

## **CODE OF ETHICS**

August, 2010 (Revised: October, 2014; May, 2016; January, 2018; October, 2018; November, 2020)

### **POLICY:**

NOWCAP Services has established standards of ethical conduct to direct the actions of the governing board of directors and staff members. These standards apply to business and marketing practices of the organization, professional responsibilities, and the supports provided in the professional relationship with participants, employees, colleagues, guardians and family members of participants, related agencies and professionals, and the community at large. All applicable parties shall abide by these standards and carry out the spirit and intent by which it was created.

### **GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF THE ORGANIZATION**

#### **Mission and Program**

NOWCAP Services operates to accomplish a stated mission statement – “Creating Opportunities for All People with Disabilities”. All stakeholders shall work towards achieving the organization’s mission through effective, efficient, innovative and choice-driven services. Resources will be devoted towards achieving the mission through appropriate allocation and sound fiscal practices.

**NOWCAP Services’ Statement of Quality** is the core belief that guides the actions and attitudes of the organization. It represents the core priorities in the organization’s culture, including what drives those priorities and how they are truly reflected within the organization.

- **A promise made is a promise kept.**

NOWCAP Services builds and maintains trusting relationships through being honest and acting with integrity.

- **Every person is unique.**

NOWCAP Services creates individualized opportunities for people with disabilities.

- **Teamwork is the key to each person’s success.**

NOWCAP Services’ employees are dedicated to meeting the needs of each person who is served and treat every stakeholder in a professional and ethical manner.

- **Together everyone achieves more.**

NOWCAP Services values the positive relationships we foster within the communities we serve.

#### **Governing Body**

NOWCAP Services is governed by an elected, volunteer board of directors that consist of individuals who are committed to the mission of the organization. The board determines the mission of the organization, establishes management policies and procedures, assures that

adequate human resources and financial resources are available, and actively monitors the performance of the organization.

## **PROCEDURES:**

### **Business – Financial and Legal**

NOWCAP Services has sound fiscal management practices and complies with all legal and regulatory requirements. Internal and external reviews of financial records are conducted regularly through transparent periodic reviews. Results of reviews are shared with funding resources, regulatory agents and anyone else upon request. All personnel are expected to adhere to all regulatory requirements of documentation for proper reimbursement of Medicaid funds to ensure the organization is a good steward of public funds.

### **Marketing**

NOWCAP Services will act truthfully and with integrity in regards to all marketing materials whether it be print, video, or through social media. All information shared or conveyed will be based upon fact, and with the mission of the organization at the forefront of the message. No images or names of individuals served will be shared for marketing purposes without the express written consent of the individual or their legal guardian. All employees will also consent in writing to the use of their image or name in marketing or social media campaigns prior to their use by the organization.

### **Contractual Relationships**

Contractual relationships will be honored as to the outlined intent and purpose of the agreement. Prior to entering into a contractual relationship with an organization, business or individual, a review will take place to ensure no conflicts of interest exist and that all requirements of the contract can be met by both parties.

### **Conflicts of Interest**

All stakeholders will act in the best interest of the organization and will give preference to professional responsibility over personal interests or the interests of third parties. The organization has conflict of interest policies in place to avoid any current or future conflicts. Acceptance of gifts or offering of gratuities, gifts or favors for current or future participants and/or guardians is prohibited.

### **Use of Social Media**

Employees are discouraged (within the scope of current employment law) from expressing opinions or providing information on social media (such as Facebook, Twitter, or other social media sites) which would represent NOWCAP Services in an unprofessional or negative manner, or breaches confidentiality, such as posting information regarding an individual served in a personal post. More information is provided on the topic of social media in the *News Media Relations & Social Media Policies* as well as *Electronic Data Management Policies & Procedures*.

## **Service Delivery**

- Exchange of gifts, money and/or gratuities between guardians, participants and individual staff is strictly prohibited.
- Any personal fundraising by employees or participants must be reviewed by the Risk Management Committee in an effort for complete transparency.
- Any sales of personal property between employees or participants must be reviewed by the Risk Management Committee in an effort for complete transparency.
- All employees must maintain professional relationships with participants at all times. NOWCAP Services wants to encourage and provide safe accessibility of staff to participants while at the same time ensuring the safety and confidentiality of NOWCAP Services facilities, programming and participants.
- Permission to be a legal witness on a legal document for participants and/or guardians must be received prior to signing any legal document.

