

Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health Unit

Code of Conduct

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About the Code of Conduct

What is the Code of Conduct?

The Code of Conduct (the “Code”) is a policy which sets out the expectations of the Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health Unit (the “Health Unit”).

The Code applies to all Members of the Board of Health, employees, regularly contracted service providers, contracted staff, students and volunteers (collectively, “employees”) of the Health Unit.

The Health Unit’s *Code of Conduct* is based on the values of our organization which govern our decisions and actions:

1. **Trust:** we build trust by showing integrity through open, honest, respectful and inclusive interactions;
2. **Engagement:** We collaborate with our team members, partners, and communities in shared decision-making to build quality programs and services;
3. **Accountability:** We are responsible for our actions and honour our commitments so we can contribute to the success and well-being of others; and
4. **Leadership:** We are leaders; we empower each other and build on our strengths to foster health and resilience.

The Code is an important part of the Health Unit’s overall compliance program. It is intended to promote lawful and ethical behavior by everyone engaged with and by the Health Unit. Our Code introduces important policies and legal requirements that we must follow. However, this document cannot cover every possible situation and is not intended to describe every policy, rule, law, or situation that may arise. The Health Unit has other written policies and regulations that go into more detail on various topics, and which are referenced throughout the Code. Full versions of these policies are available to all employees. Compliance with the Code is expected, along with all Health Unit policies and all applicable laws and regulations.

Our Responsibilities under the Code

Each of us must be familiar with the Health Unit’s Code and policies, as well as the laws, regulations and ethical expectations that apply to our jobs. Certain details of the Code apply more to particular jobs e.g. not everyone deals directly with financial reporting or has daily interactions with customers. Read this booklet, think about how it applies to your job, and ask questions if you would like clarification or more information in any area.

Ethical obligations do not stop with doing your own job. You should support ethical behavior everywhere within the workplace. You have an obligation to let someone know if you see or hear of actions that violate this Code. You have a duty to report any concern that you think may be unethical or a violation of Health Unit policy or legal requirements. If you are aware of suspected misconduct, illegal activities, fraud, misuse of Health Unit assets or violations of Health Unit policies, it is your responsibility to report the concern immediately. Failure to do so can lead to disciplinary action.

Although this booklet provides helpful guidance in important ethical areas, it is impossible to anticipate every question or issue that may come up. If you are unsure about the proper course of action, seek guidance or ask for assistance from your manager in working through ethical or legal issues.

Duty to Cooperate

It is a part of every employee's job to report ethical concerns appropriately, to provide complete and accurate information, and to cooperate in internal or external investigations.

In order for the Health Unit to adequately and appropriately respond to allegations of wrongdoing, investigations must sometimes take place. Our goal is to follow-up on what has been reported and find the truth as well as the causes of the issues. We are required to make ourselves available for interviews or questions and to provide, upon request, relevant records, and documents for review by the investigator(s). Failure to cooperate can lead to disciplinary action.

Disclosure Policy

We are all expected to report all concerns that require management attention in a timely, accurate and complete manner. Reporting must be timely and complete so that there is an opportunity to respond accurately with information that can be relied upon.

If you are a manager, or director, you must listen respectfully to communication from employees reporting to you. You must listen and be diligent to ensure you neither directly nor inadvertently punish the person(s) for communicating or reporting the information.

Our focus will be on the facts of an issue or wrongdoing, not who reports them. It is important to understand, however, that reporting an issue does not protect you from legitimate discipline for unethical or illegal behavior if it is warranted.

Non-Retaliation Policy

You will not be treated adversely or retaliated against for expressing legitimate concerns about suspected problems or violations of Health Unit policies or law when you act in good faith.

"Good faith" means you are acting with honest and forthright intentions and without an improper motive such as personal gain. Management is required to respect the rights of employees to express concerns and must ensure that those who do express concerns are not treated adversely as a result of the reporting.

The Health Unit will not tolerate efforts by managers or co-workers to retaliate against an employee who has reported a concern or to discover the identity of a reporting employee. Any such efforts will result in disciplinary action.

