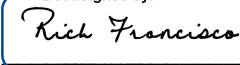




Policy/Procedure Title: Code of Ethics/Conduct	Policy and Procedure #: 01-011	<u>Review Dates</u>	
Category: Health Information Subject: The purpose of the Corporate Compliance Program is to ensure that HealthWest and its affiliates, employees, contractors and individuals conduct their operations and provide services in a manner consistent with the mission, vision and value statements and with all applicable federal and state laws and regulations. The program consists of a mechanism for reporting, investigating, monitoring and responding to potential, threatened or actual violations of federal or state law. The program is intended to serve as a vehicle for HealthWest on an ongoing basis to educate its employees and police itself, to prevent any violations of law from occurring and/or to minimize the impact, exposure of liability of any such actions.	Prepared by: Name: Linda Anthony Title: Director of Health Information Approved by: DocuSigned by:  AA7EBD48ABB04A3... Rich Francisco, Executive Director		
Effective Date: 04/28/2025	Last Revised Date: 07/28/2026		

I. POLICY

HealthWest is committed to a continuing effort to maintain principles of ethical business conduct. To accomplish this, HealthWest has developed a system-wide Corporate Compliance Program. This program has been reviewed and approved by the Board of Directors of HealthWest.

HealthWest expects that the personal and professional conduct of its employees will conform to acceptable standards and reflect positively upon the County. In instances where an employee fails to comply with these standards, an attempt may be made to correct an employee's conduct by progressive discipline.

II. APPLICATION

All employees, volunteers, contractual employees, and vendors of HealthWest.

III. DEFINITIONS

- A. Dignity: To be treated with esteem, honor, politeness; to be addressed in a manner that is not patronizing, condescending or demeaning; to be treated as an equal; to be treated the way any individual would like to be treated.
- B. Respect: To show deferential regard for; to be treated with esteem, concern, consideration or appreciation; to protect the individual's privacy; to be sensitive to cultural differences; to allow an individual to make choices.
- C. Abuse: Payment for items or services when there is no legal entitlement to that payment and the provider has not knowingly and/or intentionally misrepresented facts to obtain

payment.

- D. Corporate Compliance Program/Plan: Procedural framework established to provide assurances that HealthWest is compliant with all billing, collection, and medical records and other documentation requirements of all Federal or State programs with which the Agency does business. The Plan provides avenues for errors/problems in the system to be appropriately and timely identified and corrected.
- E. Corporate Compliance Officer: Leadership team member selected by the Board of Directors to manage HealthWest's Corporate Compliance Plan. The Corporate Compliance Officer has necessary access to legal counsel, Board of Directors, and Executive Director to enforce the Plan.
- F. Fraud: Knowingly and willfully executing or attempting to execute a scheme or artifice to defraud any Federal or State program or to obtain, by means of false or fraudulent pretenses, representations or promises any of the money or property owned by, or under custody or control of, any Federal or State program.
- G. Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996: This is a law established in 1996 designed to provide privacy standards to protect patients' medical records and other health information provided to health plans, doctors, hospitals, and other health care providers. The HIPAA Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health (HITECH) Act, enacted as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, was signed into law on February 17, 2009, to promote the adoption and meaningful use of health information technology.

IV. PROCEDURE

A. Staff Expectations

- 1. All employees to include Certified Peer Support Specialists, Peer Recovery Coaches, and Parent Support Partners, are expected to report violations of any Federal Health Care Program, including the Federal and Michigan False Claims Acts, or other Federal or State funded program requirements to the Corporate Compliance Officer. Failure to reasonably detect and report a violation is itself a violation of the Program.
- 2. Business will be conducted in good faith, with integrity and in accordance with these ethical standards. Adherence to such standards should never be traded or compromised for financial, professional or other business objectives. This obligation includes dealing honestly with other health care providers, educational institutions, payors, internal and external customers, suppliers, competitors and financial partners.
- 3. Business decisions will be based on corporate mission, strategic plan and HealthWest resources. They will take into consideration the behavioral health care needs of the community served by HealthWest with care given to avoid duplication of services and services that are unnecessary or non-efficacious. As we work to provide care in a more cost-effective manner, we will strive to provide care that meets our standards. HealthWest will not be wasteful in the utilization of its resources. HealthWest will obey all relevant laws, regulatory standards and ethical codes.
- 4. Staff are responsible for adherence to the HealthWest Way Value Statement and Code of Conduct: We strive to embrace the Golden Rule when engaging clients, as well as colleagues. We act with integrity, pursue excellence in all we do, and empower one

another to grow and succeed by:

