



Employee Ethical Code of Conduct

Families First of Florida (FFF) maintains a high level of integrity for employees. The expectation is for all staff to conduct themselves appropriately and to place the needs of clients, co-workers, and the agency first.

For that purpose, FFF created an Ethical Code of Conduct with basic principles for staff to agree to follow upon hire.

- **The principle of beneficence.** Promote good; do the right thing; enhance welfare.
- **The principle of non-maleficence.** Do no harm. Do not exploit one's position of power or influence for personal gain or gratification. Do not condone or engage in any dual or multiple relationships in which there is a risk of exploitation of or potential harm to another.
- **The principle of autonomy.** Focus on the centrality of the individual receiving services. Promote and support consumer rights to choice and self-determination.
- **The principle of fairness and justice.** Distribute resources equitably. Perpetuate individual and civil and human rights, including rights to privacy, dignity, confidentiality and choice. Confront discrimination and stigma.
- **The principle of veracity.** Provide accurate and clear information regarding the extent and nature of the services available to consumers. Keep promises and agreements. Maintain personal and professional integrity.
- **The principle of informed consent.** Provide information about options, risks, and potential consequences of choices regarding treatment, supports and services.
- **The principle of privacy and confidentiality.** Respect individuals' rights to control information about them. Adhere to Policies and Procedures on Client Rights, Confidentiality and HIPAA.
- **The principle of mandatory reporting.** Staff will comply with all mandatory reporting statutes and laws pertinent to their role as a mandatory reporter.
- **The principle of honesty in billing services.** Individuals and/or their funder are charged only for services actually provided, which are summarized on an itemized list including dates of services. Individuals receive full disclosure regarding the source of reimbursement for their care.
- **The principle of competence.** Ensure personal and professional competence of staff in accordance with job duties and agency policies and procedures regarding maintaining skills and competencies. Continue to develop skills and knowledge and apply them to work activities.
- **The principle of consultation.** Seek advice and counsel of colleagues and supervisors whenever such consultation is indicated to ensure that actions being taken are in the best interest of the consumer.

FFF employs high quality staff and has specific expectations of appropriate conduct that tie into the principles.

Conflicts of Interest: Employees must avoid having a personal, business, financial, or other interest, activity or relationship, outside FFF that has or may be in conflict with FFF or its clients. Any material transaction or relationship that may give rise to an actual or perceived conflict of interest should be discussed with the Assistant Executive Director.

Conflicts of interest may include, but are not limited to, the following situations:

- Outside Employment- employees should not perform work or render direct consulting or managerial services for an organization that competes or does business with FFF without appropriate approval from management.
- Having a personal, social, or romantic relationship with a client, prospective client or their family/caregivers.
- Managers or supervisors may not engage in a sexual, romantic, or dating relationship with subordinate employees.
- Accepting loans or gifts of entertainment, food, or cash from clients (including family/caregivers), subordinate employees, foster parents, regulatory or any outside agency that does or seeks to do business with or is a competitor to FFF.
- Obtaining a personal financial benefit in any sale or loan of company property.
- Performing services for clients outside those consistent with FFF's mission of providing quality, comprehensive in-home services to facilitate growth and development in the children and families FFF serves.
- Using or disclosing any confidential information gained during employment for an employee's personal benefit or the benefit of others, including a future employer.

Discrimination and Harassment: FFF prohibits discrimination and harassment of clients or employees whether or not the incidents occur on FFF premises and whether or not the incidents occur during business hours.

- FFF follows federal, state, and local law to ensure equal recruitment, employment, compensation, development and advancement opportunity for all qualified individuals, and prohibits deliberate harassment based on federally protected categories of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, or disability.

Workplace Violence: FFF does not tolerate workplace violence including threats, threatening behavior, harassment, intimidation, assaults or similar conduct.

Weapons: FFF employees may not carry firearms or other weapons on FFF's facilities unless obtaining prior permission.