Ethical Standards

Personal Use of Health Unit Resources and Information Technology

You are expected to act as a good steward of Health Unit funds, assets, opportunities, equipment, and resources. Health Unit assets are to be used for Health Unit purposes. You are responsible for ensuring that these assets are used for legitimate purposes and for reporting suspected or known abuse of Health Unit property to your manager. This responsibility includes protecting Health Unit property from loss, theft, fraud, misappropriation, abuse, and unauthorized use. Health Unit assets include property, credit cards, materials, equipment, supplies, information, intellectual property, and services.

The Health Unit's facilities, equipment, supplies, time, trademarks, computers and other electronic equipment and communications systems must be used in compliance with the applicable policies the

Health Unit has established to protect our information technology resources and the information they contain. These vital Health Unit assets and records must be safeguarded against accidental or unauthorized modification, disclosure, misuse, or destruction. You are expected to be aware of and to abide by the specific policies which address use of the Internet and intranet, email, voicemail, network servers, software, and cell phones. Subject to applicable laws, your electronic communications and cell phone use may be monitored to verify that you are complying with Health Unit policy.

[Electronic Monitoring 3.60.25](#)

[Personal Use of Health Unit Resources 3.70.130](#)

[Technology 3.60.10](#)

[Cellphones 3.60.80](#)

Confidential and Sensitive Information

Employees and service providers are responsible for maintaining the security of all information regarding the affairs of the Health Unit and safeguarding confidential information that has been entrusted to the Health Unit by others including client information. All confidential information should be properly protected from advert or inadvertent disclosure. These obligations continue even if the employee/student/volunteer is no longer employed by the Health Unit or affiliated with the Health Unit for whatever reason.

The Health Unit prohibits unauthorized disclosure or sharing of any confidential information to unauthorized personnel whether inside or outside of the Health Unit. Employees may use or disclose confidential information about the Health Unit only in performing their job responsibilities. Confidential information may be disclosed as required by law or with written authorization of the appropriate entity of the Health Unit, to be identified by asking a manager.

Documents and Record Keeping

We all must accurately and completely maintain all Health Unit records. You are prohibited from ever knowingly or intentionally creating documents that contain false or misleading statements. Documents must be stored in secure locations and maintained in accordance with the Health Unit's record retention policies and/or best practices. Documents relevant to actual or threatened litigation must be appropriately retained and preserved as directed by legal advisors.

[Personal and Personal Health Information 3.10.10](#)

[Collection of Personal and Personal Health Information 3.10.10P1](#)

[Release of Personal and Personal Health Information to the Person to Whom it Relates 3.10.10P3](#)

[Disclosure of Personal and Personal Health Information to Third Parties with Client Consent 3.10.10P4](#)

[Disclosure of Personal and Personal Health Information to Third Parties without Client Consent 3.10.10P5](#)

[Disputes in Accessing Personal and Personal Health Information 3.10.10P6](#)

[Sending and Receipt of Facsimile Transmissions 3.10.10P7](#)

[Sending and Receipt of E-mail and Texting Transmissions 3.10.10P8](#)

[Collection, Use and Disclosure of Personal Health Information within the Circle of Care 3.10.10P12](#)

[Scanning and Document Management Procedure 3.10.10P13](#)

[Records Retention 3.20.10.P2](#)

[Storage and Security of Records 3.20.10.P1](#)

Conflicts of Interest

A conflict of interest exists whenever there is any situation where the personal interests of a Health Unit employee, manager/director, a family member of an employee, or any individual with whom an employee has a close personal relationship interferes with – or could be perceived to interfere with – your ability to make sound, objective decisions on behalf of the Health Unit. Employees must avoid activities that undermine their professional judgment or that could result in improper personal benefits because of their position with the Health Unit. If you are unsure whether a conflict of interest may exist, you should ask your manager.

[Conflict of Interest 4.10.5](#)

[Conflict of Interest 4.10.5.P1](#)

Receipt of Gifts

You and members of your immediate family must decline any gift, favor, gratuity, or other item of more than nominal value from any person or entity receiving current or prospective services with the Health Unit.

Gifts or lavish entertainment may be seen as attempts to unduly influence relationships between service providers and clients.

If, despite attempts to discourage gifts, you receive a gift of more than nominal value as the result of a work relationship, you must inform your supervisor. If the gift exceeds \$25 in value, it should be returned with a note respectfully declining the gift, donated to a local charity on behalf of the Health Unit, or dispensed within the Health Unit with a supervisor's approval. You should never accept cash, gifts of stocks or bonds, liquor, lavish entertainment, or travel.

