



EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

INTRODUCTION

The agency provides this handbook to its employees to familiarize them with information needed to work smoothly within the agency. Employees are expected to review the following information immediately upon employment and to bring any questions to the attention of their supervisor.

MISSION STATEMENT

It is the mission of the agency to provide client-centered, quality, comprehensive care services in the home.

OBJECTIVES:

1. To provide comprehensive services to our clients living within a 60 mile radius of our office.
2. To provide personalized care designed according to the client's needs.
3. To assist the client to achieve his/her maximum level of independence.
4. To maintain a work environment which provides our employees the opportunity for personal growth and job satisfaction and the tools needed for home care of the highest quality.
5. To comply with all appropriate state and federal standards and regulations all the staff will be review for their performance at least annually. The results of the annual review of the staff will discussed with PAC members and suggestion will be implemented as required.

RECRUITMENT

The agency seeks to employ personnel of the highest level of professional competence and integrity. Every reasonable effort will be made to accommodate physically challenged individuals. Field personnel include nurses, rehabilitation therapists, social workers and aides, whose basic professional education has trained them to work with physically, mentally and emotionally impaired individuals. Additional training may be provided when needs are identified.

The agency recruits staff without regard to race, religion, national origin, creed, sex, age, political belief or sexual preference. Recruitment resources may include classified advertising, employment services, college campuses and human services and other organizations.

Each applicant must complete an application form and provide a minimum of two satisfactory references. Background checks may be required at the administrator's discretion or by state law. Following interviews and reference checks, the agency Administrator or designee will make the final selection of staff.

NONDISCRIMINATORY PROCESS

Synergy Home Health Systems, LLC selects staff without regard to gender, race, age, creed, handicap or national origin.

Synergy Home Health Systems, LLC will make every attempt to employ physically and/or mentally disabled individuals in jobs that they are capable of performing providing the applicant is able to perform essential job functions as defined in the position requirements.

In employing the disabled, Synergy Home Health Systems, LLC will provide these workers with on the job training as needed making every effort to comply with requirements as spelled out in the statutes and regulations for "reasonable accommodation."

Those employees with documented histories of substance abuse will be considered individually with appropriate medical recommendation.

This policy will be updated as needed and reviewed annually

ORIENTATION

All the agency employees must complete an orientation program designed to familiarize the employee with agency philosophy, policies, procedures, benefits, job descriptions, and other information necessary for successful performance of job duties.

STANDARDS OF CONDUCT:

The following standards of conduct are prescribed to assure continuation of employment. Employees are at all times expected to:

Give primary consideration to the welfare of patients, employees and visitors

- Respect established authority
- Use facility equipment and supplies judiciously and with extreme care
- Perform all duties and responsibilities in an acceptable manner, according to applicable standards, laws and regulations
- Be honest; seek help in resolving problems
- Present a neat and clean personal appearance
- Comply with Agency policies and procedures
- Conduct themselves as responsible members of the staff and as good citizens

TRAINING AND SKILLS VALIDATION

All field staff must provide proof of clinical competence including copies of current state licenses and certificates, successful completion of skills competency evaluation (verbal and observational) and documentation of professional education (copy of diploma or transcript or verification by the school of successful completion of educational program.)

PROBATION

Newly hired employees will serve a 90-day probationary period intended to offer both the employee and the agency time to decide if this is the appropriate fit.

The agency reserves the right to dismiss an employee anytime during the probationary period if performance is inadequate.

Probation may be used as a step in progressive disciplinary action for employees past their first 90 days of employment when performance is not up to standards.

PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

Performance evaluations are required for all employees by the appropriate supervisor with active employee participation at the end of the probationary period, and annually on the date of employment thereafter. Evaluations will include self-evaluation, supervisor's assessment of employee fulfillment of job responsibilities, employee development planning, individual goal setting, on site observations of performance skills competency evaluation and response to evaluation by the employee.

