

POLICY:	Code of Conduct		
APPROVED BY:	Senior Leadership	APPROVED:	August 2021
LAST REVIEW:	September 2024	REVISED IN:	September 2024

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The effective operation of Niagara Support Services and Niagara Training & Employment Agency (together the “Employer”) requires that each employee adheres to all Employer policies and procedures and maintains a high standard of conduct and self-discipline in keeping with the responsibilities each carries for the safety, welfare and treatment of all individuals supported in Employer programs.

We are proud of, and accept responsibility for our professional standing in the community. Therefore, we require that all employees act in a professional and responsible manner at all times while representing the Employer.

The purpose of this Code of Conduct is not to restrict employee rights, but rather to ensure that all employees understand the standards of conduct that are expected of them, and recognize that misconduct is prohibited. When each employee is aware that they can fully depend upon fellow employees to follow this Code of Conduct, then the Employer will be a better place to work for everyone.

We further commit to maintaining a work environment that is free of illegal drugs, alcohol, firearms, explosives and/or other prohibited material.

2.0 SCOPE

- The Code of Conduct applies to every person who works for the Employer.
- The Code of Conduct applies to any place where activities related to the business of the Employer are conducted.

3.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1 Employees are expected to:

- .1 Act as agents of the Employer, who are ultimately responsible to the Board of Directors through the Chief Executive Officer;
- .2 Further the vision, mission and values of the Employer;
- .3 Comply with all Employer policies, procedures, and legislation while engaging in Employer business;
- .4 Treat individuals, colleagues and community partners with respect;
- .5 Work cooperatively with colleagues, showing regard for expertise;
- .6 Maintain regular attendance and fitness for duty, including adhering to the work schedule;
- .7 Conduct themselves in a manner that will bring credit to themselves, their program, and the Employer;
- .8 Carry out job duties honestly, conscientiously and loyally, in keeping with the Employer’s Code of Ethics and Operational Philosophy;
- .9 Maintain the confidentiality of the Employer’s confidential information and the personal information of the Employer’s clients, in accordance with Human Resources and Operating policies on confidentiality.
- .10 Be accountable for the use of Employer and individuals’ funds, equipment and resources;
- .11 Use information obtained on the job for the intended purposes, and not for their own interest or the interest of others;
- .12 Respect the property owned by the Employer individuals supported, visitors, contractors and suppliers;

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- .13 Refrain from bringing prohibited substances, intoxicating drugs or alcohol into the workplace, or being intoxicated while at work.

4.0 PRINCIPLES

- 4.1** The Code of Conduct serves as a guide to promote ethical and lawful conduct and to provide practical guidelines for employees. At the same time, the Code of Conduct simply cannot address all circumstances that may arise in our workplace. When unsure about how the Code of Conduct is to be interpreted or applied, employees are encouraged to consult with their direct supervisor, manager, or Human Resources.
- 4.2** Any violations of the Code of Conduct will not be tolerated and may be grounds for disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Some examples of behavior that violate the Code of Conduct are set out below:

- .1 Any conduct that could injure or adversely affect any of the individuals supported or any of the Employer's operations;
- .2 Repeated unexcused absences or instances of lateness;
- .3 Unauthorized use or disclosure of confidential information;
- .4 Willfully restricting work output or encouraging others to do the same;
- .5 Failure or refusal to follow instructions from a supervisor or manager;
- .6 Violation of any of the Employer's policies, procedures or legislation while engaging in Employer business;
- .7 Soliciting or accepting any monetary compensation or other perks from third parties, including clients, vendors and suppliers, without approval from management;
- .8 Falsification or misuse of any Employer records including time records, individuals' finance records, and employment applications;
- .9 Using an Employer vehicle for personal use without prior approval from management;
- .10 Allowing anyone other than a client, employee or volunteer of the Employer to use or be transported in an Employer vehicle;
- .11 Entertaining family or friends at the workplace or taking a guest on a tour of the workplace without prior approval from management;
- .12 Entering any Employer program when not on shift, excluding the Administration Office, without prior approval from management.

5.0 GIFTS AND FAVOURS

- 5.1** Gifts, services, special considerations or favours of any kind made to an employee with a value of \$25 or less may be accepted provided that such acceptance does not influence, or appear to influence job performance.
- 5.2** If an employee is unclear as to whether accepting a gift is contrary to the Code of Conduct, they are required to consult with Human Resources.

6.0 CONFLICT OF INTEREST

- 6.1** Employees are entrusted to use their position of trust and confidence to further the interests of the Employer and its clients, and must protect themselves against real or perceived conflicts of interest, in accordance with the Human Resources policy on Conflict of Interest.

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6.2 This can best be achieved by ensuring that conflicts of interest are avoided. Conflicts of interest arise when an employee's outside activities conflict or raise question with their duties and responsibilities to the Employer. Conflicts of interest may also include activities that may be perceived by others to adversely affect the reputation of the Employer.

6.3 All employees are encouraged to examine their personal dealings with suppliers and contractors to ensure there are no real or perceived conflicts of interest, and to report any potential conflicts or concerns to their supervisor, in writing.

7.0 OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT

Employees may take additional outside employment provided it does not interfere with the employee's employment duties to the Employer, or result in a real or perceived conflict of interest, as determined by management.

8.0 CONTACT WITH MEDIA

Under no circumstances shall an employee of the Employer initiate or maintain communication, verbally or non-verbally, with a member of the media regarding any aspect of the Employer's business.

Communication includes, but is not limited to, text messages, emails, photographs, phone conversations, video clips, audio clips, radio interviews, in-person interviews, or general requests for information.

All media inquiries are to be directed to the Chief Executive Officer in accordance with the Employer's HR policy, Contact with Media.

9.0 CIVIC AND POLITICAL ACTIVITIES

Employees are encouraged to participate in civic and political activities during their free time. These activities must not interfere with work performance, disrupt normal work activity, or involve real or apparent conflicts of interest. Employees who participate do so as individuals, not as representatives of the Employer.