PERMISSIBLE GIFTS

Gifts do not include items that are generally available to a large group of Employees on an equal basis, such as perishable items (chocolates, fruit baskets or flowers) that are shared with employees at the employees' work location.

Respectful Workplace

Respect

All Health Unit Representatives are required and expected to treat each other, our suppliers, clients, stakeholders, and all members of the Health Unit community with respect. We will behave fairly and respectfully to all with whom we have contact in our workplace.

The Health Unit is committed to ensuring that all members of the health unit community act with each other, and everyone with whom they interact in our workplace, in a manner that is respectful, civil, and professional. The Health Unit is also committed to providing and fostering a positive and respectful workplace free from discrimination, harassment, and violence.

The Health Unit will take all reasonable precautions to prevent these behaviours and to protect Health Unit Representatives in the workplace.

Safety

The Health Unit is committed to conducting operations in a way that demonstrates our dedication to safeguarding the safety and health of our employees.

We believe that all tasks can be accomplished without injury. You are expected to familiarize yourself with all policies, procedures, and guidelines governing workplace safety and health and to always work safely. Safety training is required for every employee, and you are expected to take responsibility for your own safety and that of every other person in your workplace.

[Response to Safety Concerns 3.90.50](#)

[Response to Safety Concerns 3.90.50.P1](#)

[Immunization Requirements 4.10.40.](#)

[Immunization Requirement 4.10.40.P1](#)

[Influenza Immunization 4.10.40.P2](#)

[Workplace Respiratory Framework 4.10.160](#)

Discrimination

The Health Unit is committed to fair and equal employment opportunity and makes employment decisions based on merit. We do not discriminate in employment and take action to ensure that unlawful discrimination does not occur on the basis of citizenship, race, place of origin, ethnic origin, color, ancestry, disability, age, creed, sex/pregnancy, family status, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identify, gender expression, receipt of public assistance and record of offences or any protected ground as outlined under the Human Rights Act.

Our commitment to equal opportunity employment prohibits unlawful discrimination by any employee of the Health Unit, including managers/directors and coworkers, or retaliation against employees or prospective employees reporting discrimination.

Harassment

We are committed to preventing harassment from occurring. Harassment is any conduct that denigrates or shows hostility toward an individual based upon citizenship, race, place of origin, ethnic origin, color, ancestry, disability, age, creed, sex/pregnancy, family status, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, receipt of public assistance and record of offences or any other protected ground. Retaliation against anyone reporting harassment in good faith is also strictly prohibited. You should not tolerate harassing conduct. If you believe that you have experienced harassment in connection with your employment, or if you are aware of the harassment of others, you have a duty to immediately report this to your manager or the Human Resources Department.

Violence

Your safety and security are of paramount importance. Acts or threats of physical violence, including possession of a weapon, intimidation, harassment and/or coercion will **not be** tolerated. This prohibition against threats and acts of violence applies to anyone on Health Unit property. Workplace violence includes any behavior that causes an individual to reasonably fear for their personal safety or the safety of family, friends and/or property. Violations of this policy, by any individual, will lead to disciplinary action, up to and including immediate termination, removal from Health Unit property and legal action as appropriate. You should report the details of any threats or violence to your manager or a Human

Resources representative as soon as possible. All incidents and threats of violence that are reported will be investigated.

Accommodations

To ensure equal employment opportunities to qualified individuals with disabilities, we make reasonable accommodations to enable otherwise qualified applicants or employees with a physical or mental disability to perform the essential functions of a position, unless this will result in undue hardship for the Health Unit.

Any qualified applicant or employee who has a disability that prevents them from performing one or more of the essential functions of the job should contact their manager or the Human Resources Department to request an accommodation. We will cooperate with the applicant or employee to identify reasonable accommodation, if any, that will help eliminate the job limitation.

See Respect in the Workplace policy (link when approved)

[Employee Health Status 4.60.10](#)

Administration of the Code

Annual and New Hire Training and Acknowledgement

Every employee is expected to read the Code on an annual basis, to certify to the Health Unit that they have read, understand, will abide by the Code, and to disclose all information to the Health Unit necessary to comply with the Code.

