

CODE of ETHICS

Application: All Virginia Department of Health (VDH) workers including, but not limited to, classified employees, wage employees, volunteers, assignees, and contractors.

Policy

It is the policy of the Virginia Department of Health that each VDH worker demonstrates the agency's Code of Ethics' Core Values and Commitments with uncompromising integrity in all aspects of their work. The Code of Ethics is the foundation for accomplishing the VDH mission, delivering public health services, and inspiring the public's trust in VDH workers.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish standards and mandate ethical behavior by VDH workers in the performance of their duties and responsibilities to the public, colleagues, management and other customers.

Authority

State Health Commissioner

Related Policies

VDH Policy Number: OCOM #1.04 – Management Control Policy

Code of Ethics Core Values

- **Accountability**: To act responsibly and adhere to the agency Code of Ethics at all times.
- **Communication**: To communicate effectively, timely and accurately.
- **Diversity**: To appreciate and support diverse backgrounds, perspectives, and ideas.
- **Equity**: To promote justice, fairness and a commitment to others.
- **Excellence**: To work at the highest level of performance, delivering services and products of high quality in a competent and timely manner, with a commitment to continuous improvement.
- **Integrity**: To be honest and trustworthy.
- **Respect**: To recognize the dignity of the people served as well as our fellow employees.
- **Stewardship**: To manage public resources responsibly and efficiently.

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Agency Commitments

- **Obey the law and comply with policies and procedures**
Commitment to full compliance with VDH, state, and federal laws, regulations, requirements, policies, and procedures.
- **Promote a positive work environment**
Demonstrate courtesy and respect to all. Harassment or discrimination of any kind is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. This includes discrimination based on race, color, religion, gender, age, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, citizenship or veteran status.
- **Work safely**
Follow standard and workplace safety precautions, warnings, and regulations in carrying out all their duties and in caring for patients. Report all client, environmental or safety hazards or concerns promptly.
- **Promote health equity**
Commit to eliminating inequity in health status by promoting access to those resources and opportunities that support quality health care, healthy behaviors, and healthy families, communities and environments.
- **Maintain confidentiality of sensitive patient and client information, employee records and other private information**
Comply with agency policy and law regarding privacy, confidentiality and inappropriate release of sensitive patient, client, employee or emergency preparedness information. Limit access to sensitive information and obtain appropriate release of information as required by law and policy.
- **Carefully negotiate contracts and make responsible purchases**
Fairly and accurately bid and negotiate outside contracts at fair market value, and make purchases so there is no question of conflict. Comply with policy, regulations and law.
- **Avoid conflicts of interest**
Avoid conflicts of interest and/or the appearance of conflicts of interest by understanding the conflict of interest policies, disclosing all pertinent facts about potential conflicts, ensuring that their official position is never used for personal gain, and ensuring that no one benefits at the expense of the agency.

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- **Neither give nor receive any illegal gifts, favors or kickbacks**
Follow the Commonwealth and agency guidelines regarding giving or receiving gifts or discounts from clients or people who supply us with goods and services.
- **Report suspected wrongful conduct promptly**
Promptly report suspected fraud and alleged violations of the Code of Virginia or the agency Code of Ethics to their supervisor, to the Internal Audit Department, or to the anonymous State Employee Hotline number (1-800-723-1615), for investigation.

Communicating the VDH Code of Ethics

- The **State Employee Orientation Program (SEOP)** for new employees, provided by the Office of Human Resources, includes a review of the Code of Ethics. A copy is provided to each employee/worker at the beginning of their employment.
- The Code of Ethics is posted on the **agency's internal home page** on the VDH website and on the **VDH Internet home page**.
- A copy of the Code of Ethics is **posted in each VDH facility**, both where employee notices are normally posted and in close proximity to the main public entrance. Office of Human Resources provides posters to Offices/Districts. In the Madison Building, posters are placed on every floor, near every building entrance and the Code of Ethics periodically displays on the building's TV monitors.
- The **Commissioner emphasizes annually** to all workers the importance of the agency's Code of Ethics.
- **As required in their Employee Work Profile (EWP), Senior Management, directors, managers, and supervisors are required to review, promote and emphasize the Code of Ethics to employees**, at least annually.
- Each worker annually completes a **training course on the Code of Ethics**, located on the TRAIN Learning Management System (TRAIN Course ID#1044656).

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Policy Administration

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Reviewer: _____
Signature on File
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Date: June 26, 2013

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