HIRING AND PROMOTIONS

When a vacancy occurs or a new position is created, all current employees will be given the first opportunity to apply. The interview process will involve the Administrator and/or designees of the Administrator. If the position is not filled from within, an announcement will be made in the classified ads of the major newspapers in the community and job announcements may be sent to other agencies with whom the agency networks.

The agency is an equal opportunity agency and endorses the belief that no employee applying for a new or vacated position will be denied this opportunity by virtue of his/her race, religion, age, color, creed, sex, sexual preference, national origin or disability.

EMPLOYEE SEPARATION

All personnel are required to give two (2) weeks written notice of resignation to be considered separated in good standing.

DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

When a staff member's (employee or contract personnel) job performance or work behavior does not meet those standards for continued employment, it is the policy of Synergy Home Health Systems, LLC to initiate disciplinary action for corrective purposes in the following manner:

- Verbal Reprimand: Considered to be a notice to the employee that the job performance or work behavior does not meet standards of employment.
- Written Reprimand: Considered to be further notice to the employee of undesirable work behavior or unacceptable job performance, submitted in writing and placed in the personnel file for permanent record.
- Suspension Without Pay: Considered to be the final notice to the employee that undesirable work behavior or unacceptable job performance must be corrected at once.
- Discharge: Considered to be the most extreme form of disciplinary action and final step in this process. This will occur when all previous steps have been followed or in the event that immediate discharge is considered to be justifiable by the Supervisor, Director of Patient Care Services and Administrator.

It is the policy of Synergy Home Health Systems, LLC that all employees shall have the right to initiate an in-house grievance procedure in connection with any phase of this policy.

EXIT INTERVIEWS

All terminating employees will be requested to give an exit interview to a member of the administrative staff who is acceptable to the employee. The purpose of the exit interview is to present an opportunity for the employee to verbalize concerns safely and to offer information for agency quality improvement. The agency's exit interview form may be used. The only documentation in the personnel record will be that the exit interview was offered and whether it was accepted. Any written documentation of the interview will be used anonymously for agency performance improvement processes.

OFFICE HOURS / WORK HOURS

The office will be open 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM Monday through Friday. Field employees are responsible to arrange hours efficiently to meet client needs.

PAPERWORK TIME FRAMES

All visit recording must be done during the visit and completed immediately after. All paperwork is due in the agency office by 9:00 AM Monday; a locked box is provided in the office door for weekend drop off.

EMPLOYEE CLASSIFICATIONS

- Full-time employees work an average of at least forty (40) hours or more per week.
- Part-time employees work less than an average of thirty two (32) hours per week.

- Temporary or Contingent employees are employed under an agreement for a specific amount of time, for a specific amount of remuneration either on a full-time or part-time basis.

Non-exempt employees are entitled to overtime pay for work beyond 40 hours per week or 8 hours per day under distinctive provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act.

Exempt employees generally occupy executive, administrative or professional positions and are not entitled to overtime pay except in certain situations under the Fair Labor Standards Act and applicable state laws

PAYDAYS

Paychecks are issued Bi-Weekly.

CALCULATION OF PAY

Office Staff pay is calculated on a basis from the daily time% et Any questions regarding how hours of work were calculated should be discussed with our immediate supervisor. Field Staff pay is calculated on per visit basis on rater per discipline

TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT

Field employees will be reimbursed at higher than the current market rates to compensate for travel expenses. Employees must show proof of adequate automobile insurance.

HOLIDAYS

Certain days of religious and historic importance are recognized as holidays Regular part- time and all full-time employees are eligible to receive holiday pay on the following holidays

1. New Years Dm
2. Memorial Day
3. Independence Day
4. Labor Day
5. Thanksgiving Day
6. Christmas Day

Holidays which occur on Saturday will he observed on the previous Friday. Holidays which occur on Sunday will be observed on the following Monday. Holiday pay is dependent upon the employee working his regular schedule on the workday preceding and the workday following the holiday.

JURY DUTY

Jury duty is a civic responsibility. Therefore, employees will be reimbursed the difference between their regular pay and the jury duty pay. Employees granted time off for this purpose are expected to report for work during any portion of a scheduled workday in which they are not required to be present at court. A certificate of attendance must be submitted upon return to work.

