

# The Center for Counseling & Holistic Services



## Employee Handbook

2016

## Welcome

Welcome to The Center for Counseling & Holistic Services.

We are pleased to have you join our team. We want for you to be comfortable at our organization and consider yourself a vital team member.

This handbook is intended to help you become better acquainted with our organization, its policies and rules, and your benefits and privileges. Make yourself familiar with the information contained within. Questions are sure to arise during the course of your employment and this handbook should help answer them. If not, we will be glad to help you seek the answers to your questions.

Keep this book for future reference. Please be advised, from time to time changes may be necessary, so you will be given revised pages to replace or add to your handbook.

This handbook is not an employment contract or does not guarantee employment for any determined amount of time. You have been “employed at will”.

Again we are proud to have you as a part of our organization.

## History

The Center for Counseling & Holistic Services began in 2010 as small nonprofit organization dedicated to providing psychotherapy, coaching, and workshop to men, women, children, families, and couples. In 2013, professional workshops, seminars, and trainings were added to meet the needs of the community at large.

Our organization started as a “one woman” operation. We held counseling services within the community at various nonprofit organizations before locating an office location. The organization now operates seven days per week with an annual client base of roughly 200 patients, with plans to expand to 1000 patients over the next five years.

Our expansion plans are to increase our services, staff, client base, and service area to include Passaic and Hudson counties.

## Philosophy

We want to reduce the stigma associated with mental health care. In order to reach our goal, we must be able to provide psychoeducation to communities where stigma is high, regardless of resistance and challenges. To achieve that goal, we will strive to attract and retain honest, skilled and dedicated employees and not settle for second best.

We work hard at The Center for Counseling & Holistic Services. Anything less is not acceptable. Hard work, dedication, and continuous education and training are what this organization has been built on. The continued prosperity of this organization will be determined by the efforts of our employees. If our employees are successful, then The Center for Counseling & Holistic Services will be successful.

## Employment Policies

### *Personal Policy*

A tremendous part of the success of The Center for Counseling & Holistic Services is dependent upon its most important asset--its team players. It is our objective to provide a relationship of mutual trust and respect which will allow employees to attain personal satisfaction from their work and contribute to our organization's successful growth.

The Center for Counseling & Holistic Services' policy is to:

1. Select and hire the best qualified men and women without regard to race, creed, color, age, sex, national origin, religion and handicap;
2. Provide wages, salaries, and employee benefits that are competitive with those provided for similar positions in the local area and with industry competition, and to regularly review area wages, salaries, and benefits to insure our programs are competitive;
3. Promote from within by providing opportunities for qualified employees to fill open positions whenever possible;
4. Provide job security by improving the organization's position in the industry to minimize adverse effects on our employees while maintaining the stability of the organization;
5. Provide safe working conditions by maintaining an orderly organization and developing and adhering to policies and practices that insure the safety and health of our employees;
6. Encourage an individual's self-development by providing educational programs, training and other opportunities for skill development and advancement;
7. Recognize length of service as a factor in cases of promotion, layoff and recall, other qualifications being equal;
8. Be fair in the administration of our policies and practices;
9. Keep employees informed by providing open communication of developments within the organization which are of interest to employees; and
10. Encourage open discussion of all ideas, suggestions, problems and matters of concern among employees, supervisors and managers. (Differences of opinion, complaints, and problems will occur. When this happens, a fair hearing will be given to all viewpoints to develop a positive solution.)

### **Equal Employment Opportunity**

Equal opportunity is and shall be provided for all employees and applicants for employment on the basis of their demonstrated ability and competence without discrimination on the basis of their race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, age, marital status, military status, or disability.

For purposes of promotions, demotions, layoffs, recalls from layoffs, transfers and filling temporary openings, the employee's qualifications, including ability to perform the work and physical fitness and service, will be considered without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, age, marital status, military status, or disability.

All compensation and benefit programs will be administered without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, age, marital status, military status, or disability.

### **Hiring-Rehiring**

Job applicants and former employees who are being considered for hire or rehire must complete the following before employment can commence: (Please note rehires have the same status as new hires, no credit is given for previous employment)

1. Be interviewed and recommended for employment by the Founding Executive Director;
2. Be approved by the director where the employee will work based on his or her specialty and experience;
3. Provide proper certification and/ or licensure as required by the job category;
4. Be signed up by the Executive Director and/or Executive Assistant, including completion of all applicable data and benefit records; and
5. Be instructed in all work rules, safety rules and other rules applicable to the job and organization.

### **Background and Criminal History Checks**

The Center for Counseling and Holistic Services (NJCCHS) serves children under the age of 18, and therefore requires all employees and contract employees to complete criminal, employment, and Medicaid fraud background checks and submit the results to authorized personnel at NJCCHS before the first assigned case or caseload in which employment will take place. Authorized NJCCHS personnel will determine whether a candidate may participate in field work involving children. Criminal background checks are to be completed on an annual basis and are mandatory for continued employment. Electronic fingerprinting is available through **Indentogo**, or an approved facility, and must be completed prior to employment with NJCCHS. Employees and potential employees are responsible for fees incurred for this requirement.

### **Solicitations and Distribution**

Solicitation and distribution of literature by non-employees on The Center for Counseling & Holistic Services property is prohibited.

Solicitation by employees on The Center for Counseling & Holistic Services property is prohibited. Working time is the time an employee is expected to be performing his/her job duties and does not include break periods, meal times, or other periods when employees are properly not engaged in performing their work.

Distribution of literature by employees on The Center for Counseling & Holistic Services property in non-working areas during working time as defined above is prohibited.

Distribution of literature by employees on The Center for Counseling & Holistic Services property in working areas is prohibited.

### **Conflict of Interest**

Employees are prohibited from having an interest in any business or organization that would compete with the business interests of The Center for Counseling & Holistic Services. This includes ownership of a private practice or employment at an private practice business or organization not owned by The Center for Counseling & Holistic Services.

This policy is necessary to maximize the organization's internal operations and intellectual property and force clear and complete understandings between employer and employees.

Also, information gained as an employee concerning operations, results, and performances are to be kept in strictest confidence within the organization and are not to be disclosed to others or used for personal gain.

### **Outside Employment**

Other employment is acceptable as long as it does not:

1. Interfere with the individual's responsibilities to The Center for Counseling & Holistic Services (job performance, availability for scheduled working hours, etc.);
2. Conflict in any way with the mission, goals, and well-being of The Center for Counseling & Holistic Services; or
3. Cause or contribute to a negative public image of The Center for Counseling & Holistic Services.

Employees of The Center for Counseling & Holistic Services may not use any company-owned programs, materials or equipment in the course of other employment.

Work with other private practice businesses or organizations violates this policy.

### **Harassment**

It is the goal of The Center for Counseling & Holistic Services to provide a work environment free of tensions involving matters which do not relate to the The Center for Counseling & Holistic Services' operation. The The Center for Counseling & Holistic Services strongly disapproves of any form of harassment including but not limited to ethnic, religious or sexual harassment involving any of its employees. Actions or remarks involving ethnic or religious animosity, or conduct of sexual nature will not be tolerated.