New hires are expected to read and sign off on the Code promptly upon employment.

Directors and managers are expected to reinforce and re-emphasize the Code with their direct reports regularly, or when a situation arises that requires the director or manager to revisit relevant sections of the Code, but no less than on an annual basis.

Reporting of Illegal or Unethical Behaviour

The Health Unit strives to foster an environment that promotes integrity and deters unethical or illegal behaviour. The Health Unit will ensure compliance with this Code and applicable laws. Concerns or complaints may be reported in accordance with the procedures outlined in the Health Unit's *Respectful Workplace Policy* or by use of the Reporting Procedure outlined below.

Violations of the Code of Conduct

Violations of the Code will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination without notice. No employee may authorize a violation of the Code or disregard any provision in the Code. An employee's violation of the Code is not excused because the employee was directed by another individual to take such action.

In addition to disciplinary consequences, employees who commit misconduct, including by breaching the Code, may be subject to legal action including criminal and/or civil liability.

Reporting Procedure

If there are sufficient grounds to do so, or the Health Unit otherwise deems it necessary, the Health Unit will investigate an incident of disrespect, workplace violence, harassment, and/or discrimination and take corrective action to address the incident. The Health Unit's internal complaint procedure provides for:

- A timely, thorough and objective investigation of any allegation of workplace violence, harassment, or discrimination;
- Appropriate disciplinary action for anyone found to have engaged in conduct contrary to this policy; and
- Reasonable and appropriate remedies for anyone who has been the target of workplace violence, harassment, or discrimination.

Immediate/Emergency Assistance

If you are the target of or a witness to workplace violence, you are required to seek immediate assistance and report the incident. If the situation is an emergency, you should call 9-1-1.

In a non-emergency situation, you should summon immediate assistance by contacting your immediate manager who can assist you in summoning the appropriate help.

If you are either directly affected by, or witness to any violence in the workplace, it is mandatory for the safety of all Health Unit employees that the incident be reported without delay. Reporting any violent or potentially violent situations must be done immediately to your director/manager or to any member of the Human Resources Department. This includes reporting domestic violence situations that could get carried into the workplace and expose employees to physical injury in the workplace.

Complaint Procedure for Incidents of Disrespect

See *Respectful Workplace Policy*

If you believe you are the target of an incident of disrespect as covered by the *Respectful Workplace Policy*, the Health Unit highly encourages you to participate in either or both of the following resolution options before escalating the complaint to a formal resolution process. Often, addressing incidents at this early stage and through an informal resolution process can prevent future occurrences, and set clear boundaries and expectations for employees to follow out of respect for one another.

INFORMAL RESOLUTION

For incidents of disrespect that are minor, non-violent, and/or where the individuals involved are comfortable doing so, employees are encouraged, but not required, to try and address the issue on their own with the individual who has engaged in the disrespectful behaviour. The complainant should make clear that the behaviour was unwelcome and/or disruptive, and that they do not wish for it to happen again.

As soon as possible after this conversation, the complainant should make a record for themselves of the date of the conversation, the person(s) with whom they spoke, witnesses to the conversation (if any), what was conveyed by both parties, and any agreed upon outcome of the conversation (if any).

INFORMAL RESOLUTION WITH SUPPORT

For incidents of disrespect that are minor, non-violent, and/or where the individuals involved prefer or require support or assistance, employees are encouraged to consult with their manager. Managers who receive complaints are considered to be the employee's Designated Support Person ("DSP") and will assist the employee with reaching an informal resolution of the incident. The DSP may take steps to resolve the matter by speaking with the alleged perpetrator with or without the complainant's presence or conducting an informal mediation session. The DSP should keep a record of the complaint, when it was brought forward, the employees involved, any steps taken as part of the informal resolution process, and any agreed upon outcome(s) by either or both parties at any stage of the process (if any). After initial resolution steps have been taken, the DSP should follow up to ensure that the matter has been completely resolved. If the DSP is unable to resolve the incident informally, they can report to/consult with Human Resources.

If the complaint as described above is in respect of your manager, or if you are uncomfortable reporting the complaint to your manager for any reason, you should report the incident of disrespect to another manager/director or to Human Resources directly, who may appoint a DSP to proceed with the informal resolution process.

