

Grievance Procedure and process explained

- A. The Board of Directors adopted a grievance procedure and process to handle grievances and complaints.
- B. All individuals and associates, including credential and license holders are under an affirmative duty to file a report anytime they believe a violation of the Code of Ethics has occurred by any credential or license holder regardless of rank or authority and that associate is directly responsible to make this report to the PCMS, Director of Public Health and Safety, and document the report without unreasonable delay. This policy will occasionally require clarification and guidance as to specific situations. In addition, as new situations are encountered, this policy will be modified accordingly.
- C. Purpose: The grievance procedure and process is a process designed to develop a way to take quick corrective action, bring awareness to the attention of the corporation to correct, redress, remedy or repair a situation. The process should always be used anytime any individual believes that there may exist, a violation of policy or the code of Pastoral Care Ethical Standards, or when any person reasonably believes that either the individual reporting or another person has been subjected to treatment that violates our policy standards.
- D. It is our policy that all associates and clients of the PASTORAL CARE MANAGEMENT SERVICES will be treated with respect, dignity, and equality. It is also expected that all associates shall carry out their duties while maintaining high professional and ethical standards in the performance of their role as a Pastoral Care Management Services credential, or license holder including maintaining compliance to the code of Pastoral Care Ethical Standards ethics, the laws of the land, bylaws and articles of incorporation.

Definitions:

GRIEVANCE: A Grievance shall be understood to mean a Statement of Concern, notice, formal objection or formal complaint made in writing by an individual, or associate on the basis of an action, inaction, decision, practice or other conduct that any associate or other individual reasonably feels is unfair, or that the conduct or action complained of violates a rule, policy, procedure, local, state or federal law, organization bylaw or the articles of incorporation.

PROFESSIONAL ETHICS COMPLAINT: A Professional Ethics Complaint is an official document to bring charges against a PCMS staff member or service provider. A investigative officer, service provider, or management staff may initiate a PROFESSIONAL ETHICS COMPLAINT by filing a INCIDENT REPORT with the Risk Management Department, or the Director of Public Health and Safety. A Professional Ethics Complaint shall be understood to mean a formal accusation charging a staff member, service provider or associate with a violation or chargeable offense under the Best Standards in Pastoral Care Practice and Administration, Pastoral Care Ethical Standards, and its Policy, Procedure or Regulations.

RETALIATION: Retaliation is any direct, or indirect communication or conduct made against any person, or groups of persons who files a grievance complaint, or who participates in an investigation, or inquiry relating to a complaint, grievance or

other investigation. Retaliating against any person for any reason is prohibited and is grounds for immediate sanctions to be imposed including but not limited to dismissal and termination from the PASTORAL CARE MANAGEMENT SERVICES. It is standard operating procedure that any crime or suspected crime be immediately reported to the local law enforcement or other public agency.

Procedure in Filing, Processing and Managing Grievances

- A. All complaints and grievances shall be filed with the Director of Public Health and Safety, of Office of Public Health and Safety, the department adopted and approved by the board of directors who is responsible for among other things investigating complaints and grievances related to healthcare operations.
- B. All divisions, departments and staff shall without unreasonable delay date stamp or otherwise note the date received, and then forward all complaints to the PCMS, Director of Public Health and Safety.
- C. Every person has the right to submit a grievance, without fear of retaliation.
- D. The PCMS, Director of Public Health and Safety, or designee shall review all grievances and s for their content to ensure that there is sufficient information, to proceed on the complaint.
- E. The Director can not be involved in any case where the director is the accused.
- F. A Grievance shall be submitted on a form designated for that purpose herein after referred to as a 'Grievance' form. The Grievance form shall contain the name and contact information of the person making the complaint.
- G. A Professional Ethics Complaint shall be submitted on a form designated for that purpose herein after referred to as a 'Professional Ethics Complaint' form. The Professional Ethics Complaint form shall contain the name and contact information of the person making the complaint, and a statement of facts they are reporting. Only authorized staff members, agencies and organizations have the authority to initiate a Professional Ethics Complaint.
- H. Upon investigation of a grievance the Director of Public Health and Safety, or the investigative officer may determine that sufficient evidence exist to bring formal charges against a staff member, or service provider and thereby initiate a Professional Ethics Complaint.
- I. Hearsay is not considered reliable information when made by a third party without sufficient corroboration. Hearsay information is any information or statements made by one person who is repeating what they have been told or heard from another person and such information will not be accepted without independent personal knowledge or the person who actually made the statement to disclose the actual knowledge they have relative to the complaint.

- J. Grievance and investigations are classified as being confidential in nature as some information is sensitive and if exposed could harm the investigation, or bring irreparable harm to a participant in the investigation.
- K. All parties involved in the investigations are directed to not discuss the incident with anyone except, authorized representatives of the corporation.
- L. Upon the receipt of a validly filed 'Grievance' the Director shall initiate an investigation, to ascertain the facts, including interviewing witnesses or other individuals who may have independent knowledge of the facts complained.
- M. Pending the outcome of an investigation, and in the discretion of the Director of Public Health and Safety, the Director may suspend or revoke any credential or license if there is a reasonable cause to believe that the presence or continued practice of the license or credential holder would be disruptive to orderly operations, poses a substantial degree of risk to the safety or well being of the clients we serve, or when the conduct reported or complained of indicates a threat to the reputation, morale, clients, staff or the organization itself.
- N. Upon the receipt of a validly filed 'Professional Ethics Complaint' the Office or the Director of Public Health and Safety or designee may proceed with setting the case for a impartial ethics committee hearing, unless additional investigation is needed.
- O. All persons contacted during the course of investigation are cautioned to not discuss or reveal any information that relates to the investigation, subject to disciplinary action up to, but not limited to dismissal or termination.
- P. Confidentiality of witness identity or statements shall be protected from unauthorized and unnecessary disclosure to the extent allowable by law or prudence.
- Q. Reports regarding suspected fraud, embezzlement or other financial matters shall be referred to IAB (Internal Audit Board) for disposition without delay.
- R. All corporate investigations shall be considered confidential.
- S. The Director of Public Health and Safety may in their discretion
 - 1. Take administrative action to handle any professional ethics complaint or grievance filed and impose sanctions that can include oral, and written reprimand, up to employment or practice suspension, license suspension or revocation, or impose credential or license restrictions, limitations, or additional requirements upon a license or credential holder.
 - 2. Refer any matter to a impartial ethics committee;