Employees without fear or reprisal, have the responsibility to bring any form of harassment to management's attention. Complaints concerning harassment will be investigated by The Center for Counseling & Holistic Services promptly in a confidential manner and the results will be reviewed with the persons involved.

Disciplinary action, up to and including termination, will be taken against any employee engaging in any form of harassment.

### **Sexual Harassment**

Sexual harassment is a form of misconduct that can undermine the integrity of the employment relationship. No employee - male or female - should be subjected to unsolicited and unwelcomed verbal or physical sexual overtures or conduct.

Sexual harassment, whether committed by supervisory or nonsupervisory personnel, is specifically prohibited.

The Center for Counseling & Holistic Services is responsible for taking action to effectively deal with all acts of sexual harassment occurring in the workplace or as part of the employment relationship, regardless of the manner in which it becomes aware of the conduct. This includes the acts of supervisory or management personnel, non-management employees and third- parties.

Sexual harassment is defined as either:

1. Unwelcome sexual advances or requests for sexual activity by a The Center for Counseling & Holistic Services employee in a position of power or authority to another The Center for Counseling & Holistic Services employee, or
2. Other unwelcome verbal or physical conduct of sexual nature by a Center for Counseling & Holistic Services employee to another Center for Counseling & Holistic Services employee, when:

- Submission to or rejection of such conduct is used explicitly or implicitly as a condition for employment decisions;
- The purpose or effect of such conduct is to interfere unreasonably with the work performance of the person being harassed; or
- The purpose or effect of such conduct to a reasonable person is to create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment.

Sexual harassment does not refer to occasional compliments or other conduct or actions that arise out of a personal or social relationship that are socially acceptable and not intended to have a discriminatory effect on employment.

### **Discipline**

Violations of this policy by any employee (management or non-management) will result in appropriate disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

If the complaint involves a manager, report directly to the Executive Director or any board member. If the complaint does not involve a manager, report it to the manager.

Upon receiving an accusation of sexual harassment against an employee of The Center for Counseling & Holistic Services, The Center for Counseling & Holistic Services will investigate and, if substantiated, will initiate the appropriate disciplinary procedures. There is a five-year limitation period from the date of occurrence for filing a charge that may lead to discipline.

An individual who makes an accusation of sexual harassment will be informed:

1. At the close of the investigation, whether or not disciplinary procedures will be initiated; and
2. At the end of any disciplinary procedures, or the discipline imposed, if applicable.

### **Non-Retaliation**

Policy also prohibits retaliation against any person who brings an accusation of discrimination or sexual harassment or who assists with the investigation or resolution of sexual harassment.

Notwithstanding this provision, The Center for Counseling & Holistic Services may discipline an employee who has been determined to have brought an accusation of sexual harassment in bad faith.



## **Alcohol and Drugs**

The Center for Counseling & Holistic Services expects and requires all employees performing on behalf of or in the organization to report to work in, and maintain at all times while at work, an unimpaired and alert physical and mental condition. In order to provide all employees, clients, and community partners with a safe, healthy and secure workplace and/or environment, The Center for Counseling & Holistic Services has adopted the following policy regarding drug and alcohol use and abuse:

The Center for Counseling & Holistic Services policy prohibits the use, sale, dispensing or possession of illegal drugs, narcotics and alcoholic beverages on or in company property or during working hours regardless of whether on the organization's property or not. This prohibition also covers all legal or prescription drugs which may impair an employee's ability to perform his/her job. An employee shall not report to work under the influence of any drugs or alcoholic beverages.

The use of an illegal drug or controlled substance or possession on or off duty is cause for termination.

The sale, trade or delivery of illegal drugs or controlled substances by an employee to another person is cause for termination and for referral to law enforcement authorities.

The "occasional," "recreational," or "off-duty" use of illegal drugs will not be excused. Employee involvement with illegal drugs, even "recreational," may result in:

Financial and domestic difficulties resulting in:

1. Unstable performance or
2. Theft

Embarrassment to The Center for Counseling & Holistic Services due to:

1. Arrests of employees;
2. Poor employee relations, poor work performance, etc.;
3. Increased drug usage at The Center for Counseling & Holistic Services and in the community.

Violation of The Center for Counseling & Holistic Service's alcohol and drug policy is grounds for immediate termination.

## **Supervision**

You and your supervisor are two essential parts of a close working team, each having a certain responsibility to the other. You may expect your supervisor to see that you do your job effectively, correctly, and thoroughly. Your supervisor, in turn, expects you to be professional and consistent at your assigned work and perform your job to the best of your ability. You have a

right to expect your supervisor to provide you with proper tools, equipment, safeguards and training and to teach you how to use them. You, of course, are expected to use them as intended. One of your supervisor's most important jobs is helping you work effectively and advance to the best of your ability. Your supervisor's job will be easier and you will learn the full details of your job with greater ease if you will remember these points:

- Ask questions!
- Find out - don't guess!
- Learn "Why" as well as "How!"
- Research, Research, Research
- Know your niche and treatment modality

### **Open Door and Ethics**

Employees are assured freedom from retaliation or discrimination for discussing problems, offering suggestions, asking questions, or seeking the review of higher level managers. Employees can talk directly with any board member; however, this should be done at an appropriate time and place.

This policy emphasizes the special trust and cooperation that must exist between employees and managers. Problems are best solved when both parties feel free to discuss issues in an open and informal manner. For this reason, The Center for Counseling & Holistic Services administration and managers will not discuss work-related employee matters with, or in the presence of, other employees or non-organization personnel.

At no time should an employee give out information about The Center for Counseling & Holistic Services or any matter discussed pertaining to NJCCHS related business. At no time will information be revealed pertaining to another employee, manager, or board member.

### **Medicaid Billing and Fraudulent Activities**

Section 6032 of the federal Deficit Reduction Act of 2005 (Public Law 109- 171) requires certain governmental, for-profit and nonprofit providers, and other entities that receive Medicaid funding to take actions that will address fraud, waste, and abuse in health care programs that receive federal funds. It is the policy of the Center for Counseling and Holistic Services (NJCCHS) to be in compliance with the federal and state laws and regulations related to the Deficit Reduction Act, the federal False Claims Act, and the New Jersey Conscientious Employee Protection Act.