FORMAL RESOLUTION

If an incident of disrespect remains unresolved after the above informal resolution processes have been attempted and/or utilized, it may rise to the level of workplace violence, harassment and/or discrimination, as outlined in the *Respectful Workplace Policy*. If this is the case, please read the following section on complaint procedures for such incidents.

[Complaint Procedure for Workplace Violence, Harassment and/or Discrimination](#)

If you believe you are the target of or have witnessed workplace violence, harassment, or discrimination (collectively referred to as "Prohibited Behaviour" under the *Respectful Workplace Policy*), the Health Unit requires you to report or address your concerns as soon as possible after the incident occurs. In some situations, simply explaining to a person why their joke, comment or conduct is unwelcome may resolve the issue. Asking the person to stop is often the most effective means of eliminating the problem.

However, if you are uncomfortable speaking to the person directly, or if you speak to the person directly and the conduct persists, you should make a complaint of workplace violence, harassment, or discrimination. You will be asked to complete a **Complaint Form** and to provide as much detail about the incident(s) as possible. This will include a description of the incident(s), the names of individuals involved, the names of any witnesses, and the provision of any relevant documents. The complaint form should be submitted to the Human Resources department.

In some instances, Human Resources may direct your manager or an appointed DSP to take steps to resolve the matter informally, if requested by the complainant. Such conversations will be confidential, except as required to resolve the issue or as otherwise required by law. This may include speaking with the alleged perpetrator or conducting an informal mediation session. If, however, your manager, the DSP, Human Resources or the Health Unit determines that the matter discloses potential workplace

violence or harm, or creates an unsafe work environment, an investigation as outlined below may be conducted.

The Health Unit reserves the right to instigate an investigation when it becomes aware of a potential issue involving workplace violence, harassment, or discrimination regardless of whether a formal complaint was submitted.

Investigation Process

If the Health Unit deems it necessary to do so, the Health Unit will conduct or arrange for a prompt, thorough and objective investigation, in accordance with applicable provincial legislation and as appropriate in the circumstances, of a complaint and/or incident of workplace violence, harassment, and/or discrimination. Such investigations may be conducted by the Health Unit or a third party.

The particular investigatory steps may vary from matter to matter but will be appropriate in the circumstances of each complaint. The kind of investigatory steps that could be taken may include:

- Comprehensive and documented interviews with the complainant and/or victim, the alleged perpetrator, and any other witness with relevant information to provide;
- Collection and review of any relevant documents; or
- Such other step(s) as the investigator deems necessary to fully and fairly investigate the complaint or incident.

Employees must fully cooperate with efforts to verify compliance with the Code and with any inquiry concerning a possible violation of the Code. Employees are also obligated to act in accordance with the Health Unit's *Respectful Workplace Policy* and/or other applicable policies or laws. Employees must not make any false or misleading statement to the Health Unit or the Health Unit's representatives, independent auditors, or counsel, or conceal or omit information relating to such an investigation. Employees must not withhold, conceal, alter, or destroy any hard copy or electronic documents, books or records that relate to such an investigation.

The Health Unit reserves the right to engage in a different procedure as deemed necessary or appropriate. All employees are required to co-operate with the investigation process.

The Health Unit is committed to accommodating employees and will consider all reasonable requests for accommodation during the investigation process.

See *Respectful Workplace Policy*

Confidentiality of Investigation

The Health Unit will make reasonable efforts to protect the confidentiality of information received during an investigation – including information that may identify any person. The Health Unit will not disclose the circumstances related to an incident of workplace violence, harassment, or discrimination, or the names of the complainant, the person alleged to have committed the violence, harassment or discrimination, or any witnesses, except where necessary:

- to fairly or effectively investigate the complaint;
- for the purposes of corrective action;

- to inform the parties involved in the incident of the results of the investigation and any corrective actions to be taken to address the incident;
- to inform workers of a specific or general threat of violence or potential violence (disclosing only the minimum amount of personal information necessary to inform workers of a specific or general threat of violence or potential violence); or
- as required by law.

Complete confidentiality is not possible in all circumstances and cannot be guaranteed.

