

❖ Section 4 – Code of Conduct

Code of Ethics Policy

Region 5 Systems believes that operating by a designated Code of Ethics is needed to ensure integrity and credibility and that a written ethics code represents the major philosophical beliefs, principles, and values of the organization. The Code of Ethics shall include identified moral principles of business practices, marketing practices, service delivery, professional conduct, human resources, and potential conflicts of interest as well as procedures for investigating and acting on violations of the Code of Ethics. All personnel, Regional Governing Board members, volunteers, interns, and consultants shall familiarize themselves with the Code of Ethics as it applies to their association or performance of work responsibilities. All persons served in Family & Youth Investment shall be provided with Region 5 Systems' Code of Ethics policy at time of orientation.

Business Practices

- I will not solicit, accept, receive, give, or buy gifts, services, or loans, in excess of minimum value, that would affect in any way my professional relationship with personnel, persons served and their families, vendors, suppliers, or service providers. Examples might include gift certificates, money, and/or gifts.
- I will not accept any other payment for the work I do other than for wages received as part of my job duties at Region 5 Systems unless authorized by the Regional Administrator.
- I will not subject others to fiduciary abuse.

Marketing Practices

- I will be honest and professional in all interactions with Region 5 Systems' customers and stakeholders.
- I will be honest and professional in all interactions with the media and the general public.
- I will be honest and transparent when promoting or seeking funding, applying for grants, or entering into contracts for Region 5 Systems.
- I will build positive relationships with Region 5 Systems' customers and stakeholders and work with them cooperatively to meet their needs and expectations.
- I will focus on the customer's needs and expectations when developing or delivering services.
- I will not market professional services that are not provided by Region 5 Systems during hours of employment for Region 5 Systems, i.e., accepting phone calls/referrals from potential clients.

Service Delivery

- I will not provide services that I am not licensed or certified to provide.
- I will not refuse to provide professional services to any one on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, political beliefs, sexual orientation, marital or family status, or disabling condition.
- I will provide the best quality of service to those who need my help.
- I will not, under any circumstances, physically, emotionally, or sexually abuse, harass, and/or physically punish other personnel, persons served, or guests.
- I will respect the privacy of persons served and keep their information confidential.
- I will maintain confidentiality when handling client records.
- I will show genuine interest in all persons served and do hereby dedicate myself to their best interests in helping them help themselves.
- I will not utilize Region 5 Systems' resources to engage in personal fundraising (e.g., on work time, electronic communication, or otherwise). I understand that personal fund-raising announcements (e.g., Girl Scout cookie drive, children's school fundraising events) may only be made on Region 5 Systems' employee Intranet site as permitted.
- I will not ask clients of Region 5 Systems to contribute funds on my behalf or the organization's behalf.
- I will respect and safeguard the property and equipment I am given to use on behalf of Region 5 Systems.
- I will respect the property and personal belongings of persons served.
- I will demonstrate appropriate boundaries with persons served, including but not limited to, social media communication, dating and/or having a sexual relationship while persons served are receiving services from Region 5 Systems.
- I will not serve as a witness to execute personal, legally binding documents on behalf of persons served (power of attorney, guardianship, or advance directives), which are outside the scope of my professional duties.

Professional Conduct/ Responsibilities

- I will provide professional assistance to others based upon my level of education, training, experience, and/or ability to do so.
- I will maintain a professional attitude that upholds confidentiality towards persons served, personnel, and guests.
- I will be honest, fair, consistent, and do what is right, acting with professional integrity.
- I will be honest about my level of education, training, experience and abilities as they relate to my job position.
- I will correct incorrect information and information given by others concerning my level of education, training, experience, and abilities.
- I will be on time for all Region 5 Systems' activities.
- I will continually assess my personal strengths, limitations, biases, and effectiveness.
- I will continue to learn and gain knowledge about my position, as well as my duties.
- I will maintain a professional appearance that reflects Region 5 Systems in a positive way.