Neither NJCCHS nor its providers may submit false or fraudulent claims to the Federal government. The Federal False Claims Act makes it illegal for any person who:

- A. knowingly presents, or causes to be presented, a false or fraudulent claim for payment or approval;
- B. knowingly makes, uses, or causes to be made or used, a false record or statement material to a false or fraudulent claim;
- C. conspires to commit a violation of subparagraph (A), (B), (D), (E), (F), or (G);
- D. has possession, custody, or control of property or money used, or to be used, by the Government and knowingly delivers, or causes to be delivered, less than all of that money or property;
- E. is authorized to make or deliver a document certifying receipt of property used, or to be used, by the Government and, intending to defraud the Government, makes or delivers the receipt without completely knowing that the information on the receipt is true;
- F. knowingly buys, or receives as a pledge of an obligation or debt, public property from an officer or employee of the Government, or a member of the Armed Forces, who lawfully may not sell or pledge property; or
- G. knowingly makes, uses, or causes to be made or used, a false record or statement material to an obligation to pay or transmit money or property to the Government, or knowingly conceals or knowingly and improperly avoids or decreases an obligation to pay or transmit money or property to the Government,

is liable to the United States Government for a civil penalty of not less than \$5,000 and not more than \$10,000, as adjusted by the Federal Civil Penalties Inflation Adjustment Act of 1990 (28 U.S.C. 2461 note; Public Law 104-410 [1]), plus 3 times the amount of damages which the Government sustains because of the act of that person.

"Knowingly" includes acting not only with actual knowledge but also with deliberate ignorance or reckless disregard of the facts. To impose liability, it is not necessary for the court to find a specific intent to defraud. Simply presenting a false claim is a violation, even if the claim has not been paid and no money has been expended.

### **Progress Notes (Office Ally and CYBER)**

Progress notes are an essential part of the client file where staff and clients succinctly record details to document the client's status or achievements, and treatment planning. Progress notes are a tool for reflecting on a client's movement towards their treatment goals. Progress notes represent a record of events recording each session or client visit and serve as a communication tool for staff. It is essential that progress notes reflect the strengths, challenges, and the clinician's assessment of their work with their clients. Essentially, the progress notes should give an historical account of the client's treatment journey.

Client file notes including progress notes are legal documents. Progress notes can also be subpoenaed at any time and staff can be cross-examined in a court regarding the contents of progress notes. When writing progress notes treatment staff must be mindful of how someone reading the notes will perceive the entries regarding the client and NJCCHS service provision. Notes should only contain clinical assessment, notes, and imprints. All person judgments and opinions are not clinically appropriate. Always remember, client's have the right to request to read their client file notes.

Depending on the program, all client progress notes are to be entered into Office Ally, for all outpatient services, or CYBER, as it relates to the Intensive In-Community Program. **Notes are to be entered into the system within 24-hours after making client contact.** Notes should reflect (a) the client's progress towards goals, (b) the client's level of participation, (c) the client's level of participation, (d) appointments attended (if applicable), (e) the outcome of Service Coordination Meetings (if applicable), (f) all communication with other services involved with client (including phone calls, emails, faxes, face-to-face contact). All attempts to contact other services need to be recorded, (g) referrals made on behalf of the client, and (h) any follow-up required.

### **Probationary Period**

New employees are regarded as probationary until they have completed ninety (90) days of continuous service. This period is intended to allow the employee time to learn the job and become familiar with The Center for Counseling & Holistic Services.

The probationary period serves two purposes:

1. An opportunity for the employee to experience the job, to become adjusted to required standards and expectations and to decide if he/she will like to continue the employment, and
2. An opportunity for the manager to evaluate the employee on job skills,

cooperativeness, attitude, dependability and other factors which make a good and valuable employee.

This period is used to assure that the employee is a good "match" for the job (i.e. capable and willing to perform up to standards and expectations). A written evaluation and conference will be conducted at 90-days.

Employees are not eligible for business cards, marketing materials, or employee benefits (if applicable), except worker's compensation, until their probationary period expires.

An employee may resign with notice, at any time, during or at the end of the probationary period. However, any employee carrying a client caseload **must** properly terminate services in alignment

with social work rules and regulations.

The employee may be terminated without notice, at any time, during or at the end of the probationary period for misconduct, willful failure to meet the standards and expectations required for the position, or when it is apparent to the manager(s) that the employee lacks the skills, ability, or motivation necessary for successful job performance.

### **Semi-Annual Performance Review**

All employees will be evaluated two times per year based on their hire date. Performance reviews will be conducted by the immediate supervisor.

### **Promotions and Transfers**

The Center for Counseling & Holistic Services follows, as far as possible, a policy of promotion from within and seeks to select the best qualified individual to fill positions. To be considered for promotion, employees must have demonstrated sustained acceptable performance on the present job. Other factors considered are: attendance and ability to perform specific job requirements of the new position. Probationary employees and employees with unsatisfactory performance history will not be eligible.

Employees are not limited to a specific number of applications, but are encouraged to apply only for those jobs in which they are genuinely interested and qualified. Employees who transfer to a position in another department must serve a two-month qualifying period in the new position.

### **Employee Referrals**

The Center for Counseling & Holistic Services accepts and encourages referral of qualified applicants for employment by present organization employees. All applicants are considered based on their qualifications for the job and in accordance with our policy on nondiscrimination and equal employment opportunity.

### **Inclement Weather**

Inclement weather increases the safety of all organization staff and it's clients. All organization clinical and administrative personnel should report to work as scheduled, if possible. If you are unable to do so, you should contact your supervisor immediately.

In an event that the organization closes, all staff will be notified by either phone call, text, email, or all three methods of communication.

### **Payroll Advances and Loans**

Company policy does not allow payroll advances or loans to employees. Employees are encouraged to prepare for financial emergencies should they arise.

### **Donations and Contributions**

The Center for Counseling & Holistic Services desires to provide financial support/donations to worthwhile activities and organizations in the community which meet the following criteria:

1. The organization or activity provides a defined and worthwhile service to the community and should be of benefit to the employees of The Center for Counseling & Holistic Services;
2. The organization or activity is supported by other businesses in the community; and
3. The organization or activity is not be controversial, practice any form of discrimination and is available for participation from all segments of the community.

All requests for contributions are to be referred to The Center for Counseling & Holistic Services Board of Directors and/or the executive director for evaluation and policy consistency. Each responsible party will be responsible for reviewing, evaluating and approving or recommending approval or disapproval of each request for financial support/donation. Approvals will be granted only if discretionary budgeted funds are available.

### **Gifts and Flowers**

The Center for Counseling & Holistic Service's policy is to send a floral arrangement, in the name of the organization, to the family of a deceased employee or the employee who experiences a death in the immediate family. (Immediate family is defined as the employee's spouse, children, grandchildren, parents, grandparents, brothers, sisters, and parents-in-law.)

It is also the policy of the organization to send a floral arrangement to an employee who is hospitalized.

Supervisors should notify the executive director of such events so that the above policy can be administered.

### **Employee Classification**

**Regular Full Time:** Employees who work from week to week throughout the year for an average of at least 35 hours per week and are not persons under any operational contract. Regular full time status entitles the employee to full benefits, if applicable.

**Temporary Full Time:** Employees who work at least 35 hours per week but are hired for 60 days

or less and are not persons under any operational contract. Temporary full time status does not entitle the employee to any benefits.

Seasonal: Employees who work or may work from year to year but do not work each week throughout the year and were hired to do seasonal work and are not persons under any operational contract. Seasonal employees are entitled to no benefits other than medical insurance subject to the standard probationary period if the average work week is greater than 30 hours.