Illegal Drugs and Alcohol: FFF employees must not distribute, possess or use illegal or unauthorized drugs or alcohol on FFF property, or in connection with FFF business.

Accurate and Complete Business Records : Employees must act in good faith not to misrepresent material facts in FFF's books and records or in any internal or external correspondence, memoranda, or communication of any type, including telephone or electronic communications.

Financial Reporting: All FFF funds, assets, liabilities and receipts must be recorded in accordance with generally acceptable accounting procedures. There cannot be any “off the books” accounts.

Proper Maintenance of Records: FFF maintains documents in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations. If FFF employees receive a subpoena, a request for records or other legal papers or if FFF has reason to believe that such a request or demand is likely, the law requires FFF to retain all relevant records and contact the Director of Administration and Human Resources.

Cooperation with Auditors: FFF employees must cooperate fully with internal and independent external auditors during examination of FFF’s books, records, and operations.

Communications: Employees must not make public statements regarding issues or matters of FFF about which they are not authorized spokespersons.

Internet and Electronic Mail:

- Employees may use Internet and send and receive electronic mail solely for business purposes.
- FFF’s electronic mail system is a company resource, and FFF reserves the right to read, view and copy any email communications.
- Employees must take reasonable care not to disclose confidential information, or acquire unauthorized information over the Internet.

Equipment and Supplies: All equipment and supplies purchased by FFF remain FFF’s property, including but not limited to office supplies, office furniture, phones, fax machines, computers, software, hardware, supplies and equipment, and may not be used by FFF employees for personal reasons.

Political Activity: FFF encourages employees to participate in the political process on their own time. Employees may not use FFF’s resources, reputation or assets to support a political candidate.

Non-work Related Interests: FFF employees may not use FFF facilities to promote non- FFF or non-work related interests of the employee or of third parties without prior consent of their supervisor.

Proper Use of Organizational Assets: FFF employees may only use, transfer, or dispose of funds or assets for the lawful and legitimate business purposes for which they were approved by FFF’s Executive Director.

Confidential Information: FFF employees must exercise care to avoid disclosing non-public, internal, secret, or proprietary information related to FFF or its clients to unauthorized persons, either within or outside FFF during employment or afterwards, except as such disclosure is legally mandated or approved by FFF.

Employee Access to Confidential Information: Only FFF employees that truly need to know confidential information to conduct their business have access to confidential information and must take necessary steps to keep this information private and confidential.

Confidential Information of Employees: Employment and medical records of FFF employees are confidential and private. Medical Records may only be disclosed if the employee provides a written release or required by applicable law.

All FFF employees must know this Code and adhere to its guidelines. If questions arise, please contact the Director of Administration and Human Resources.

Supervisors: Supervisors must take reasonable care to assure that subordinate employees are complying with these guidelines. Supervisors are responsible for misconduct by employees if the supervisor orders misconduct; ratifies the conduct, even by inaction; the supervisor has direct authority and knows of the conduct but fails to act appropriately; or should have known with reasonable diligence that the actions occurred.

Requirement to Report Actual or Suspected Violations of the Code: Employees must report any actual or suspected violations of this Code to their immediate supervisor. Failure to report any actual or suspected violations of the Code is in itself a violation of this Code.

Non Retaliation: Employees will not be retaliated against or subject to any form of reprisal for raising a good faith concern under this policy or participating in an investigation into any such concerns. Retaliation is a serious violation of this Code and should be reported immediately.

Investigation of Alleged Violations of the Code: All inquiries, complaints, and reports will be promptly investigated. Employees are expected to cooperate in the investigation. Reasonable measures will be taken to preserve confidentiality of the claim and the identity of anyone who reports a suspected violation or participated in the investigation. If you are unsure whether a violation has occurred, FFF encourages you to seek advice from the Director of Administration and Human Resources before acting.

FFF takes a zero-tolerance approach to violations of this Code, failure to report actual or suspected violations of the Code, or retaliation against whistleblowers. Employees that are found to have violated this Code or retaliated against whistleblowers will have their employment with FFF terminated.