



CODE OF CONDUCT



Our Mission: Assess, protect, and promote the health, the environment, and the well-being of southern Nevada communities, residents, and visitors.

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FROM THE DISTRICT HEALTH OFFICER

April 30, 2021

To Our Valued Workforce Members,

Your caring professionalism and individual integrity are the cornerstones of our success. By promoting and protecting the health of all Clark County residents and visitors, we ensure high-quality public health services – regardless of economic status and circumstance.

This Code of Conduct is our compliance guidebook. All workforce members deserve to be treated, and shall treat others, with respect, compassion, and fairness. This Code, which includes our compliance philosophy and expectations, is the basis for building a positive workplace culture. These principles promote professional, collaborative working relationships to support the delivery of quality services to our clients.

Each of us shapes our culture through our words and deeds. I ask all Health District workforce members to use this Code to guide your actions. Our commitment to integrity, acting honestly and ethically, and complying with the letter of the law are critical to our success.

Thank you for your commitment to public health and our community.

Sincerely,



Fermin Leguen, MD, MPH
District Health Officer



OVERVIEW:

Compliance is integral to fulfilling our mission, vision, and values.

The Southern Nevada Health District is committed to creating a working environment in which Health District values are evident in everyday decisions and actions. Our individual and collective behavior in the workplace communicates where we stand on ethics, integrity, and honesty – each of which affects our success and shapes our reputation. To this end, the Health District has established a Compliance Program and adopted a Code of Conduct reflective of its commitment to ensuring integrity in its workplace conduct as well as its clinical and business activities.

This Code of Conduct coupled with Health District policies and procedures are integral components of the Health District's Compliance Program. Both are an extension of Health District values and outline how staff is expected to demonstrate these values in their relationships with their clients, co-workers, and the community.

This Code of Conduct applies across all divisions, departments, and programs to all Health District workforce members (including employees, volunteers, temporary employees, and contract employees).

ETHICAL PRACTICE OF PUBLIC HEALTH:

As public health professionals, we address the fundamental causes of disease and requirements for health, aiming to prevent adverse health outcomes. Public health should achieve community health in a way that respects the rights of individuals in the community. Public health policies, programs, and priorities are developed and evaluated through processes that ensure an open, public discourse.

We advocate and work for the empowerment of disenfranchised community members by promoting resources and conditions necessary for health are accessible to all people in the community.

We act in a timely manner on the information we have within the resources and the mandate given to us by the public. We ensure that the public is provided with information to help keep themselves safe while protecting the privacy of individuals.

CODE OF CONDUCT:

The Health District is committed to conducting business in a lawful and ethical manner.

The Code of Conduct and Health District compliance policies and procedures are founded upon a set of conduct commitments that govern the way we perform and fulfill

our public health responsibilities. As Health District employees, we all have a critical role in this regard. We must comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations. We - individually and collectively - have an obligation to do our best to detect, deter, and correct improper conduct, as well as promptly report any activity that appears to violate applicable laws, rules and regulations, Health District policies or this Code.

The Code cannot include every type of compliance issue. However, by reviewing this Code, completing mandatory compliance training, attending scheduled training sessions, and reading policies and procedures, you can become familiar with legal and regulatory requirements. This knowledge will allow you to identify circumstances and issues that may raise legal or ethical concerns.

Any actual or perceived violation of this Code should be immediately reported to your supervisor, manager, division director, Compliance Specialist, or the SpeakUp Hotline, (844) 769-5097 or <http://snhd.ethicspoint.com>.

All Health District employees are required to acknowledge receipt and review of the Code.

OBEYING THE LAW:

We treat fellow employees, clients, customers, and other stakeholders with fairness, honesty, and respect.

No Code can substitute for personal integrity, good judgment, and common sense in performing our public health duties. We are committed to complying with applicable laws, regulations, accreditation standards, policies, procedures, and ethical guidelines. We have an ethical responsibility to do the right thing for the right reasons in serving our clients and meeting the public health needs of our community.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AND AFFIRMATIVE ACTION:

The Health District believes in hiring, promoting, and compensating employees without regard to race, color, national origin, age, gender, religious preference, marital status, sexual orientation, physical limitation, or disability.

We are committed to recruiting, hiring and promoting individuals in compliance with state and federal laws and regulations. We are also dedicated to upholding the spirit of these laws. Therefore, we will recruit, hire and promote individuals in conformance with this policy, will make certain that individuals meet employment standards, and will continue to seek out applicants meeting the needs of the organization.

For a list of the state and federal laws, which govern Health District's non-discrimination and equal opportunity policy, see *Equal Employment Opportunity Policy, Adm-032*.

NON-DISCRIMINATION, ANTI-HARASSMENT, AND RETALIATION:

We recognize our obligation to provide an environment in which diversity is valued and equal employment opportunities are provided.