- i. Meeting people where they are
- ii. Listen actively and with intention
- iii. Treat everyone with kindness and joy
- iv. Approach issues with an open mind and do not jump to conclusions
- v. Always seek to understand
- vi. Operate with transparency
- vii. Follow through until the end
- viii. Make decisions using data and an evidence-based approach
- ix. Understand group norms
- x. Approach challenges with innovation, and are unafraid to explore new solutions

Acknowledge errors transparently and constructively with a focus on continuous improvement.

5. HealthWest depends on employees to fulfil their responsibility to individuals and the community it serves. Ethical care and business practices are essential elements in guiding its operations. The Code of Ethics defines the expected ethical behavior of employees. All employees of HealthWest commit themselves to conduct their professional relationships in accordance with this statement and agree that they will:

B. Responsibilities to Individuals Receiving Services:

1. Adhere to policies and procedures of the Agency including the following:
 - i. Discrimination or Refusal of Professional Services
 - ii. Confidentiality
 - iii. Recipient Rights
 - iv. Consumer Bill of Rights
2. Respect the choice of persons served in all aspects of their lives.
3. Respect the dignity of all persons served by avoiding dual personal, clinical, and/or supportive relationships, sex or intimate touch with individuals receiving services.
4. Protect and preserve clinical relationships by not lending money, borrowing money or becoming a guardian for non-family members that are individuals receiving HealthWest services. Should any legal documentation require a witness, HealthWest has notary services available as needed.
5. Ensure personal and professional competence by continuing to develop skills and knowledge and applying them to work activities.
6. Provide diagnosis, treatment or advice on problems only within the employee's recognized scope of practice.
7. Respect and value all persons' religious beliefs, personal and spiritual values and cultural practices. Staff will not engage in religious preaching with consumers.
8. Ensure that all persons are provided mobility supports and any other supports included

in the Person-Centered Plan (IPOS).

9. Assist those consumers with limited English proficiency so that services may be accessed.
10. Do not accept any gifts of value given by individuals receiving services, their families, advocates or guardians.
11. In the appropriate treatment settings, advanced directives of the individual receiving services will be honored. If a consumer individual seeks information about advanced directives, employees shall provide information and take reasonable steps to safeguard the individual's best interests and rights.
12. The agency will not disclose any medical information about individuals served without a signed authorization for the use and disclosure of protected health information as required under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996.
13. Respect the dignity of the family members of the person served in all interactions.
14. Respect the personal property of the persons served. Persons are allowed to carry their personal items with them unless it goes against any safety concerns (Policy and Procedure 04-016 Personal Property and Funds)

C. Responsibilities to Co-workers:

1. Respect the views of co-workers and treat them with fairness, courtesy, and good faith.
2. Report through supervisory channels any staff that engages in harassment, discrimination, or presents themselves as competent to do services beyond their training and/or level of experience.
3. Suspend assumptions, act as colleagues and adopt the spirit of inquiry by exploring the thinking behind their views and the evidence that they have that leads to these views. Staff will not engage in religious campaigning during working hours.
4. HealthWest will not discharge, demote, suspend, threaten, harass, or otherwise discriminate against an employee because the employee initiates, assists, or participates in a proceeding or court action under the Michigan False Claims Act as well as the Federal False Claims Statutes.
5. Report to my supervisor, the Corporate Compliance Office Team, Recipient Rights Officer, HIPAA Privacy Officer, or Human Resources Manager any suspected activity of a colleague that has violated the code of conduct/ethical standards.

D. Responsibilities to Employer:

1. Demonstrate respect and adhere to all Agency policies, procedures and practices and management decisions.
2. Work to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of services provided by the Agency by embracing the principles and practices of quality improvement.

