

PCBS Code of Professional and Ethical Behavior

As human service and direct support professionals, we are called upon to make independent judgments on a frequent basis that involve both practical and ethical reasoning. As we assume these complex roles, we must exemplify professional and ethical practices. This code of professional and ethical behavior is designed to guide decision making, in conjunction with PCBS Policies and Procedures, while performing duties on behalf of PCBS and the people we support.

PCBS Vision, Mission, and Value Statements

All decisions will be guided by and made in accordance with the PCBS Vision, Mission, and Values.

Vision: Everyone leading personally meaningful and connected lives.

Mission: To develop tools and provide resources that assist people to lead the life of their choice.

Values:

- We embrace all that the Platte County community has to offer.
- We are committed to the inclusion and belonging of all.
- We envision all people having lives that are personally fulfilling.
- We encourage the unique contributions and goals of each person.
- We welcome progress, innovation, and creativity.
- We treat one another with dignity, respect, and integrity.

Decision Making - General

Questions:

When making decisions and performing duties I will use the following questions to help guide my actions.

I will ask myself:

- Is my action legal, ethical, in accordance with PCBS Policy?
- Am I sure my action does not appear to be inappropriate?
- Am I sure that I, or PCBS, would not be embarrassed or compromised if my action became known within the organization or publicly?
- Can I confidently explain my decisions to explain them to my supervisor, advocates for the person served, media, or law enforcement?

The answer should be “yes” to all these questions before taking any action. If I have any concerns after asking these questions, I will consult a member of the executive team for guidance. Situations may arise that call for fast action and do not allow consultation. In these situations, I will act using my best judgement and report the situation as soon as possible.

Guiding Principles – Service Provision

Person-Centered Philosophy – My first allegiance is to the people I support; all other activities and functions performed flow from this allegiance.

I will:

- Focus first on the person and understand that my role in direct supports will require flexibility, creativity, and commitment.
- Honor the personality, preferences, culture, and gifts of people who cannot speak by seeking other ways of understanding them.
- Recognize that the unique social network, circumstances, personality, preferences, needs and gifts of each person I support.

Promoting Physical and Emotional Well-Being – I promote the emotional, physical, and person well-being of the people I support and my colleagues.

I will:

- Develop a respectful relationship with the people I support that is based on mutual trust and maintains professional boundaries.
- Partner with others to identify areas of risk and create safeguards specific to these concerns.
- Be vigilant in identifying and reporting any situation in which the people are at risk of abuse, neglect, exploitation, or harm.
- Address challenging behaviors proactively and respectfully.

Integrity, Responsibility, Respect, Confidentiality – I support the values of my organization and profession.

I will:

- Be aware of my own values and how they influence my professional decisions.
- Assume responsibility and accountability for my decisions and actions.
- Interact with others in a respectful manner language that is sensitive and contemporary.
- Recognize that confidentiality agreements are subject to laws and regulations at the federal and state levels, as well as PCBS policies.
- Never post information or images related to PCBS or the people it supports on my personal social media accounts.

Justice, Fairness and Equity – I affirm the human and civil rights of the people I support and my colleagues.

I will:

- Facilitate the expression and understanding of one's rights and responsibilities.

June 14, 1999

Reviewed: 6/11/01, 3/10/03, 12/12/07, 8/17/2011

Revised: 8/2022



- Understand the guardianship or other legal representation of the people I support, and work in partnership to assure that the person's preferences are honored.
- Follow PCBS policies regarding my role as a mandated reporter.
- Support a system of transparency by reporting retaliation against anyone reporting concerns.

Professional Boundaries – I respect that the provision of support creates a relationship in which someone is paid to be with a person. This type of relationship, while friendly, is different than a friendship and requires certain professional boundaries for the protection of both parties.

I will:

- Remember that my responsibility is to the person I am supporting, their interests and well-being.
- Respect that when providing supports in a person's home, I am a guest.
- Avoid all dual relationships that may impair professional judgment, increase the risk of harm to persons served or lead to exploitation.
- Separate my personal beliefs and expectations regarding relationships from those I support.
- Support people to develop non-paid relationships that enhance their lives.

Guiding Principles - Business Practices

Conflict of Interest - A conflict of interest situation can arise when someone takes actions or has interests that make it difficult, or even appear to make it difficult, to perform their work objectively and effectively. I will disclose any situation that may create or appear to be a conflict of interest. These include, but may not be limited to, receiving material personal benefit because of a relationship to PCBS, owning or possessing an interest in an organization that competes with PCBS, having a family member on the board of directors, employed, or receiving services by Platte County Board of Services.

Gifts, money, or gratuities - On occasion, a member may be offered gifts, money or gratuities for services performed as part of the job. Under no circumstances will I accept gifts in the nature or possible appearance of favoritism, payoffs, bribes, or kickbacks of any type from persons served, stakeholders, or any business. I will decline any gifts, money, or gratuities whenever they are offered except at holidays when I may accept token gifts of under \$20 in value.

Fundraising for Personal Causes - If I choose to raise funds or sales on behalf of a personal cause I will only discuss it with other employees during my break time or unpaid lunch. I will not use excessive or coercive tactics in promoting the fundraising activity or raising funds/sales from persons served.

Property and resources – I recognize that it is my responsibility to protect and conserve personal property and resources. I will not borrow, purchase, or remove without permission the personal property of the agency, persons served, visitors, or other employees.

Marketing – Efforts in marketing will promote PCBS services, recruit employees, and spread awareness of intellectual/developmental disabilities. They will take represent people in a way that is dignified and

June 14, 1999

Reviewed: 6/11/01, 3/10/03, 12/12/07, 8/17/2011

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respectful to them. There can be no expectation of privacy at public events or large gatherings, the use of images or names without written permission will be avoided. Employees must be familiar with and adhere to the guidance in the PCBS policy regarding social media.

People Operations – All actions involving recruitment, hiring, and ongoing employment relationship will support and encourage consistent and effective employment practices, instill a sense of confidence about the conduct and intentions of PCBS, and uphold all laws, regulations, and PCBS Policy.

Waste, Fraud, Abuse and Other Wrongdoing— I will not retaliate against any individual who issues a complaint, files a grievance, or participates in any investigation or hearing toward the agency. This applies to allegations of waste, fraud, ethical violations, harassment, discrimination, and any other wrongdoing by the agency or its members.

Acknowledgment

By acknowledging The Code of Professional and Ethical Behavior, I agree to adhere to its guidance and understand that my failure to do so may result in disciplinary action, up to and including the termination of my employment. I understand that I am encouraged to explore any questions I may have about this Code with my supervisor.