The Health District affirms its commitment to ensure that each employee in the Health District community has a right to work in an environment free from any form of discrimination or harassment based upon race, color, sex, national origin, religion, age, disability, marital status, pregnancy, ancestry, citizenship, gender identity, veteran's status, gender expression, sexual orientation, genetic information, and/or any other status or condition protected by law.

The Health District does not tolerate any form of harassment or unwelcome conduct that creates an offensive, hostile, or intimidating environment. To fulfill our commitment, the Health District relies on you to perform your work responsibly and professionally, treat colleagues in a way that upholds our mission and values, and report any known or suspected discrimination or harassment.

Any employee who believes that they have been subjected to discrimination, harassment or retaliation in violation of the Health District's policies should file a complaint within

ninety (90) days of the alleged discrimination by utilizing the informal and/or formal complaint process outlined in *Non-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy, Adm-043*.

For further questions regarding discrimination and retaliation, contact the Human Resources Department at (702) 759-1104.

A SAFE ENVIRONMENT:

Violence has no place in the workplace and will not be tolerated. This includes intimidation, violent acts, and threats of violence.

Because each of us is responsible for helping to create and maintain a safe working environment, please use safety devices and report any real or potential hazards to your supervisor, manager, and/or division director.

The Health District is committed to maintaining a workplace that is a safe, functional, effective, and supportive environment. We comply with applicable laws and regulations regarding occupational and environmental health and safety.

SOCIAL MEDIA USE:

Through the Office of Communications, we participate in social media to better communicate with the community.

Workforce members are responsible for exercising good judgment regarding the use of social media, including

making sure use of it does not interfere with one's employment obligations. Respecting our patients and clients means honoring their private and confidential information. Accordingly, Workforce members are prohibited from posting information or photographs about them on a social media page or forum unless prior consent is given from the Office of Communications or it is shared from an official Health District account.

Participation in social media during work hours should be done in an official capacity.

For further questions regarding social media use, contact the Office of Communications at (702) 759-1390.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION:

We are expected to perform job duties and responsibilities in a manner that reflects the highest ethical and professional standards of conduct consistent with the Health District Personnel Code and/or applicable collective bargaining agreement provisions, and any stated rules of a division, department, program, or another established work unit.

The Health District has developed specific corrective action protocols that should be followed when employees do not meet expectations for conduct and/or performance.

DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE:

In furtherance of the Health District's commitment to protecting the safety, health, and well-being of all employees

and other individuals in our workplace, it is the Health District's policy to maintain a drug-free workplace.

Employees are prohibited from manufacturing, distributing, dispensing, possessing, or using illegal drugs, or any other unauthorized or mind-altering or intoxicating substances while on Health District property or while conducting Health District business. Employees are also prohibited from using prescription drugs above the level recommended by the prescribing physician and are prohibited from using prescribed drugs for purposes other than the prescribed drug use.

For more information regarding drug-free workplace policies see *Drug and Alcohol-Free Workplace Policy, Adm-047*.

The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is available at any time to assist any employee who voluntarily seeks help with an alcohol or drug problem. *Employees may contact the EAP at (800) 280-3782.*

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST:

The Health District is committed to conducting its activities professionally, ethically, and free of inappropriate influence.

Workforce members have a duty to conduct Health District business in an impartial and unbiased manner that is in the best interest of the community.

A Conflict of Interest arises when a Health District employee's judgment could be affected because of a financial, professional, or personal interest in the outcome of a decision over which they have control or influence. Accordingly, employees are expected to avoid accepting from or giving gifts to clients, contractors, and vendors; or, taking advantage of our association with businesses for personal gain. If you are unsure whether an activity represents a conflict of interest, ask your supervisor, manager, or division director.

PROVIDING QUALITY ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICES:

The Health District is obligated to follow and enforce regulations, policies, procedures, federal and state laws, and to protect public health and safety. We apply principles of environmental health to mitigate risks and hazards that could harm residents and visitors of southern Nevada.

As environmental health professionals, we shall perform our duties with fairness, respect, and impartiality to all. Determinations of compliance during enforcement activities will be conducted objectively, based on regulation and law. Judgment will be exercised based on research, planning, design, and review of activities in a scientifically and technically objective manner and must be free from the appearance of impropriety.

COMPENSATION, BILLING, AND REIMBURSEMENT:

Employees are responsible for accurately documenting their time worked and ensuring their business reimbursement requests are appropriate, reasonable, and documented appropriately.

The Health District is committed to ensuring that our billing and reimbursement practices comply with applicable federal and state laws, regulations, guidelines, and policies. We are dedicated to ensuring that our charges are accurate, reflect current appropriate payment methodologies, and are provided to clients in a timely manner.

All clinical charges must be based on services rendered and supported by documentation contained in the patient's medical record. Working in collaboration with clinicians, all charges must be entered accurately and in a timely manner in accordance with Health District policy.

Submitting fraudulent claims is a violation of the False Claims Act (FCA). The FCA is a federal statute that prohibits the submission of false or fraudulent claims to Medicare and Medicaid for payment.