Regular Part Time: Employees who works less than 35 hours per week and/or on a periodic basis. Part time employees are not entitled to any fringe benefits provided by The Center for Counseling & Holistic Services except those required by law; and paid vacation, if applicable, based on the organization (5 days/year). Medical coverage, at the current time, is not available.

Part Time: Employees not fitting the above classifications, i.e. students, interns, temporary employees with special work arrangements, they are entitled to no benefits.

### **Service Time**

Service time will begin on the date in which an employee is employed. Service time for probationary employees who become regular full time will date from the original start date. Service time shall terminate when an employee:

1. Voluntarily resigns;
2. Is discharged for cause;
3. Is laid off and not recalled for 120 calendar days; or
4. Is terminated in any reduction in force.

### **Pay and Work Hours**

#### *Hours of Work*

For payroll purposes, the work week varies. The standard workweek is from Saturday a.m. until Friday p.m. Actual work hours are determined by the needs of the client load for clinical staff or by the department supervisor/manager as dictated by the nature of that department's duties.

#### *Off Duty Employees*

Employees are not to enter or remain in a NJCCHS facility or working area for any purpose unless either on duty or scheduled for work or conference.

#### *Time Sheets/Clinician Logs*

Federal and state laws require us to keep accurate records of the hours you work. Your time card or clinician log is the only record of the hours you have worked. Your time card should be maintained daily to insure proper payroll processing. You shall record your starting time, time

out for meal(s), quitting time and or client log documenting clinical sessions--45-minutes and 60-minutes logs. Break periods are considered as time worked but meal periods are not.

Always complete your own time sheet or client log. Never complete another employee's time card or log nor allow anyone to complete yours. For employees completing a timesheet, should you forget to document your timesheet, take it to your supervisor so that he/she may initial your time. Time sheets should indicate any absence from work of more than 15 minutes.

Submit your timesheet to your supervisor at the close of each week. Supervisors are responsible for verifying the accuracy and validity of the time records of their employees. Supervisors must sign the timesheet and forward it to the executive director, including client logs. Incorrect and incomplete time records will not be processed for payroll until the records have been corrected by the personnel responsible for their accuracy.

This policy applies to all employees.

Interns and volunteers are required to maintain a monthly timesheet and submit it to the executive director at the end of each month.

#### *Meal Periods*

All employees are entitled to and expected to take an unpaid meal period whose length is determined by the department manager. Meal periods are to be spent away from your workstation unless your presence at that station is necessary. Supervisory approval is needed for any anticipated missed meal periods.

#### *Employee Bonuses*

Bonuses are determined on a case by case basis and through the availability of funds.

#### *Overtime*

All overtime must be scheduled in advance and approved by the department manager. The Center for Counseling and Holistic Services will offer comp time for time worked over 40-hours when supervisory approval is not possible.

#### *Child Labor Laws*

Child labor laws apply to the New Jersey State employment of all non-family minors, migrant as well as local residents. The laws do not apply to minors employed by their parents or legal guardians in any job owned or operated by their parent or legal guardian. Legal guardian is a specific legal term not including casual or family relationships which are temporary.

Sixteen is the minimum age for employment, in the State of New Jersey, during school hours. Fourteen- and 15- year-old persons can accept employment in the State of New Jersey in jobs not declared hazardous after first securing a work permit (during the regular school term). Work permits are issued by local public school officials when a person under 16 presents:



1. An intent to employ form from a perspective employer;
2. A written consent of the minor's parent;
3. Proof of age; and
4. A certificate from the principal of the school which the child attends showing the grades of school work completed.

No child under 14 years of age may be employed at any time.

Fourteen- and 15-year-old persons may not be employed during the school year for more than three hours on any school day or for more than eight hours on any non-school day (including summer vacations). They may not work more than six days a week, or 40-hours a week. They may be employed:

- Between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m. during the school year; except during school hours set by the school district in which the minor is living and/or employed and
- Between 7 a.m. and 9 p.m. from June 1 through Labor Day.

## Attendance Policy

Attendance and punctuality are important to The Center for Counseling and Holistic Services, and the efficiency of an entire work group is impaired if every individual is not at his/her workstation at the designated starting time. Absence is defined as any unscheduled time lost from work regardless of reason, including sickness and tardiness. The term "unscheduled" excludes leave scheduled in advance, leave of absence, bereavement, jury duty, and worker's compensation time.

Any unscheduled absence is to be reported daily to the supervisor at least one hour prior to the start of the shift (work day), or in accordance with departmental notification requirements. Daily notification requirements may be waived in the case of hospitalization or extended illness.

Absence will be considered by occurrence rather than length. Absence for one or more consecutive work days will be considered one occurrence. If an employee returns from an absence (due to an illness), works one day and then is absent again for the same illness, the absence will be counted as one occurrence. An unscheduled absence of more than 1/2 the workday will be counted as an occurrence.

An employee having excessive absences or otherwise violating the organization's attendance policy will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including discharge. An average of two or more occurrences in a 30 day period is considered excessive. Total attendance may also be considered relative to disciplinary action.

Failure to call in for three consecutive days will be viewed as a voluntary separation of employment from The Center for Counseling and Holistic Services.

### *Tardiness*

An employee should notify their supervisor of any anticipated reasons that might cause him/her to arrive to work late the following day. Because it may often be difficult to notify your supervisor of lateness caused by unforeseen circumstances (e.g. a flat tire), call-ins for lateness due to emergencies will be required only if the employee expects to be late for 15-minutes or more. Upon arriving late, your supervisor should be notified and an explanation given.

Employees who are frequently tardy, absent, or who leave early may be subject to further disciplinary action.

Absenteeism which will result in corrective action include:

1. Any unreported absence;
2. Report of absence for an unacceptable reason;
3. Patterns of absence preceding or following a weekend or scheduled day off;
4. Incidents of absence which exceed five or more within the preceding twelve month period (An incident constitutes an individual period of absence. Return to work ends an individual period of absence.); or
5. Not reporting to work for a scheduled weekend is considered a serious offense. In case of an emergency, the employee is required to contact another employee to cover his/her shift as soon as reasonably possible and/or arrange to cancel appointments with scheduled clients.

An employee who is absent from work for three consecutive scheduled shifts due to illness or injury must provide a physician's statement to the manager certifying their fitness to return to work.

An employee who is absent from work for three consecutive shifts without notifying and securing approval from the manager will be considered to have resigned voluntarily.

### **Pay Day**

Employees are paid on a Friday, on a biweekly basis, for all work performed. Employees with direct deposit typically receives payment on a Thursday, with the exception of Holidays. Paychecks are not available for early distribution. Supervisors are responsible for distribution of paychecks.

Volunteers and interns who receive stipends will be paid on the last pay day of the month. Should that day fall on a holiday, checks will be distributed on the workday immediately preceding.

For your protection, no check will be given to anyone except the employee whose name appears on the check. An exception to this will be made where an employee has given a written or verbal

authorization to the executive director that has been verified by them.

If you have any questions or doubts about your pay amount first contact your supervisor, if applicable, or the executive director. Any discussions concerning needed corrections will be conducted by the supervisor with the payroll administrator. Employees are not to contact the payroll company directly.

