



MONTANA STATE HOSPITAL POLICY AND PROCEDURE

EMPLOYEE CONDUCT

Effective Date: November 2, 2009

Policy #: HR-06

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- I. PURPOSE:** To provide standards for employee conduct that promote quality patient care and reflect the expectations of the citizens of Montana for public employees who provide care to people with disabilities.
- II. POLICY:** All Hospital employees are expected to conduct himself/herself both on and off the job in accordance with the definitions and standards set forth in this policy. An employee who violates the expectations for conduct set forth in this policy will be subject to disciplinary action which may include dismissal. Not every situation that may arise can be anticipated and included in policy. Employees are expected to understand the fundamental expectations governing conduct and apply them to situations that may arise.
- III. DEFINITIONS:**

Guiding Principles: The Hospital has established the following guiding principles as a fundamental basis to guide organizational and employee behavior:

- Keep people safe
- Treat people with respect, trust, and dignity
- Consider all patient needs with sensitivity
- Utilize a holistic approach for provision of care
- Assist patients toward achieving greater levels of self-sufficiency and autonomy
- Support informed choice and decision making
- Advance the mission of the hospital through teamwork
- Ensure public trust through personal and professional integrity

On-the-Job Conduct: The employee's response to any assigned duty, responsibility, expectation, obligation or behavior required of the employee by the employer or the position.

Off-the-Job Conduct: The employee's off-duty behavior which maintains expected ethical and conduct standards and does not discredit or adversely impact the Hospital's image or public trust.

Public Trust: The holding of public employment is a public trust, created by the confidence that the citizens have in public employees. Therefore, the ultimate employer of the public employee is the citizens of the state. Each public employee is vested with

part of the whole of public trust in the performance of job responsibilities. That trust requires adherence to integrity, responsible performance, and correctness in conduct both on and off the job.

IV. RESPONSIBILITIES:

Employees are responsible for their conduct and behavior both on and off the job.

Supervisors are responsible for ensuring employees understand the expectations for conduct outlined in this policy and appropriate follow up action is taken if expectations for conduct are breached.

V. PROCEDURE:

The following list is intended to be a partial list of guidelines for conduct. It is not intended to be exhaustive or to anticipate any situation that may arise. Employees are expected to rely on their training and knowledge of Hospital policy, and when possible should consult with their supervisor or co-workers to address questions about whether a behavior is acceptable.

A. Expectations for Employee Conduct

1. Be cooperative with others. Demonstrate good teamwork principles. Recognize that our organization is only successful if we are successful as a team.
2. Demonstrate initiative. See things that need to be done; don't wait to do something until you are told.
3. Utilize Hospital Guiding Principles as a basis for decision-making.
4. Always be respectful of patients and their families. Respond to patients in a caring, empathetic manner no matter what their behavior. Display a welcoming and hopeful attitude towards those we serve. Remember, patients are our customers; they may present challenges, but they are never a burden.
5. Always adhere to principles of patient confidentiality. Only share patient information with those who have a "need to know." Never discuss patients in public places at work or away from work.
6. Uphold and reinforce the rights of patients.
7. Maintain self control and utilize appropriate conflict resolution strategies when confronted by people who are angry. Utilize proper crisis intervention techniques in the event of a physical altercation.

8. Refrain from sharing significant personal information about yourself, your family, or your co-workers with patients.
9. Maintain therapeutic boundaries with patients and former patients. Do not engage in any type of socialization or relationship that may be outside of the professional role of care provider. If in doubt, seek advice from supervisors or treatment team members.
10. Inform supervisory personnel if a person is admitted with whom you have had a relationship with outside the hospital. Request a modification in your assignment if a personal relationship with a patient may compromise your ability to provide quality, objective care.
11. Provide care for patients using the techniques and procedures taught in orientation and in-service education programs.
12. Report to work on time and as scheduled. Only leave your work area when properly relieved and with your supervisor's approval.
13. Promptly report safety hazards and take prompt action to prevent injury to others until the problem can be corrected.
14. Follow the Hospital's policy on tobacco use, and encourage others to do so as well.
15. Utilize telephones, radios, computer, and copier equipment in accordance with state and Hospital policy. Keep personal use of telephones to a minimum and do not let it interfere with Hospital business. Essential personal long distance calls must be collect, charged to a personal third-party number, charged to a personal credit card, or made using a calling card. Internet use must adhere to state policy.
16. Always use proper telephone etiquette whenever answering the telephone or when calling others. Identify yourself and your work area, be courteous, offer assistance, write down messages and repeat names and numbers back to the caller to check for accuracy.

B. Unacceptable Conduct

1. Neglect or failure to properly carry out duties, responsibilities, or assignments.
2. Abuse, mistreatment or neglect of any patient.
3. Theft, willful damage, misappropriation or neglect of patient property or property of the Hospital.

4. Insubordination or refusal to follow verbal or written instructions of a supervisor.
5. Any conduct such as use of alcohol, or use or sale of drugs, either on or off the job which adversely impacts the employer's operation (including absence from work) or brings discredit upon the employer's mission or public trust.
6. Willful, intended or threatened harm to patients, family members, co-workers, or others.
7. Falsification of Hospital records, e.g., time sheets, patient records, travel expenses, omission of pertinent data, giving false testimony, etc.
8. Behavior intended to harass or threaten patients or co-workers.
9. Failure to report or disclose information concerning allegations of possible patient abuse, neglect, or other wrongdoing.
10. Improper disclosure of confidential information.
11. Willful violation of law, contract, policy, or directives. Failure to carry out assignments or responsibilities.
12. Improper or illegal use of the Hospital's telephone, radio, or computer network system. Improper use of the Hospital's copy machines.
13. Unauthorized use of state time, equipment, or facilities for private business or personal use.
14. Sleeping on the job.
15. Failure to abide by the Hospital's dress code or maintain personal hygiene in a manner acceptable to the Hospital environment.
16. Failure to appropriately respond in an emergency situation.
17. Unauthorized duplication or inappropriate use of keys. Loaning or providing keys to others without authorization.
18. Developing a relationship with a patient that violates expected patient-staff boundaries and therapeutic principles. Failing to report a personal relationship with a patient or former patient outside of the work setting.
19. Performing special favors for patients that are outside the therapeutic process, without authorization from the patient's treatment team.

