

Summerhouse Houston Ethical Code of Conduct
Developed: May 2019
Updated Jan 2021

PURPOSE:

To reinforce the fact that Summerhouse Houston maintains high standards for professional behavior from its leadership and employees in the performance of their job duties and responsibilities.

To address ethical issues in the conduct of its business, provision of service delivery, professional responsibilities, 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.

All employees are to be cognizant of waste, fraud, abuse and other wrongdoing and affirm that suspected allegations will be reported immediately without fear of retaliation.

The organizational ethical codes of conduct statement shall be communicated to all employees and to members/families served, and other stakeholders, as appropriate.

EMPLOYEE EXPECTATIONS:

Member well-being: All employees are expected to respect the integrity and protect the welfare of the member or group with whom the employee is working. Employees should act and behave in a manner that demonstrates a genuine interest in all members and dedicate themselves to the best interest of the members and their needs.

Mission and Values: Employees are expected to adhere to the mission and vision of Summerhouse Houston:

Summerhouse's Vision: To create opportunities for adults with IDD to belong and positively impact the Greater Houston community.

Summerhouse's Mission: Summerhouse supports adults with IDD, their families, and our community through employment, volunteerism, and partnerships to foster a culture of belonging, choice, and respect.

Key Areas of Focus:

Employment: Highly individualized and customized job placement, coaching, and supported employment services provided to members and outside referrals.

Volunteerism: Assisting members to give back to the community while exploring their career interests and learning valuable work skills.

Community Engagement: Our community is stronger when everyone participates, and we support members to develop socially valued roles and engage in their communities.

Family Support: Being a resource and support to families as we truly partner to implement each member's PATH and ILP.

Confidentiality: All employees are expected to maintain confidentiality of the member's identifying information, and to abide by all applicable federal, state, or local laws and regulations which address issues of privacy or confidentiality of records. Employees will be mindful of members' rights to confidentiality of information and privacy.

Nondiscrimination: All employees are expected to refrain from discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity, age, color, religion, creed, gender, national origin, sexual orientation, veteran status, financial condition, disability, or health condition. This includes discrimination against other employees, any current, former, or potential members, and others in the community with whom an employee may interact.

Teamwork: All employees are expected to act in accordance with organizational policies and procedures, and other personnel directives established by the board or CEO. 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.

Responsibility: Employees have a commitment to assess their own personal strengths, limitations, biases, and effectiveness on a continuing basis; shall continuously strive for self-improvement; and have a personal responsibility for professional growth through further education and training.

Setting boundaries: All employees are expected to maintain a professional relationship with members and their families.

Remain alert: All employees should 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 organization.

Reporting:

- All employees must understand, sign, and adhere to Texas laws regarding Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation and mandated reporting.
- All employees have a responsibility to report any known waste, fraud, or abuse.
- All employees must report any true or potential conflicts of interests.

Member 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.
 - Are completed, data entered, accurately billed and filed in a timely manner.
- Employees are to ensure that they:
 - Provide timely and accurate reports of time that is expended in organization-related activities.
 - Claim only those expenses that are budgeted, authorized and/or are reasonably related to their job descriptions.
 - Participate cooperatively with supervision, peer review and quality assurance/improvement requests and activities.

Witnessing of Documents: Employees shall not act as a witness to documents such as Power of Attorney, guardianship, advance directives, and/or company contracts without the expressed written approval of the CEO. Employees are authorized to countersign documents such as intake forms authorizations, (i.e. release of information form), service plans, etc. as directly related to their job duties.

Exchanges of Gifts, Money and Gratuities: No employee or other persons associated with Summerhouse Houston will accept gifts of money or material values exceeding \$50.00, favors remuneration, or other consideration from any member, family, individual, or organization that does business with the organization.

Solicitation, Distribution and Personal Fund Raising: To avoid unnecessary work interruptions and potential awkward situations, solicitation and personal fundraising by a staff member of another staff member is prohibited while either person is on working time. Solicitation of a member is strictly forbidden.

Personal Property:

- All personnel shall respect and safeguard the personal property of members, visitors, and other personnel as well as the property of the organization.
- Employees will not use or allow the use of Summerhouse Houston property or equipment other than activities approved by the organization.
- Summerhouse Houston is not responsible for personal property that is not safeguarded or is left unattended.

Social Media: Employees who use social media should be mindful that inappropriate use could damage their own reputation and that of the organization. Employees are only allowed to represent Summerhouse Houston on social media when given the authority to do so.

Outside Services: Summerhouse Houston employees will not engage in outside professional social services that are incompatible or in conflict with job duties within the organization.

BUSINESS PRACTICES:

Business Practices:

- Summerhouse Houston will operate within the guidelines of its By-Laws.
- Summerhouse Houston will conduct business in an ethical manner and ensure that any business practices that are questionable are thoroughly investigated.
- Summerhouse Houston will only bill for services rendered and shall seek the amount to which it is entitled.
- All financial, purchasing, personnel, facility development and information technology practices shall comply with local, state and federal law and guidelines.

Marketing:

- Summerhouse Houston will conduct marketing practices in an honest and factual manner.
- Marketing materials and practices will in no way mislead the public or misrepresent Summerhouse Houston's abilities to provide services.
- Summerhouse Houston will not claim any service outcomes unless represented by valid and reliable outcome data.

Monetary Rewards or Gifts:

- Summerhouse Houston will not allow monetary rewards or gifts to affect admission decisions.
- Summerhouse Houston will not utilize monetary rewards or gifts to any potential member in an attempt to entice them to enter programs.

Human Resources:

- Summerhouse Houston will refrain from discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity, age, color, religion, creed, gender, national origin, sexual orientation, veteran status, financial condition, disability, or health condition.
- Summerhouse Houston will provide an updated copy of Personnel Policies to each employee at hire and at least annually.
- Summerhouse Houston will adhere to all federal, state, and local laws regarding human resource practices.
- Summerhouse Houston will take all steps necessary to ensure a healthy and safe workplace.

- Summerhouse Houston is committed to providing appropriate training and professional development for employees.

Contractual Relationships:

- All contracts with individuals or other organizations or businesses shall be in writing and reviewed annually for compliance.
- The only persons allowed to enter into a contract or sign a contract is the CEO or Board President.

Fund Raising:

- Summerhouse Houston will ensure that spending practices and fundraising policies are fair and appropriate to fulfill its mission.
- Summerhouse Houston will ensure that financial reports are factually accurate and complete.
- Solicitation of funds will only use material that is truthful about the organization.
- Summerhouse Houston will respect the privacy concerns of individual donors and ensure that donors and their gifts are handled with respect and with confidentiality to the extent provided by law.
- Summerhouse will only expend funds consistent with donor intent.

VIOLATIONS OF CODE OF ETHICS:

The Code of Ethics are important to the organization 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, may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

REPORTING RESPONSIBILITIES:

Employees have the responsibility to report any suspected violation of the Code of Ethics to the Corporate Compliance Officer and/or CEO. Summerhouse Houston prohibits any retaliation against employees who provide information to or assist in an investigation of any violations of any part of the Ethical Code.

The Corporate Compliance Office or CEO, upon receipt of any allegation of wrong doing will start an investigation within three (3) working days. Results of the investigation will be presented for appropriate action. Investigations will generally be completed within 5 working days from commencement, and, upon completion, the CEO will inform the person(s) making the allegation of the findings and disposition. If additional time is needed to complete the investigation, all involved parties will be notified and provided with the newly established time frame.

Date