The following are examples of unacceptable billing practices under the FCA:

- Billing for items or services not actually rendered;
- Providing medically unnecessary services;

- Upcoding – the practice of using a billing code that provides a higher payment rate than the actual services furnished to the patient;
- Failure to refund credit balances;
- Duplicate billing; and
- Unbundling – the practice of submitting bills piecemeal or in fragmented fashion to maximize the reimbursement for various tests or procedures that are required to be billed together and therefore at a reduced cost.

If you suspect or have knowledge of the submission of fraudulent or inappropriate claims or unacceptable billing practices, you should report the issue to your supervisor, escalate the issue to higher management, the Compliance Specialist, call the anonymous Health District SpeakUp Hotline, (844) 769-5097 or <http://snhd.ethicspoint.com>.

For further questions regarding billing and reimbursement matters, contact the Financial Services Department at (702) 759-1618.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND THE HEALTH INSURANCE PORTABILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY ACT (HIPAA):

Confidential, sensitive, and/or proprietary information of regulated businesses will only be used in the performance of Health District duties and may be protected from public disclosure.

Our patients' trust is central to providing the best quality care to the community and it is critical that each of us play a role in identifying potential issues. Central to this trust is the confidential environment that must be ensured by a team effort of Health District staff.

Except as necessary for the performance of job-related duties, employees may not access, use or disclose confidential information that is gained as a result of their Health District employment. If an unauthorized Protected Health Information (PHI) disclosure occurs, you have a duty to timely report the issue to your immediate supervisor and the HIPAA Privacy Officer at (702) 759-1609.

To further assist patients with information about their privacy rights, the Health District provides each patient a Notice of Privacy Practices (NPP) which informs patients how the Health District may use and share their PHI and how they may exercise their health privacy rights. The NPP is provided to patients at their initial visit to any of the Health District's clinic facilities and is also available to patients upon request or on the Health District website.

PROVIDING QUALITY PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES:

Recognizing the dignity of each patient as a human being with a unique cultural and social background, we treat each patient with compassion, respect, and courtesy. In caring for our patients, no distinction will be made on the basis of age, sex, disability, race, religion, or national origin. And, we will

respect patient, parent, and legal guardian rights to reasonable, informed participation in healthcare decisions.

As stewards of finite resources, we commit to focus our resources to continuously improve the health of our southern Nevada community. Decisions regarding quality health care must be based on what is medically and ethically appropriate. All staff will perform services respecting the patient's fundamental right to considerate health care.

Objectivity in patient care and clinical judgment must not be compromised or appear to be compromised by financial incentive or risk.

HEALTH CARE PROVIDER COMPLIANCE WITH REFERRALS AND SERVICES/GOODS:

The Health District structures arrangements with health care providers to ensure compliance with numerous federal and state laws and regulations. The federal laws that focus on referrals to health care providers include the Stark Law and the Anti-Kickback Statute.

The Stark Law, also called the Physician Self-Referral Law, provides that if a physician or immediate family member has a financial relationship with an entity, the physician may not make referrals to that entity for health care services.

The Anti-Kickback Statute prohibits any person or corporate entity from offering, paying, soliciting, or receiving remuneration in exchange for referring an

individual or furnishing or arranging for a good or service for which payment may be made under any Federal health care program.

EXCLUDED PARTIES:

We screen our current Workforce members and vendors against The Department of Health & Human Services, Office of Inspector General's List of Excluded Individuals/Entities, and The General Services Administration's List of Parties Excluded from Federal Programs.

The Health District will not retain any Workforce members or vendors who have been debarred, excluded or otherwise been deemed ineligible for participation in federal and state health care programs, who have been convicted of or charged with committing a healthcare fraud-related criminal offense, or who do not have a required current licensure, registration or certification as part of their job requirement.

In addition, all Workforce members and vendors must be appropriately licensed, registered, or certified, as applicable, in the event that such a qualification is necessary for the job or contractor position.

RECORD RETENTION:

It is the Health District's policy to maintain an effective, comprehensive and standardized Records Management Program that complies with federal and state statutes for the storage, retention, and disposition of public records.

The procedures designed to implement this policy are in accordance with the State of Nevada Local Government Retention Schedules and any applicable federal law. Health District record retention policies and procedures can be found on the Intranet in *RIM Retention and Destruction Policy, Adm-008.2* and *RIM Disposition and Destruction Policy, ADM-008.4*.

RESERVATION OF RIGHTS:

The Health District reserves the right to amend this Code of Conduct, in whole or in part, at any time and solely at its discretion.



SpeakUp Hotline

To report compliance or ethics issues anonymously, contact the Health District's third-party vendor, Navex Global.

- By phone: (844) 769-5097
- By internet:
snhd.ethicspoint.com

**OUR VISION: HEALTHY PEOPLE
IN A HEALTHY SOUTHERN NEVADA**