#### *Employee's Withholding Allowance Certificate*

Each employee must file with the HR administrator or executive director, whichever is applicable, an Employee's Withholding Allowance Certificate (Federal Form W-4) or a I-9 for contract employees. Payroll checks will not be released to any employee not having Forms W-4 and/or I-9 properly filed and recorded.

A revised W-4 and/or I-9 form may be submitted at any time to report changes in the number of allowances; however, an employee is required to file with the HR administrator or executive director a revised W-4 Form within 10 days if any of the following has taken place:

- The employee is divorced, legally separated, or the employee's spouse begins claiming his or her own withholding exemption;
- The employee no longer provides at least one-half the support of a dependent for which he/she was previously entitled;
- The employee should reasonably believe that a dependent previously claimed as an allowance will earn income of \$2,350.00 or more; or
- There is a reduction in the number of withholding allowances for estimated itemized deductions.

Note: In the event of the death of a spouse or dependent, a revised Form W-4 must be filed with the HR administrator or executive director by December 31 of that calendar year.

Employees may request additional amounts be withheld for federal and/or state income tax by submitting an Employee's Withholding Allowance Certificate indicating the additional amount(s) to be withheld. Such requests will remain in effect until canceled by submitting a revised Employee's Withholding Allowance Certificate.

Exemption from any withholding of federal or state income tax may be filed by any employee who did not incur a tax liability in the previous year and who does not anticipate incurring a tax liability for the current year by submitting an Employee's Withholding Allowance Certificate.

Note: A new form is required for each year the exemption is claimed.

#### *Payroll Deductions*

Only deductions required by state and federal laws and those you authorize yourself will be deducted from your pay. All deductions are listed on your paycheck stub.

### *Social Security*

Social Security and Medicare are federally-sponsored programs that pay several kinds of benefits to employees who have made regular contributions to the program during their working years. The cost of Social Security and Medicare coverage is shared; you pay half and The Center for Counseling and Holistic Services pays half. Your contributions to these programs will show up on your pay check stub under the heading “FICA” and “Medicare”.

### *Pay Adjustments and Performance*

It shall be the policy and intent of The Center for Counseling and Holistic Services to compensate each employee on the basis of:

1. The employee’s experience and qualifications for the job;
2. Job content and skill level required to perform the job; and
3. Competitive levels for like work within the area.

Other factors considered include the employee’s:

1. Attitude, aggressiveness, and leadership abilities;
2. Efforts to promote the organization’s community presence and increase it’s client services; and
3. Effective utilization of his/her time.

**Note: Earnings of employees are a personal matter and should be treated as such. Discussion of wages and salaries with anyone other than your immediate supervisor is discouraged.**

### *Payment of Personnel upon Death or Termination*

Upon the death or termination of employment for any cause of an employee, payment shall be made for the number of hours worked in the current pay period and accumulated paid leave not yet used (if applicable).

## **Benefits**

Benefits are a large part of your total compensation and play a prominent part in your personal and family financial planning.

The Center for Counseling and Holistic Services strives to provide you with a benefit package that:

1. Is competitive with or better than others within the industry and in the communities where operations are located;

2. Can be financially supported in both favorable and unfavorable economic times; and
3. Best meets the most important needs of a majority of employees.

This handbook covers only the major features.

### *Unemployment Compensation*

Unemployment Compensation is another type of insurance which is paid for by The Center for Counseling and Holistic Services. If you should become unemployed through no fault of your own or are out of work, you may be covered with cash benefits. The amount of money you receive is determined by the state laws of the Employment Security Commission.

### *Worker's Compensation*

This program is also administered by the State and The Center for Counseling and Holistic Services pays the total cost of the insurance. It covers all employees for job-related illness, injury and death providing three basic types of benefits.

1. Medical-Hospital care benefits: payments to offset the cost of medical treatment or hospital stays.
2. Disability benefits are paid at a specified rate for a stated number of weeks for a partial or total disability. The amount of the weekly benefit is based on average pay, and is the same for partial or total disability, but the total disability benefit is payable for a longer period of time.
3. Death benefits include a specified lump-sum amount for funeral expenses, plus weekly payments (based on employee earnings) to surviving dependents.

### *Reporting on the Job Injuries*

Should you be injured on the job, you must report the incident to your supervisor immediately so that you will receive prompt medical attention. Failure to promptly report an on the job injury could result in your loss of worker's compensation insurance benefits.

Employees are not to seek medical attention without supervisory permission, except in emergencies.

You will be directed to a physician for treatment of non life-threatening injuries.

### *Educational Assistance*

All employees are encouraged to improve their working skills through outside, approved courses of study. A tuition reimbursement program covers up to 100% of the cost of tuition for such approved outside courses when successfully completed and if funds are available.

All employees whose duration of employment has been at least 6 months and regularly scheduled to work a minimum average of 30 hours per week are eligible.

Contact Vashonna Etienne for more information on the educational assistance program.

### *Employee Recognition Program*

The Center for Counseling and Holistic Services is proud to recognize employees for their years of valued service. Service awards are presented for 1, 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, and 30 years of service.

## **Holidays**

The Center for Counseling and Holistic Services observes 10 holidays throughout the year as follows:

- New Year's Eve
- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday Observance
- Good Friday
- Malcom X Birthday (Optional)
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Indigenous People's Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Christmas Eve
- Christmas Day

## **Vacations**

Staff are expected to notify their supervisor or executive director of any planned vacation time in advance in order to make the proper arrangements for client services. For caseload carrying staff, proper client care is paramount and state regulation and rules take precedent for proper client treatment during all time off. When planning for time off or vacation time, please request the proper forms from admin support prior to any arrangements being made.

## **Personal Days**

At the current time, The Center for Counseling and Holistic Services does not offer paid time off. Any employee who is need of personal time off does so at their own discretion. Unless otherwise noted, pay should not be expected and will not be granted.

## **Termination**

An employee who terminates is paid for time accrued as of the termination date.

## **Jury-Duty**

We recognize the need to carry on our judicial system and your responsibilities as a citizen to serve as a juror. You will notify your supervisor upon receiving a jury summons.

Should you be selected for jury duty, you will be paid for a regular work day. This should be indicated on time cards and summary sheets when applicable.

## **Bereavement Leave**

In the event of death in an employee's immediate family, the employee will be granted a maximum of 3 days leave without loss of pay during the period starting on the date of death and ending on the second calendar day after the funeral. Note: Under this policy, "days" means working days.

Funeral leave is meant to provide you with time to attend the funeral of a member of your immediate family and to handle related personal affairs without disrupting income. Only regular full time employees are eligible for funeral leave benefits.

Immediate family member is defined as: husband/wife, father, mother, grandparent/great grandparent, brother, sister, child, stepfather, stepmother, stepbrother, stepsister, stepchild, grandchildren, mother-in-law/father-in-law, or foster children who have become members of family.

Additional days required must be taken as excused leave without pay.

Payment for hourly employees will be at average workday rate. Salaried employees will receive their regular pay.

