with the least intrusive/enabling support possible.

2. Disclose any potential conflict of interest pertinent to job duties to your supervisor, whereby personal, financial, or other considerations have the potential to influence or compromise professional judgment and objectivity. Examples include existing or previous relationship with a referred client.
3. Refrain from accepting loans; gifts of money; or goods, services, or other proposed arrangements for personal benefit, directly or indirectly involving possible influence or appearance of influence upon the manner in which they perform their work, makes their decisions, or otherwise discharges their duties as an agency employee/volunteer.
4. Refrain from fundraising for personal causes with clients (such as selling candy for their child's school), or requesting that clients fundraise on behalf of the organization.
5. Respect and safeguard the personal property of persons served, visitors, and all property of the organization, as appropriate.
6. Set appropriate boundaries with clients, including not disclosing personal information, and refraining from any secondary relationships (friendship, sexual relationship, or any exploitative/coercive/harmful relationship).
7. Refrain from acting as a witness for signature of documents, unless approved to do so by your supervisor on a case-by-case basis. Witnesses act as neutral third parties.

### **Codes of Conduct: Professional Responsibilities**

1. Behave in a manner that demonstrates dignity and respect to clients, staff members, visitors, volunteers, and other stakeholders.
2. Perform all duties in accordance with existing licensure you may hold.
3. Identify and address any accessibility barriers for clients.
4. Seek Clinical Supervision with regards to clients and case work.
5. Refrain from initiating contact if you encounter a client in the community, unless the client chooses to initiate contact with you.
6. Identify your own physical, mental, and emotional health issues, trauma issues, and other related issues, and seeking professional and/or informal supports to

address these as needed. Failing to attend to your own well-being potentially puts your clients and co-workers at risk.

7. Immediately confer with the Executive Director in regards to one or more staff's concern that a co-worker may be engaging in unethical, illegal, or dangerous conduct towards clients, Dial Help staff, or the agency. If the concern is in regards to the Executive Director, confer with the Board President. See the Grievance Policy in Dial Help's *Personnel Policies* for more information.

### **Codes of Conduct: Human Resources**

1. Supervisors: Refrain from abusing your authority in any manner.
2. Supervisors: Delegate duties to your team members, taking into account their competences and workload.
3. Follow your supervisor's instructions and complete duties in a timely manner.
4. Refrain from discrimination against other employees/volunteers based on race, ethnicity, color, sex, gender identity, national origin, age, sexual orientation, marital status, religion, disability, or other protected class.
5. Refrain from retaliation against any individuals properly exercising their right to initiate a complaint, criticism, or grievance.
6. Clarify your role when speaking or acting as a private individual, rather than as a professional or as a representative Dial Help.

### **Codes of Conduct: Waste, Fraud, Abuse, and Other Wrong-Doing**

Definition of fraud: Intentional deception or misrepresentation that an individual knows (or should know) to be false, knowing the deception could result in some unauthorized benefit to themselves or some other person(s).

Definition of waste: Over-utilization of services, or practices that result in unnecessary costs.

Definition of abuse: Provider practices that are inconsistent with sound fiscal, business practices, and human service-related practices and result in:

- a. An unnecessary cost to the Medicare/Medicaid program or other insurance providers;
- b. Reimbursement for services that are not medically necessary; or

- c. Services that fail to meet professionally recognized standards for mental health care or other human services
1. Follow the law in regards to proper billing for Medicaid, Medicare, and third-party insurance.
2. Refrain from committing waste, fraud, abuse, or other wrong-doing.
3. Immediately confer with the Executive Director in regards to one or more staff's concern that a co-worker may be engaging in fraud, waste, abuse, or other wrong-doing. If the concern is in regards to the Executive Director, confer with the Board President.

### **Codes of Conduct: Marketing**

1. Only participate in active marketing of the agency if you are approved for such tasks by the Executive Director. This includes providing interviews, quotes, or developing outreach materials/other media-related materials.
2. Share information regarding the agency in a responsible manner that causes no harm to staff, volunteers, Board members, or clients.
3. Represent information about the agency in a truthful and fair manner.
4. Use language that is respectful and professional when communicating with clients, employees, volunteers, and other stakeholders.
5. Engage in corporate citizenship as appropriate and with approval from your supervisor, such as participating in collaborative projects with other stakeholders, taking part in a multi-disciplinary teams, or volunteering at partner events.

### **Codes of Conduct: Contractual Relationships**

Definition of contractual relationship: When the agency contracts with an individual or business to perform specific tasks at an hourly rate or project cost. Individuals under contract are not considered employees of the agency and are not entitled to fringe or other benefits. Contractual agreements must be approved and signed by the Executive Director.

1. Request verification of licensure, certification or accreditation, and/or insurance coverage, when appropriate.

2. Promptly report any suspected abuse, neglect, waste, or wrongdoing by an independent contractor to their supervisor or the Executive Director.

### **Violations of the Code of Ethical Conduct**

Dial Help maintains a “no reprisal” approach to reporting violations of the Code of Ethical Conduct. This means that employees shall not be subject to any retaliation, penalties, discrimination, confrontation, or any other type of consequences for reporting violations.

To make report of a violation of the Code of Ethical Conduct, provide a written account to the Executive Director of the violation. You should receive a call or in-person meeting from the Executive Director within 48 hours of receiving the complaint. If you do not receive a call back within 48 hours, please contact the Executive Director.

If you feel that the issue has been resolved after your discussion with the Executive Director, no other action is needed on your part. If you are not satisfied with how your complaint has been handled, you may contact the Board President.

### **Examples of Inappropriate Conduct**

1. Disclosing confidential information about Dial Help, its clients, staff, or contractors.
2. Falsification or altering of Dial Help records or reports such as applications, client contact records, time sheets, and/or purchasing records and recipients.
3. Misuse of vacation, sick, or other leave time.
4. Reporting to work under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs or using, selling, or possessing alcohol or illegal drugs on Dial Help property.
5. Denying services to clients for whom services would be appropriate.
6. Failure to disclose any conflict or potential conflict of interest to Dial Help.
7. Self-disclosure of personal details when working with clients.
8. Engaging in personal relationships with clients, including friendship, romance, or anything that involves personal gain. Do not accept friend requests from clients on your personal social media, or communicate with them using your personal email or phone. In a small rural community, it may be difficult to avoid dual

relationships. Please speak with your supervisor should a conflict of interest occur.

9. Intolerance or disrespect toward client or co-worker values, including religion, political affiliation, etc.
10. Engaging in any form of harassment, sexual or other.
11. Threatening or intimidating co-workers, clients, contractors, visitors, or others.
12. Verbal, physical, or sexual abuse against clients, contractors, visitors, or others.
13. Fighting with or assaulting co-workers, clients, contractors, visitors, or others.
14. Possessing firearms or other weapons on Dial Help property.
15. Stealing, destroying, defacing, or misusing Dial Help property or other employees' or volunteers' property.
16. Refusing to follow supervisory instruction concerning a job-related matter, or insubordination.
17. Loaning money to clients unless appropriate emergency funds are being given following the guidelines described under Section 2 of the Personnel Policies.

**Dial Help adheres to the standards listed in the Michigan Mental Health Code, 2001 (Act 258 of the Public Acts of 1974 as amended) regarding:** Recipient Rights, Confidentiality, and Duty to Warn.

**Dial Help employees, Board of Directors, and volunteers are expected to perform all duties in accordance with Dial Help's Personnel Policies.**

- This document is updated annually
- Staff should plan to review this document at least annually