3. Do not accept any gifts from vendors, providers or other contractors that would result in an implied or direct promise of reciprocity.
4. Support the integrity and enhance the reputation of the Agency. Be positive in words and actions toward the Agency.
5. Critically review requests from vendors or subcontractors to participate in any type of promotional efforts to limit the possibility of a potential conflict of interest.
6. Distinguish personal views and actions from those authorized as representatives of HealthWest.
7. Obtain approval from the Leadership team prior to making any public statement to the media as representatives of HealthWest.
8. Report all known or suspected compliance issues to the Corporate Compliance Team, including any fraud, abuse, or misconduct as identified in the Michigan False Claims Act as well as the Federal False Claims statutes.
9. Conduct job duties in a manner that demonstrates commitment to compliance with all applicable laws and regulations.
10. Strive to prevent errors and provide suggestions for change to eliminate errors.
11. Donations from vendors, contractors or providers may be accepted to benefit the consumers of the Agency as a whole. Donations may not be accepted to benefit one employee.
12. Adhere to all billing and documentation standards without knowingly or willfully providing false or misleading information.
13. Document services without misrepresentation of the service provided, duration or outcome.
14. Authorize and provide services according to generally accepted mental health and managed care practices.
15. Ensure communications about offered services and products are accurate, fair and true. Accurately portray those services and products, which are available in the network.
16. Conduct business with vendors, contractors and other third parties free from offers of or requests for gifts and favors.
17. Apply the principal of confidentiality to all aspects of our business and relationships with consumers and co-workers. Follow the appropriate procedures for the release of protected health information for consumers and co-workers.
18. Obtain written authorization for use of photography or testimonials prior to use.
19. Use license, certification and accreditation information according to the standards and requirements established by the Agency from which the information was obtained.

20. Ensure that marketing materials regarding programs, outcomes of services, costs for services, credentials of clinical providers, or benefits offered are not false or misleading and are approved by the appropriate departments.
21. Refrain from negative statements about competitors.
22. Refrain from high-pressure techniques or manipulation in promoting services and programs.
23. Refrain from plagiarizing the publications or media of others. Publications or media materials of other agencies or corporations are used when appropriate consent has been obtained or compensation is provided to the owner.
24. Provide information to a consumer individual receiving services that allows them to authorize the removal of their name from the mailing list for marketing materials.
25. Staff will respect and safeguard the personal property of coworkers, individuals in service, and the organization. Work areas will remain clean and tidy.

E. CORPORATE ETHICS

1. Comply with the agency's Corporate Compliance Plan and to other requirements of Medicare, Medicaid and federally funded programs/services.
2. Accurately record service provided and report any potential or suspected fraud, waste or abuse.
3. Ensure that marketing materials (e.g. publications, descriptions of services) reflect only the services available and accurate information about level of certification and accreditation. Services, programs and outcomes will be accurately described in an understandable manner.
4. Abide by all federal and state statutes, regulations and/or administrative rules applicable to any licenses and/or positions they hold, including, but not limited to, the Department of Community Health's (MDHHS) administrative rules pertaining to social workers, counselors and therapists.
5. Not engage in practices that are contrary to fiscal, business, healthcare or other professional practices.

F. PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCY I AFFIRM THAT I SHALL:

1. Accurately represent my education, training, experience, and competencies as they relate to my profession.
2. Have an ongoing commitment to assess my own personal strengths, my limitations, my biases and my effectiveness.
3. Strive to become and remain proficient in the practice and performance of my job duties.
4. Abide by the ethical code of professional license(s) by which I am credentialed

5. Witness (e.g., sign and date) documents according to standards and legal requirements.
6. Not attempt to diagnose, treat or advise on problems outside the recognized bounds of my competence.
7. Seek appropriate professional assistance for my own personal problems or conflicts that will impair my work performance and my judgment.

V. REFERENCES

- A. HealthWest Policy and Procedure 01-006 Corporate Compliance
- B. HealthWest Policy and Procedure 01-004 Mission, Vision, and Values Statement
- C. HealthWest Strategic Plan
- D. Michigan Certified Peer Support Specialist Code of Ethics https://madfreedom.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/MI-Peer_Support_Specialist_Code_of_Ethics.pdf
- E. Michigan False Claims Act
- F. Federal False Claims Statute
- G. Muskegon County Personnel Rules
- H. HealthWest Policy and Procedure 04-016 Personal Property and Funds
- I. HealthWest Way

Authors Initials LA/hb