No payment will be made for funeral leave should the absence be on a nonscheduled workday, a scheduled leave day or if the employee is on lay-off status. We may require proof of relationship to the deceased.

## **Leave of Absence**

An extended leave of absence may be granted to an employee at the discretion of The Center for Counseling and Holistic Services. Only regular full time employees are eligible for a leave of absence.

A request for such leave requires completion of our leave form.

### *Military Leave*

The following guidelines will be used to assure compliance with the Vietnam Era Veterans Assistance Act of 1974. Appropriate military leaves of absence will be granted by The Center for Counseling and Holistic Services to full time or part time employees for the following types of military duties:

1. Full time active duty;
2. Active duty in Reserves or National Guard; or
3. Weekend drills or summer training duty.

Employees will NOT be paid for this additional time off.

Employees should contact the Personnel Department to schedule military leave or with questions regarding military leave.

### *Medical Leave*

If you are a regular full time employee and are disabled because of non-occupational illness, injury or pregnancy for more than ten days, you will be granted leaves of absence without pay in thirty day periods to a maximum of six months of the duration of your illness, whichever is less.

A medical leave of absence should be requested in writing to your supervisor with a copy to the Executive Director. Written evidence of such opinion from your physician must be presented to the HR administrator and they will decide whether to grant the leave request based on the information.

If you do not return to work at the end of your approved leave, you will be removed from the active payroll.

We cannot guarantee reinstatement to your former position when you return from your leave of absence. However, every effort will be made to place you in your former job or in whatever job that is available when you are able to return to work without loss of service credits.

When you return to work, you must provide your supervisor with evidence from your doctor that you are fully recovered and physically able to perform your job.

### *Family Medical Leave*

The Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA) allows employees who have been with The Center for Counseling and Holistic Services for at least one year and have worked at least 1,250 hours during the past 12 month period, to be eligible for up to 12 weeks per year of unpaid, job protected leave for one or more of the following purposes:

1. Birth of a child in order to provide care;
2. Adoption or foster care of a new child;



3. Care of a spouse, son, daughter, or parent of the employee if that person has a serious health condition; or
4. Employee's own serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the functions of his/her position.

Note: Leave for care of an adult son or daughter (at least 18 years old) is not covered unless required as a result of "mental or physical disability" as those terms are defined under the American with Disabilities Act.

These leaves of absence are without pay.

A health care provider's certification will be required for return to work from the employee's own serious health condition. The department will return the employee to the same position he/she had before the leave or an equivalent position.

Upon return to employment, the employee will be provided the level of benefits and seniority he/she had before the leave started.

Employees are required to give at least 30 days notice of FMLA leave in all cases, except in medical emergency. In addition, an employee must furnish certification from a health care provider at the time the employee requests leave or soon after the leave commences. Leave may be denied until such documentation is provided.

The Center for Counseling and Holistic Services reserves the right to require second or third medical opinions and periodic recertification. Under certain circumstances, intermittent leave may be allowed. In such cases, employees are to make a reasonable effort to schedule treatment so as not to disrupt the employer's operations, subject to approval of employee's supervisor.

Upon completion of FMLA leave, employees are guaranteed reinstatement to the same position or equivalent benefits, pay, and other terms and conditions of employment provided they return to work upon approval from a medical provider.

#### *Personal Leave*

Emergency situations other than illness or military service may arise which require you to be absent from work for an extended period of time. In such a case, a written request may be submitted to the Personnel Director for consideration. A decision to grant personal leave will be based on reason for the request, attendance, performance and length of service. Personal leave will not last more than 30 days, but extensions may be granted in extenuating circumstances. No personal leave will be granted for more than 3 months. All personal leaves are granted without pay.

## **Special Items – Safety - Housekeeping**

### *Telephones*

The sole purpose of the The Center for Counseling and Holistic Services' telephone is to conduct the organization's business. Personal use of telephone must be kept to a minimum and each employee must utilize good judgment in keeping personal interruptions to a minimum. Calls should be made at break and meal times and limited to three minutes. This time is intended for work related discussion as well as relaxation. Long distance and international calls may not be charged to our phones without written permission from you immediate supervisor.

Calls to clients, in lieu of in-office visits, must have prior supervisory approval. Client confidentiality and insurance contract requirements must be considered when conducting telephone sessions and may prohibit the use of phone sessions.

### *Calls to Clients*

Calls to clients from personal cell phones and telephones outside of NJCCHS is prohibited. In cases of emergencies, short notice of cancellations when admin support staff is not available, calls to clients from personal numbers should be made from a block number. At no time should a clinician text clients, or cancel/reschedule clients via text messaging or personal calls outside of NJCCHS client protocol.

### *Client Logs and Office Ally*

Client logs must be filled out in its entirety to include client First Initial and Last Name, Diagnosis code, CPT code, Co-payment, Payment Type, and Next Appointment, Date and Time/Notes. It is wise to keep all clients with weekly, consistent appointments. Any appointment changes that need to be made **MUST** go through admin support staff. At no time should a clinician change appointment dates or times without communicating with support staff.

Furthermore, it is **PROHIBITED** for any clinician to make appointment changes in Office Ally.

At no time should clinical staff access Office Ally for purposes other than clinical notes. If changes need to be made, (appointments, changes in client demographics/insurance, phone numbers, etc..) clinical staff must channel the proper communication to admin support or the executive director.

### *Visitors/Guests*

Visitors will not be allowed at The Center for Counseling and Holistic Services facilities except for Company sponsored tours or with permission from the responsible Department Manager.

All employees are accountable for the actions of their personal visitors, and any disruption or problems such visitors may cause to individual work activities, business operations or other staff. For this reason, employees are urged to discourage such visits, but when absolutely necessary (except in emergency situations) limit such visits to break and meal periods.

No guest will enter the place of business without prior consent of the management. Immediate family members (spouse and children) may enter the business on the employee's scheduled work shift as long as it does not interfere with the course of business or violate client confidentiality.

The employee is responsible for his/her guests, their actions, safety and well-being. It is the sole responsibility of the employee to see that his/her guests follow all rules including the rules of this policy. Non-adherence to any portion of this policy will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

### *Travel and Entertainment*

The Center for Counseling and Holistic Services' business needs from time to time require employees to travel and incur costs in the performance of their jobs. It is our objective that travel and entertainment expenditures be made only when justified by expected benefits that contribute to the NJCCHS' profitability. This fact should be remembered by all employees.

An employee traveling on NJCCHS business is expected to exercise the same care in incurring expenses that a prudent person would exercise traveling on personal business and expending personal funds.

No employee should incur travel and entertainment expenses and expect reimbursement unless the activity is authorized by their supervisor. Other travel and entertainment expenses must be authorized in advance by the employee's immediate supervisor. This will provide an opportunity for the expected benefits of the expenditure to be weighed against the estimated cost.

The guidelines below are to be followed with regard to travel and entertainment expenditures.