Regular part-time and full-time employees are entitled to two paid days for bereavement upon the death of an immediate family member. Immediate family includes grandparents, parents, children, spouses and siblings.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Leave of absence without pay may be granted at the discretion of the Administrator. Emergency leave may be granted in the case of death or serious illness in the employee's immediate family.

A leave of absence is defined as an unpaid absence from work for a specified period of time not to exceed eight weeks, with the proper approval and the understanding that the employee will return to work at the end of the allowed leave.

Conditions for non-emergency leave:

1. An employee desiring a leave must make a detailed written request stating purpose and beginning and ending dates of the leave to the Administrator who will review the request and approve or disapprove. The request must be made at least two weeks prior to the first day of leave.
2. An employee failing to report to work on the first working day following the expiration of the leave will be considered to have voluntarily resigned. In the event, the last day worked is the termination date.
3. Following an approved leave, an employee's return to work is contingent upon job availability and current opening for which the employee is qualified.
4. Normal salary/performance review dates of employees on leave are postponed by the amount of leave time.
5. Extensions of leave may be granted depending upon individual circumstances.

MATERNITY LEAVE

Up to three months leave of absence may be granted to pregnant employees. The beginning date of leave will be determined by the employee and her physician. The agency should be informed by the employee as soon as possible about beginning and ending dates of leave to enable smooth planning and scheduling. After a three month period, the agency reserves the right to choose not to hold the position open. Women affected by pregnancy and related conditions must be treated the same as other employees on the basis of their ability or inability to work. The agency reserves the right to require a physician's certificate of ability to work on a weekly basis.

MEDICAL LEAVE

A request for medical leave will be considered only when accompanied by a physician's certification indicating the reason and the probable date of return to work. An employee's return to work following a medical leave is contingent upon job availability or current openings for which the employee is qualified.

PAID LEAVE

Full time employees receive 10-business day's vacation annually. Except for unexpected illness, the employee must plan in advance with his or her supervisor for its use. Vacation leave may not be used until the employee has completed six months of employment.

Personal and sick time cannot be carried over year to year, but must be used within the year accrued. Vacation may be carried over one year. No cash payments will be made for time not used.

OTHER BENEFITS

The agency will establish a group health, dental and life insurance and other benefits when there are enough employees (the minimum needed by a carrier) and positive cash flow.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

Any employees who believe they have been treated unfairly may voice their dissatisfaction in a step-by-step process as follows:

1. Verbal discussion with the employee's immediate supervisor.
2. If the employee continues to be dissatisfied, the grievance must be put in writing to the immediate supervisor who has 5 working days to respond.

3. If the employee continues to be dissatisfied, the employee must submit the grievance to the Administrator who has 3 working days to respond.
4. The employee may submit the grievance in writing to the Governing Body. The Governing Body will serve as the final arbiter of grievances, except for those problems of discrimination or sexual harassment, which will be managed according to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND ABUSE

Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination under the law. It is illegal and against the policies of this organization for any employee, male or female, to sexually harass another employee.

Sexual harassment is "unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature" when:

1. Submission to such conduct is made whether explicitly or implicitly as a term or condition of an individual's employment.
2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individuals.
3. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating and intimidating working environment.

Sexual harassment of employees will not be tolerated. Any employee who believes he or she has been the subject of sexual harassment should report the alleged act immediately to the Administrator or alternate. An investigation of all complaints will be undertaken immediately. Any employee who sexually harasses another employee will be subjected to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

CLIENT SEXUAL HARASSMENT OR ABUSE OF STAFF

Unwelcome, repeated sexual advances or verbal or physical abuse toward staff by clients should be reported to the supervisor immediately. The supervisor will work with the employee toward a solution. Solutions may include a formal agreement with the client, transfer of the employee or planned or immediate discharge of the client.

ABUSE OF CLIENTS OR CO-WORKERS

Verbal or physical abuse directed at a client or co-worker is always unacceptable and will result in immediate termination.

