



Ethical Code of Conduct

Preamble. CenterPointe, Inc. is dedicated to the delivery of behavioral health care in an environment characterized by strict conformance with the highest standards of accountability for administration, clinical, business, marketing and financial management.

Commitment to ethical professional conduct is expected of every member of the CenterPointe staff and board.

The Code of Conduct shall be supplemented by a set of policies and guidelines, which provide explanation to assist staff in dealing with the various issues contained in the Code.

The Code of Conduct and its guidelines are intended to serve as a basis for ethical decision making in the conduct of professional work. Secondly, they may serve as a basis for judging the merit of a formal complaint pertaining to violation of professional ethical standards.

It is understood that some words and phrases in a code of ethics are subject to varying interpretations, and that any ethical principle may conflict with other ethical principles in specific situations. Questions related to ethical conflicts can best be answered by thoughtful consideration of fundamental principles, reference to written policies and procedures and evaluation with management or supervisory staff.

The Code of Conduct.

1. Business Practices CenterPointe, Inc.'s leadership is fully committed to the need to prevent and detect fraud, fiscal mismanagement and misappropriation of funds and therefore, to the development of a formal corporate compliance program to ensure ongoing monitoring and conformance with all legal and regulatory requirements. Further, the organization is committed to the establishment, implementation and maintenance of a corporate compliance program that emphasizes (1) prevention of wrong doing – whether intentional or unintentional, (2) immediate reporting and investigation of questionable activities and practices without consequences to the reporting party and (3) timely correction of any situation which puts the organization, its leadership or staff, funding sources or consumers at risk.

All fundraising/resource development activities will be conducted in accordance with standards and ethics set forth by the agency and the National Association of Fundraising Professionals and under the general oversight of the Board of Directors.

1. Witnessing of Signatures In any situation where deemed necessary, the agency will regard the witnessing of signature to be accurate and accountable. When required, the signature may be witnessed by a notary public. Generally a person chosen to witness a document should have no financial or other interest in an agreement. A neutral third party is the best choice. The witness is not usually required to know or understand the contents of the document. A witness must be of legal age and mentally capable.

2. Marketing activities will never knowingly mislead or misinform the public or misrepresent CenterPointe. Marketing efforts will always respect the dignity and privacy rights of persons served.

3. Service Delivery All persons conducting business or providing services for the agency, regardless of professional status, and whether their business is with individual clients, other providers within the agency, or the community-at-large, are duty-bound to operate in

accordance with the generally accepted ethical principles of beneficence, non-maleficence, respect for individual autonomy, and justice, as described below:

1) **Beneficence: the duty to promote the welfare of, and prevent harm to, all persons receiving services.**

We recognize the importance of responding promptly and courteously to the needs of service recipients. We are committed to providing the highest possible quality of care to service recipients, and continuously monitor and seek to improve the quality of those services. We expect all persons providing services on behalf of the agency to vigorously and continuously pursue professional competence and excellence.

As reflected in the agency's Core Values, we are also committed to equal opportunity, equitable compensation, professional development and the general welfare of staff/consultants/students/volunteers. We also recognize CenterPointe's role as a citizen of the community, and our obligation to promote the welfare of the community and, whenever possible, to prevent harm to other citizens of the community (e.g., duty to warn).

2) **Non-maleficence: the duty to do no harm to persons receiving services.**

All persons providing services on behalf of the agency are expected to remain aware of the risk for harm, and to reduce that risk by all means possible.

Such means include, but are not limited to, the following:

--implementation of Special Alert Status for clients at risk for harm;

--referral for services beyond the scope of our expertise or ability to provide

--strict avoidance of dual relationships (e.g., social, financial, sexual, etc.), intentional or inadvertent, with individual clients or their families at any time during or after services have been provided;

--strict avoidance of all other conflicts of interest;

--reporting of ethical violations to supervisors, agency administration, and relevant certifying/licensing bodies;

--honesty and integrity in reporting of all operations, both internally and externally;

--regularly scheduled staff training which addresses the most common sources of inadvertently harmful effects such as boundary violations, violations of confidentiality, misdiagnosis, counter-transference, etc.;

--regularly scheduled supervision for all staff;

--Continuous Quality Improvement activities;

--and the expectation that all staff/consultants/students/volunteers will contribute to a healthy work environment by encouraging open communication, free and open debate about issues impacting services, personal and professional growth, cooperation, a positive attitude toward the work we do, and by resisting the cynicism and passive-aggressiveness that so often undermines the human service organizations and ultimately harms service recipients.

3) **Respect for client autonomy**

It is our duty to recognize the recipient's right and responsibility to make his/her own decisions, and also recognizing the potential conflict between the duty to respect client autonomy and the duty to prevent harm. All recipients have:

--the right to participate in any plans (including treatment plans) made in their interests;

--the right to refuse services (unless otherwise stipulated by court order, and with the understanding that refusal of specific services of an CenterPointe program may jeopardize status as a client of that program);

--the right to due process; with regard to agency policy & procedures;

--the right to expect that their transactions with CenterPointe will be treated confidentially;

--the right to respect for their moral, religious, and cultural values, whether or not we as individuals share those values, and whether or not specific moral religious or cultural practices must be limited in order to prevent harm to self or others.