During the investigation, the complainant and/or victim, the alleged harasser(s)/respondent(s) and all witnesses will not discuss the incident or complaint or the investigation with each other or anyone else. A breach of this confidentiality requirement is a breach of the policy and may result in discipline up to and including dismissal from employment.

All records of the investigation will be kept confidential.

Investigation Report

At the conclusion of the investigation into an incident or complaint, the investigator will prepare a written report. The report will set out the nature of the complaint, the investigatory steps taken, the evidence gathered from the parties or witnesses, the findings of fact, whether workplace violence, harassment, or discrimination has been found or not, and the corrective action, if any, implemented to prevent a recurrence of the incident.

Reporting the Outcome of the Investigation

Once the investigation has been completed and a determination regarding the allegations has been made, the complainant and the respondent(s) (if employed by the Health Unit) will be advised, in writing, of the outcome of the investigation and any corrective action that has been or will be taken.

In the event that an employee has been the subject of workplace violence, harassment, or discrimination, the Health Unit will recommend that the employee consult a health professional of the employee's choice for treatment, referral or counseling, if appropriate.

Retaliation or Reprisal

The Health Unit prohibits reprisals and retaliation against any employee who, in good faith, has:

- made a complaint alleging workplace violence, harassment, discrimination, illegal behaviour or unethical behaviour;
- identified or opposed a practice that the employee believes to constitute workplace violence, harassment, discrimination, illegal behaviour or unethical behaviour;
- participated in an investigation relating to the above conduct, or in a proceeding pursuant to any applicable statute; or
- sought information about or otherwise exercised a right under human rights or occupational health and safety legislation.

REPRISAL OR RETALIATION INCLUDES:

- Any act of retaliation that occurs because a person has complained of or provided information about an incident of workplace violence, harassment, discrimination, illegal behaviour or unethical behaviour;
- Intentionally pressuring or intimidating a person to ignore or not report incident of workplace violence, harassment, discrimination, illegal behaviour, or unethical behaviour; and
- Intentionally pressuring or intimidating a person to lie or provide less than full cooperation with the investigation of a complaint or incident of workplace violence, harassment, discrimination, illegal behaviour, or unethical behaviour.

All reprisal or retaliation complaints or incidents should be promptly reported to your manager. The Health Unit will ensure that the complaint or incident is investigated through the investigatory steps that are appropriate in the circumstances.

False or Bad Faith Complaints

To falsely accuse someone of violence, harassment, discrimination, retaliation, or illegal behaviour is a serious offence. An employee who makes a false, malicious, or bad faith complaint or otherwise abuses this Code may be subject to discipline, up to and including dismissal from employment. All fraudulent, vexatious, or bad faith complaints, or other abuses of this Code will be investigated by the Health Unit through investigatory steps appropriate in the circumstances. However, no disciplinary action will be taken against an employee for making a complaint in good faith, regardless of whether or not the complaint is substantiated.

Discipline and Remedial Measures

If an investigation determines that workplace violence, harassment, discrimination, illegal behaviour, unethical behaviour, retaliation, or a bad faith complaint has occurred, the Health Unit will take effective remedial action commensurate with the circumstances. The severity of any disciplinary action, which may include dismissal from employment, will be consistent with the seriousness of the conduct at issue such that more significant discipline will follow more serious conduct or repeated violations of this policy, and other relevant considerations related to the perpetrator's employment. Appropriate action will also be taken to deter any future workplace violence, harassment, discrimination, illegal behaviour, or unethical behaviour. The Health Unit may contact or refer the complaint to the appropriate authorities when necessary.

The internal procedures described herein are not intended to prevent or discourage any employee from making use of, or exercising the employee's rights under any statutory or other complaint procedure if the employee wishes to do so.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

By signing this form, I, _____ (Print Name),
acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Code of Conduct for Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge
District Health Unit (the "Health Unit"), I have read and understood the Code of Conduct, and I agree to
abide by it at all times during my employment, membership and/or volunteer service with the Health
Unit.

Further, I understand that compliance with the Health Unit's Code of Conduct, including all referenced
policies and procedures within, is a condition of my continued employment/membership/volunteer
service, such that a violation of the Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action, up to and including
termination.

Signature

Date

Distribution: Employee Personnel File
 Employee