Human Resources

- I understand that all requested information from outside entities that relates to personnel employed by Region 5 Systems shall be provided by the Regional Administrator and/or Human Resources.
- I will respect the rights and views of all personnel, persons served, and guests and treat them with respect and dignity.
- If I supervise and review the performance of other personnel, I will be responsible, fair, and considerate.
- If I supervise other personnel, I will make sure information is correct about level of education, training, experience, and abilities of those personnel.
- Upon leaving Region 5 Systems, I will not share confidential information about persons served, personnel, or Region 5 Systems.

Potential Conflict of Interest

A conflict of interest, for purposes within this policy, is defined as a situation in which an employee has a private, personal, and/or financial interest that may affect his/her ability to be objective in his/her position. This includes situations where an employee would have a real or apparent conflict of interest by participating in the selection, award, or administration of a contract supported by federal funds under 24 CFR 84.42.

- I will not use my professional relationship for personal gain.
- I, nor members of my family or my partner, will not solicit, nor accept, gratuities, favors, or anything of monetary value from contractors or parties to subagreements when applying for and/or during the administration of a federal grant under 24 CFR 84.42.
- I will not use, without prior consent, Region 5 Systems' property for private advantage, e.g., taking office supplies or equipment for home use.
- I will not establish outside employment without prior review from the Regional Administrator to determine potential conflict of interest.
- I understand that Region 5 Systems prohibits real and apparent conflicts of interest that may arise among its officers, employees or agents, or any member of my immediate family or partner, or an organization that employs any of the indicated parties.

Prohibition of Waste, Fraud, Abuse, and Other Wrongdoing

Region 5 Systems strictly prohibits activities and/or intentional wrongdoing that may be considered wasteful, fraudulent, or abusive with respect to its organizational assets, facility, equipment, adherence to policies, procedures, or practices, or in the treatment of co-workers and persons served related to same areas.

Procedures to Address Allegations of Code of Ethics Violations

Region 5 Systems strives to maintain a safe and ethical work environment where personnel are able to report waste, fraud, abuse, or other questionable activities or practices without fear of loss of job, harassment, or reprimand. Region 5 Systems also promotes resolving conflict or concerns at the lowest-level possible (peer-to-peer and/or with the supervisor) whenever possible. When this problem-solving strategy fails to remedy the situation or the employee is not comfortable in doing so or the alleged violation warrants a higher level of attention (e.g., theft, fraud, sexual harassment), the employee must file a Complaint Report with Region 5 Systems' Corporate Compliance Officer.

After the Corporate Compliance Officer receives this report, he/she shall:

- 1) Notify the employee that he/she is in receipt of the report.
- 2) Assess the report to determine severity of situation and what immediate steps need to take place, which could include notifying other parties (Regional Administrator, Board chair, authorities, etc.).
- 3) Present the report to Region 5 Systems' Corporate Compliance Team for input and direction.
- 4) Act upon the Corporate Compliance Team's direction (e.g., conduct investigation or gather additional information), providing updates as needed.
- 5) Notify employee of actions taken to resolve issue.
- 6) Document reported event.

Violations to the Code of Ethics Policy will not be tolerated. Personnel, interns, or volunteers violating the Code of Ethics shall be subject to disciplinary actions, up to and including termination of employment or association with Region 5 Systems.

Education of Personnel and Other Stakeholders

Education regarding Region 5 Systems' Code of Ethics policy shall include:

- All new personnel, volunteers, and interns shall receive the Code of Ethics Policy and documented training regarding the policy upon hire, volunteering/internship; ongoing training shall be provided on a periodic basis.
- All personnel, volunteers, and interns shall acknowledge by written certification that they have been provided with revised versions of the Code of Ethics policy when changes are made.
- This Code of Ethics Policy shall be posted on Region 5 Systems' employee Intranet site, public website, and receptionist area.
- All persons served in Family & Youth Investment shall be provided with the Code of Ethics Policy at time of enrollment orientation.
- The Regional Governing Board shall review and approve the Code of Ethics Policy as changes are needed.

Responsible Official Related to this Code of Ethics

All inquiries and concerns related to this policy should be directed to:

Kim Michael, Corporate Compliance Officer
Region 5 Systems
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Lincoln, NE 68516
402-441-4350
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