4. Conflict of Interest in Service Delivery CenterPointe employees should be alert to and avoid conflicts of interest that interfere with the exercise of professional discretion and impartial judgment. Employees should inform clients when a real or potential conflict of interest arises and take reasonable steps to resolve the issue in a manner that makes the clients' interests primary and protects clients' interests to the greatest extent possible. In some cases, protecting clients' interests may require termination of the professional relationship with proper referral of the client.

Agency staff should not take unfair advantage of any professional relationship or exploit others to further their personal, religious, political, or business interests.

5. Personal Fundraising Employees shall not engage in coercive solicitation of coworkers such as seeking donations, encouraging purchases or taking a position on an issue outside the workplace. Employees receiving unwanted solicitations are encouraged to address the issue with their coworker and/or report the matter to their supervisor and/or agency management.

6. Exchange of gifts, gratuities and money CenterPointe employees should always interact "therapeutically" in their relationship with clients. Employees do not give or accept items (money, personal items, cd's, cigarettes, clothes, etc.) from or to clients. Agency staff members do not allow pictures to be taken or exchanged. Agency staff should not have any reason to accept money or gratuities from clients, external agencies, funders, or other vendors. If an employee receives a gift during service for the agency from an external vendor or referral source, the gift should be turned in to the employees supervisor and considered a donation.

7. Personal Property CenterPointe cannot be responsible for loss of personal property that is damaged or stolen. Employees are responsible for personal property/items/belongings brought to the workplace. CenterPointe prohibits any items on the premises or worksite that are sexually suggestive, offensive, or demeaning to specific individuals or groups, along with firearms or weapons. All personal property may be inspected for purposes of enforcing the organization's policies and to protect against theft.

7. Setting Boundaries CenterPointe employees should not engage in dual or multiple relationships with clients or former clients, in which there is a risk of exploitation or potential harm to the client. In instances when dual or multiple relationships are unavoidable, agency staff

should take steps to protect clients and are responsible for setting clear, appropriate, and culturally sensitive boundaries.

It is the policy of CenterPointe that all staff, consultants, interns/externs, and volunteers who are bound by codes of ethics for their professions (psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers, nurses, licensed and/or certified counselors, attorneys, certified recreational therapists) are expected to remain familiar and up-to-date with, and adhere to, their respective codes.

8. Professional Responsibilities CenterPointe's goal is to establish a high standard of performance, professionalism, and ethical conduct. We create an environment that fosters ethical behavior, where no employee will ever feel the need to compromise personal integrity to help achieve our mission.

The code of conduct is applicable to all staff, consultants and contractual employees, regardless of their professional functions, the settings in which they work, or the population they serve. To that end:

- Staff will strictly adhere to established rules of confidentiality regarding all records, materials and knowledge concerning persons served in accordance with all current government and program regulations.
- While working under CenterPointe's Ethical Code of Conduct, the staff, consultants and contractual employees must be conscientious, committed, and honest in their work and all duties related to their respective jobs within the organization.

In addition, CenterPointe employees are expected to comply with the ethical codes of conduct outlined by their respective licensing or certifying boards.

9. Human Resources CenterPointe strives to recruit, manage, develop and retain employees who meet the needs of the clients served and contribute to the accomplishment of the agency's mission. In doing so we strive to ensure compliance with Equal Employment Opportunity and Workforce Diversity guidelines and encourage hiring of qualified candidates who reflect the diversity of the community and population served. The Board of Directors and staff of CenterPointe will not discriminate against any person in recruitment, examination, appointment, training, promotion, retention, or any other personnel action because of race, color, national origin, gender, age, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, political affiliation, religion, and receipt of public assistance or other factors which cannot be lawfully used as the basis for employment decisions.

10. Contractual Relationships As part of standard business practices, CenterPointe may enter into contractual arrangements for appropriate goods or services. The following guidelines will be adhered to:

Contracts will be executed by the Executive Director or designee and the contracting party; each legally qualified to commit the contracting entity to a binding contract.

The contract will clearly establish:

- The nature of services to be performed.
- The period of the agreement.
- If applicable, the conditions under which the contract will be reviewed, renewed and/or terminated and venue for addressing perceived breaches of the contract.
- The contract clearly states financial arrangements.
- The contract addresses necessary accounting procedures for revenue and expenditures.
- If applicable, Federal and State requirements are adequately addressed within the scope of the contract

12. Waste, fraud, abuse and other wrongdoings. Employees, stakeholders, board members and contractors representing CenterPointe should not participate in, condone, or be associated with dishonesty, fraud, or deception.

13. Reporting wrongdoings, fraud, abuse, grievances When problems arise, it is hoped that a resolution can be reached informally, promptly, and equitably at the level of the staff's immediate supervisor. Reports of wrongdoing will be investigated within 48 hours of report. No employee will be penalized or retaliated against for reporting negligence, wrongdoing, fraud, abuse, harassment or other such incidents.

Employees who believe they are aggrieved may file a grievance. Every effort will be made to resolve the matter at the first or informal stage. Information on how to file a grievance can be located in the Personnel Policy Manual.

11. Delivery of Ethical Code of Conduct All clients are informed of their rights and responsibilities, and the agency's ethical standards, at the time of admission and as needed during the course of treatment.

Staff/consultants/ students/volunteers and Board Members are informed of their rights and responsibilities and provided a copy of the Ethical Code of Conduct during their initial orientation.

The community-at-large is informed of these standards by way of the agency's website.

In the event an employee has questions regarding this Code of Conduct, they should seek out advice from a Supervisor, Management Team member, or the Director of Human Resources for clarification.