1. Prior approval or authorization must be received by an employee from his/her immediate supervisor unless the expenditure is authorized by a standing NJCCHS or department head directive.
2. Meal expenses will only be reimbursed when the employee is traveling overnight or is engaged in authorized entertainment.
3. Authorized entertainment may be entertainment authorized by a standing directive of NJCCHS or a department head or specific entertainment preauthorized by a department head. That department head must sign the expense voucher turned in for the preauthorized specific entertainment expense reimbursement.
4. Travel and entertainment expenditures are reimbursed by accounting upon the receipt of NJCCHS' "expense voucher" which include the following:
  - a. Signed approval of immediate supervisor (if applicable);
  - b. Receipts of all items of expense (If the expense is for contract labor, then the documentation must have the name and social security number of the laborer);
  - c. Names of persons entertained and business relationship to NJCCHS;
  - d. Business purpose for the expenditure;
  - e. Signature of a department head, where required by above guidelines; and

- f. The employee's signature.
5. Approved travel which requires the utilization of the personal vehicle will be reimbursed at a rate of \$.25 per mile.

#### *Address Changes – Personal Status Change*

It is very important for you that The Center for Counseling and Holistic Services maintains your correct home address and telephone number at all times. Report any changes immediately to the Executive Assistant or Office Manager.

This is important to you for several reasons such as reaching you or your family in case of any emergency and mailing important personal messages to you (i.e. W-2 tax form) at the beginning of the year so you may file your income tax return.

If your personal status should change, such as your marital status, or if you have an addition to your family, you should immediately notify the Executive Assistant or Office Manager. Here too, you may need to change your withholding deductions for state and federal taxes or other important records you need to keep current.

#### *Outside Inquiries*

The Center for Counseling and Holistic Services does not release to outsiders any information concerning employees except that required by law and that authorized by the employee.

The Center for Counseling and Holistic Services will deny access to personal information to creditors, collection agencies and other outside sources, except where the employee had given his/her written consent.

#### *Your Personnel Record*

Your Personnel Record began with your application form. Various information concerning yourself and your status as an employee is added over time. All employee information will be regarded as confidential, and careful consideration will be given to ensuring this confidentiality unless disclosure is required by law. Information in your personnel file is not released without written authorization from the employee.

#### *Deceased Employees*

Payroll checks due to deceased employees must not be released without proper authorization from the Probate Court of the county in which the deceased employee was a resident.

#### *Bulletin Boards*

If applicable, notices and information of interest to every employee are posted on the Bulletin Boards located in various sites throughout the company. Consult them regularly.

#### *Smoking*

The Center for Counseling and Holistic Services maintains a smoking cessation policy. Smoking

is prohibited on premises and there are no exceptions to this policy.

#### *Transportation*

Employees are expected to furnish or make arrangements for their own transportation to and from their place of work.

#### *Suggestions*

If you have an idea, suggestion, or any comment which you feel will be helpful or may improve The Center for Counseling and Holistic Services, please discuss it with your supervisor.

#### *Grievance Procedure*

The Center for Counseling and Holistic Services recognizes the right of employees to express their grievances and to seek a solution concerning disagreements arising from working relationships, working conditions, employment practices, or differences of interpretation of policy which might arise between NJCCHS and its employees.

If you have a personal problem or complaint, first talk it over with your immediate supervisor. In most cases a solution can be worked out.

If a satisfactory solution or settlement is not reached at this level, you are free to go to the next level of supervision, the executive director, or a board member, if necessary.

#### *Safety and Housekeeping*

In order to maintain a safe workplace, you are encouraged to report unsafe conditions or work hazards. Never take chances; the safe way is the most efficient way. Certain hazards exist by the nature of our business and employees must use good judgment and common sense in dealing with them.

Employees are expected to help maintain a clean and orderly workplace. This is necessary to ensure the health and safety of employees, and equipment. Each office is expected to be kept in sanitary conditions. Food, and other garbage that will attract pest and rodents, must be removed and disposed of in the dumpster behind the premises. All equipment should be returned to its original position/location after each use.

#### *Safety Rules*

Maintenance of a high safety standard requires the participation of every employee. The following safety rules are meant as guides in an effort to prevent injury to employees and damage to buildings, and equipment. The list is certainly not complete. Violations of safety regulations will necessitate certain disciplinary actions.

1. Observe and practice the safety procedures established for the job.
2. Do not wear provocative clothing or tight-fitting clothing that will prohibit movement should an emergency arises.

3. Observe smoking regulations.
4. Do not block access to fire exits or fire extinguishers.
5. Lift properly-use legs, not back. For heavier loads, ask for assistance.
6. Keep equipment, tools and materials, and work areas clean and orderly.

### *Termination of Employment*

Should you decide to terminate employment with the company, an exit interview is to be conducted by the Executive Director. Several items need to be addressed prior to the separation:

1. Determine the reason for separation;
2. Return of all company property or settlement of any debts owed, prior to the release of your final paycheck (Company property includes tools, keys, etc.); and

Employees resigning their employment with the organization are asked to inform the manager as early as possible, but no later than two (4) weeks prior to his/her last day.

This requirement is waived for employees during their initial probationary period.

### *Job Abandonment*

An employee absent three (3) consecutive scheduled working days or their weekend to work without prior approval of, or personal communication with, the manager is considered to have abandoned (voluntarily terminated without notice) his/her position – unless the employee can later demonstrate circumstances beyond his/her control, that made it impossible for him/her to contact the manager.

### *Work Rules*

Employees are expected to observe “common sense” rules of honesty, good conduct, general job interest, safe practices, and to adhere to generally accepted customs of good taste in our relations with each other. In our company, as in any group with a common purpose, rules are necessary.

Occasionally, NJCCHS finds it necessary to take disciplinary action against an employee for violating a rule, regulation, or policy. The type of disciplinary action taken, be in the form of a verbal/written warning or immediate termination, is dependent upon the severity and frequency of the infraction.

Our rules and regulations are all easily understood and are essential for the efficient and orderly operation of our organization. They include, but are not limited to, those noted elsewhere in this handbook.

Disciplinary action usually occurs in a progressive sequence: verbal warnings, written warning, final written warning, suspension and discharge. It is not necessary for all five steps to be followed. Discipline may begin at any step depending on the seriousness of the offense. Also, offenses do not have to be of the same nature to constitute a violation serious enough to move on

to the next step of the disciplinary action sequence.

The types of disciplinary action are:

### 1. *Coaching and Counseling*

The manager should discuss the problem with the employee and explain why the conduct or performance is unacceptable. The manager should attempt to help the employee overcome the problem. An “Employee Counseling Session” form (see appendix) should be completed after the meeting.

Coaching/Counseling sessions and Oral Warnings are not considered “formal” disciplinary action and should not become a part of the employee’s official personnel file (unless later terminated for failure to correct the problem). Employee Counseling Session forms are therefore retained by the manager for his/her reference only. Copies are not provided to the employee.

This step may be repeated as often as necessary or may be omitted for more severe “Minor Offenses and Poor Performance” problems or for “Serious Offenses.”