- a. Employees or clients who have allegations or mistreatment, neglect verbal/mental/or sexual/ or mental abuse, including injuries of unknown sources, and misappropriation of patient property by anyone furnishing services on behalf of Synergy Home Health System must immediately report to the administrator or director of nursing.

EMPLOYEE DRESS CODE

As a health care agency, the agency depends on its employees to project an image of cleanliness, safety, professionalism, and competence. To that end, all agency employees are expected to be clean, neat, well groomed, and attired appropriately for the conduct of the agency's business. Appropriate attire for some positions may involve the use of protective clothing or protective devices needed to ensure the safety of the employee.

1. All agency employees in every position are expected to wear their ID badges during work hours and to be well groomed.
2. Visiting staff are encouraged to wear appropriate academic insignia.
3. All agency employees are expected to present themselves wearing clean and conservative attire.

4. If protective clothing is needed to do any specific agency job, it must be worn as per agency regulations.
5. Minimum agency expectations for attire include the following:
 - a) Dresses
 - b) Slacks/trousers
 - c) Knit shirts with collars and sleeves
 - d) Blouses/shirts with sleeves
 - e) Skirts and culottes in conservative lengths, no shorter than two inches above the knee
 - f) Enclosed shoes
6. Use of cosmetics or jewelry should be moderate and no jewelry or clothing should be worn that may interfere with patient care. Hair shall be pulled back so that it does not interfere with patient care.
7. If an employee is disabled or, as a member of a religious group, wears certain dress styles, every effort will be made to accommodate the employee provided that safety, health, and sanitation requirements are satisfied.
8. Management reserves the right to determine the appropriateness of the employee's attire. Employees violating the letter and spirit of the policy may be asked to return home at their expense and change into appropriate attire.

STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

All employees are expected to comply with the following standards of conduct:

1. To comply with all applicable local, state and federal laws;
2. To maintain complete confidentiality of client information.
3. To treat clients with complete respect according to the client bill of rights.
4. To make visits as scheduled or to notify supervisor of inability to maintain schedule.
5. To treat coworkers with respect and courtesy.
6. To practice good personal hygiene and wear appropriate clothing.
7. To refrain from bringing children, friends or pets to client's homes, with or without client's permission.
8. To refrain from use of client's telephone for personal calls.
9. To practice applicable safety and fire prevention activities.

The following behaviors are unacceptable and may result in immediate termination:

1. To borrow money or any of a client's possessions with or without permission.
2. To engage in smoking, use of alcohol or drugs or profane or abusive language in client homes.
3. To give false information in recording client care, visits made, time worked, travel time, etc.

EMERGENCY SITUATIONS AND CRITICAL INCIDENTS

Occasionally, the employee may encounter an unusual, unexpected or emergency situation in the home. The employee is required to act according to the nature and severity of the incident.

MEDICAL EMERGENCY, MAJOR TRAUMA OR LIFE THREATENING INCIDENTS

1. Call 911 immediately.
2. Report to the office what has happened.
3. The Administrator or designee will notify the client's emergency contact and physician.
4. Stay with the client until help arrives and the situation is under control.

NON-LIFE THREATENING INCIDENTS

1. Make the client comfortable.
2. Inform the office and the family.
3. Follow the Administrator's instructions.

INCIDENT REPORTS

Immediately following an incident, the employee involved must complete an incident report form and review the incident with the DOCS. Examples of incidents which must be reported include but are not limited to client complaints, medication errors, accidents and/or injury to employees or patients, equipment or medical device failure or malfunction, theft, suspicion of abuse, neglect or exploitation and criminal activity.

The DOCS will follow up on any reported incidents as appropriate and document actions taken and resolution of identified problems. A log will be kept of all incidents. Incident reports and logs will be reviewed on an ongoing basis to note trends.