## **Professional Responsibilities**

- Participants of NOWCAP Services will be treated with dignity and respect at all times. No obscene or abusive language or behavior will be tolerated on any NOWCAP Services premises. (Violations will be reported to law enforcement, DFS, BHD, and P&A if applicable).
- Employees are expected to be knowledgeable, professional, and courteous at all times. Personal or professional problems are to be discussed in private and not discussed with individuals participating in services.
- Employees are expected to follow a chain of command (as outlined in the Organizational Chart) when dealing with complex issues such as individual behavior, scheduling, disagreements, etc. It is imperative that employees use honesty, tact, and privacy when airing personal grievances.
- Employees will respect contrary views of both employees and participants and will express these views in a manner which is respectful and appropriate.
- Employees must report immediately to the emergency on-call manager any act or incident in which they believe an individual has been physically, sexually, emotionally, or mentally exploited or abused, including, but not limited to, the personal exchange of property, receiving of gifts or money from an individual or vice versa.
- Employees will not remove items belonging to NOWCAP Services or participants from the premises without the knowledge of the individual and a member of management.

## **Human Resources**

All employees will act in the best interest of the participant(s) and will provide the services and supports that are outlined in the individual plan of care and through the organization's policies and procedures. Employees will treat participants with dignity and respect and will interact with participants in a professional and courteous fashion. Professional boundaries with participants will be adhered to at all times. Any mistreatment of participants will be reported to a member of management immediately and followed up on accordingly.

## **Organizational Fundraising**

NOWCAP Service fundraising practices are maintained on a foundation of truthfulness and responsible stewardship. Fundraising is consistent with the organization's mission statement and

dollars raised are strictly used for the benefit of the participants. Employees will refrain from soliciting funds from participants for personal fundraising activities.

### **Prohibition of Waste, Fraud, Abuse, Other wrongdoing**

As per the requirements of the False Claims Provisions of the Deficit Reduction Act of 2005 NOWCAP Services takes seriously any allegation regarding known or suspected financial improprieties, malicious waste, fraud, abuse or other ethical concerns. Any allegation will be researched and reported per legal requirements.

### **Education on Codes of Ethics**

All employees review and acknowledge NOWCAP Services' Code of Ethics upon hire. They also receive this information in the New Employee Orientation training packet. All employees review and sign off on this document at least annually as part of the performance appraisal process.

### **Advocacy Efforts and Corporate Citizenship**

NOWCAP Services believes that all employees have a role in advocacy for the persons we serve as well as an expectation of corporate citizenship. Providing advocacy through casual or formal means is encouraged for all employees. Participating on local boards, in educational events, providing access to social, legal, or economic advocacy resources are just some of the examples of how NOWCAP Services employees participate. These efforts are documented in NOWCAP Services' Accessibility Plan and/or Cultural Competency and Diversity Plan.

### **Violations of Code of Ethics**

This Code of Ethics is intended to promote the kind of relationship in which services can best be carried out and give guidance in decision-making situations. Any violation to the organization's Code of Ethics will be reviewed by supervisory personnel and action will be dependent upon the severity of the infringement.

Any employee, participant, family member or community member may report a potential violation of the Code of Ethics to a member of management at any time. No particular format or form is required. If a member of management becomes aware of a potential violation of the Code of Ethics the following steps will be followed:

1. A formal review will be conducted in the weekly management meeting. The manager will review the concern within seven (7) days after becoming aware of the potential violation.
2. A member of management will be assigned to follow up and complete written follow up of the concern. This follow up should occur within seven (7) days of the weekly management meeting. Follow up could include any method of documentation including Informal Counseling Reports, Performance Notifications, and/or termination of the employee. Follow up could also include a finding that the violation did not occur.

3. Documentation of potential violations as well as follow up will be maintained in the weekly management meeting notes and/or in personnel files.
4. Any violation of the Code of Ethics leading to termination will be reviewed by the Program Director involved and the Executive Director.

NOWCAP Services takes a no-reprisal or retaliation approach to any reports of potential violations of the Code of Ethics. If any party believes that they are being unfairly treated, retaliated against or ignored that party is to immediately notify the Executive Director and appropriate relief will be brought toward the employee or reporter.