DISASTER/EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

When notified of an emergency, patient care staff will do the following:

- Do not leave home until you are assigned.
- To save notice time, do not ask questions until you receive your assignment.
- Keep your telephone line free for your assignment call.
- Wear your nametag to be recognized by other cooperating agencies.
- Call the office if you are away from home at the time the emergency is declared.
- Stay tuned to the radio station identified for emergency information.

CLIENT ASSIGNMENT

Every attempt will be made to assign field staff to requested geographic areas. However, the agency covers an area within a 60-mile radius of the office. Occasionally it may be necessary to assign visits to employees outside of their particular area to cover all patients and comply with physician orders.

PERSONNEL RECORDS

The agency maintains a personnel record on each employee. All personnel records are confidential and are maintained in a secure place. They may not be removed from the office. Access to records is limited to authorized supervisory personnel.

All field staff are required to have access to an automobile with the appropriate current vehicle insurance coverage which is in compliance state laws.

An employee may have access to all information contained in his/her record except references. Employees wishing to review the contents of their personnel records must request an appointment to review their files. No material may be photocopied or removed from the personnel file without proper authorization.

Terminated employees may not have access to their records.

All employees will have criminal background screening through the Michigan Long Term Care Website which also includes sex offender checks.

SANCTIONS FOR PRIVACY VIOLATIONS

POLICY:

The agency applies appropriate sanctions against any staff member who violates the organization's privacy practices.

PROCEDURE:

1. The agency's staff is provided with training and retraining as necessary to ensure they understand the agency's privacy practices and its expectations that staff will adhere to them.
2. Sanctions are applied against any staff member who violates the agency's privacy practices.
3. Appropriate sanctions are determined based on the nature of the violation, its severity and whether it was intentional or unintentional.
4. Sanctions may include verbal warnings, written warnings, probationary periods or termination of employment or volunteer status.
5. Any sanctions applied are documented and retained for a period of six years.
6. Sanctions are not applied against any member of the agency's workforce who engages in whistleblower activities including lodging complaints with any entity regarding violations of the agency's privacy practices.

NOTICE OF PRIVACY PRACTICES

POLICY:

The privacy practices of the agency, designed to protect the privacy, use and disclosure of protected health information, are clearly delineated in the agency's Notice of Privacy Practices which was developed and is used in accordance with Federal requirements.

PROCEDURE:

1. The privacy practices of the agency are described in the Notice of Privacy Practices.
2. The privacy practices and requirements of the agency are further detailed in the agency's privacy policies and procedures.
3. The Notice of Privacy Practices are given to all patients no later than the date of the first service delivery.
4. A good faith effort is made to obtain written acknowledgement of the patient's receipt of the agency's Notice of Privacy Practices.
When written acknowledgement of the patient's receipt of the Notice cannot be obtained, there is documentation to explain efforts made to obtain it and the reason(s) why it was not obtained.
6. The Notice of Privacy Practices is available to anyone who requests it.
7. The Notice of Privacy Practices will be revised as needed to reflect any changes in the agency's privacy practices. Revisions to the Notice will not be implemented prior to the effective date of the revised Notice.
8. When revisions to the Notices of Privacy Practices are necessary, all current patients, employees, and business associates will receive a revised copy with notation of the changes made.
9. The Privacy Official retains copies of the original Notice of Privacy Practices and any subsequent revisions for a period of six (6) years from the date of its creation or when it was last in effect, whichever is later.
10. Documentation is retained for six years of the patient's written acknowledgment of receipt of the agency's Notice of Privacy Practices or of efforts made to obtain this written acknowledgment and the reason(s) why it was not obtained.
11. All employees and business associates of the agency are required to adhere to the privacy practices as detailed in the Notice of Privacy Practices, privacy policies and procedures and business associate contracts.
12. Violations of the agency's privacy practices will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment or contracts.
13. The Notice is posted in a clear and prominent location.
14. The Notice of Privacy Practices is prominently displayed and available electronically on the agency's web site at <http://www>.
15. The Notice of Privacy Practices is reproduced in the Employee Handbook and is reviewed with all current employees annually and with all new employees during their orientation to the agency.