### 2. *Verbal Warning*

A verbal warning is given by a supervisor in cases where violations are minor in nature, or for an offense normally requiring a written warning being called to an employee’s attention the first time. The supervisor should note in their records the date the verbal warning is given. If this does not correct the situation within a reasonable time, the supervisor should then use the next step below.

The “Employee Counseling Session” form should be completed after the meeting. The form (as described in step #1) is not provided to the employee.

### 3. *Written Warning*

A written warning is a formal warning given after the repetition of an infraction where a verbal warning has been given or for any offense constituting misconduct of a serious enough nature to use this step for the first offense. It should include a caution to the employee that a repetition of the offense or the continuation of an unsatisfactory condition will result in further disciplinary action, up to, and including, discharge.

The manager should complete a “Disciplinary Notice” form (see appendix). The employee may be given a “First Written Notice” which could be followed by a “Final Written Notice” if the problem is not solved, or simply a “Final Written Notice,” depending on the severity of the problem. “First Notices” will have “other disciplinary action” denoted in the last section.

Repetition within one year of an offense for which an employee has received a written warning may result in a final written warning. Unless circumstances change, requiring more severe action, the expectation is that a “First Notice” would be followed by a “Final Notice.” “Final

Notice” requires that either “suspension” or “termination” be indicated as the next step.

A “Disciplinary Notice” asks for signatures by the manager and employee. Should the employee refuse to sign, it should be indicated where the signature would normally be placed. A copy is given to the employee, and the original is retained by the manager.

#### 4. *Suspension*

The manager completes a “Suspension Notice” form (see appendix). This form should be signed by the employee, and the manager.

The employee’s signature is not immediately required when the action is the result of a serious offense. The manager may verbally suspend an employee “on the spot.” The manager should then complete the form and give the employee a copy of the form when the employee is notified of final action to be taken--return of work or termination. The employee will be asked to sign the original form at the time, if practical. Should the employee refuse to sign, it should be indicated. The original copy is then filed in the employee’s personnel file.

This step may be eliminated if a previous “Disciplinary Notice” indicates “termination” as the next step to be taken. This generally occurs when suspension serves no practical purpose such as with performance and attendance problems. Suspensions are most commonly associated with policy and conduct violations.

#### 5. *Involuntary Termination*

An employee may be discharged for repeating an offense or condition where the first four steps in the disciplinary procedure above have been exhausted. Further breaking any rule of an inexcusable nature may result in immediate disciplinary action up to, and including, discharge.

The manager completes the “Termination Notice” form (see appendix). This form should be signed by the employee and manager.

A copy of the form must be provided to the employee.

All employees should know that disciplinary action will be taken for the following.

1. Falsifying time cards, personnel records, production records, or any other company records.
2. Refusal to perform assigned duties relating to work of the company, or slowing down production, or output.
3. Theft from fellow employees, NJCCHS, or associates of the company (including contractors).
4. Deliberately damaging, or attempting to damage, NJCCHS products, property, or equipment, or that of a contractor or a fellow employee.
5. Fighting on company premises.
6. Violation of safety practice that might cause serious injury or death to self, clients, or



fellow workers.

7. Reporting to work, or working in an intoxicated or drugged condition, possessing, or drinking any alcoholic beverages or intoxicants of any kind, or illegal drugs on company premises. Premises to include NJCCHS parking areas, or in NJCCHS vehicles.
8. Refusal to leave NJCCHS premises upon the request of any authorized representative of the organization.
9. The unauthorized leaving of the work site during working hours.
10. Gross negligence which results, or could result in, serious injury to another employee or damage to company property.
11. Willful waste of materials or supplies.
12. Willful signing the timesheet of another employee, having one's timesheet signed by another employee, or unauthorized altering of a timesheets.
13. Possession of illegal weapons, ammunition, firearms, etc. on NJCCHS premises except as required, and with departmental approval.
14. Insubordination, a willful and deliberate refusal to follow a valid and reasonable order, or assignment by a supervisor or higher authority.
15. Being absent from work three (3) consecutive scheduled workdays without notifying your supervisor, or the company.
16. Unreported absence or absence without justifiable cause.
17. Reporting late to work without prior notice, or approval.
18. Using abusive language toward an employee, supervisor, client, or NJCCHS representative.
19. Failure to properly report an accident or injury.
20. Inefficiency or lack of application to job.
21. Removal of NJCCHS property, parts, or materials without permission.
22. Unauthorized operation, or access, of NJCCHS computers, client files, supplies, or, administration files, or documents.
23. Sleeping while on duty.
24. Posting or removing notices of any kind on the bulletin boards, social media platforms, employee mailboxes, or NJCCHS property without the approval of the NJCCHS executive management team.
25. Physical or verbal abuse of clients, visitors, or other employees.
26. Unauthorized or inappropriate release of information.

These rules are not all-inclusive but represent the types of unacceptable behavior which may cause, or result in, disciplinary action.

## Summary

The Employee Handbook has been compiled to inform you of the organization's practices, policies, and benefits.

Please read each section to the Handbook carefully. Use the policies and principles within as a guide in the performance of your duties. Make your family aware of its contents. Most of it is important to them too.

Because these policies and benefits may change from time to time, you as an employee should always consult with your supervisor, as well as your Handbook, if you have any questions about any material included here. Replacement pages will be distributed as changes occur.

## **IIC / BA PROGRAM POLICIES & PROCEDURES**

### **Background and Criminal History Checks**

Intensive In-Community (IIC) and Behavioral Assistant (BA) positions require candidates to work with children under the age of 18. The Center for Counseling and Holistic Services (NJCCHS) requires all employees and contract employees to complete criminal, employment, and Medicaid fraud background checks and submit the results to authorized personnel at NJCCHS before being assigned a case. Background and Criminal History Checks must be completed on an annual basis. Staff are to remain in Satisfactory Standing in order to continue providing care to the children and families the the auspices of NJCCHS.

### **Staff Training and Quality Assurance**

IIC and BA staff must attend the first available training scheduled after their initial date of hire. Supervisors working within the IIC/BA program are required to attend the New Supervisor Training. All Direct Service Staff of the IIC/BA Program are required to attend a minimum of 4 trainings per year and are mandated to attend the following trainings:

- Trauma-Informed Care,
- Safety Issues Working in the Community,
- Case Documentation,
- Strengths & Needs and the Crisis Assessment Tool
- Behavioral Assistance Services Orientation (BAs & Supervisors)

All staff are encouraged to participate in all **recommended** IIC/BA training activities. Staff will receive ongoing supplemental trainings that are designed to increase their knowledge and skills. Training courses will include areas of focus such as child development, child welfare, difficult conversations, effective communication, crisis intervention, behavior modification, and other trainings offered by the DCF training academy.

### **Coaching/Supervision**

All supervisory and management staff are expected to ensure quality assurance and best case practice by demonstrating the following (3) functions:

1. Administrative: Promoting and maintaining excellent standards of work, coordination of practice with policies of administration, the assurance of an efficient and smooth-running office;

2. Educational: Ensuring the educational development of each individual FPS worker on the staff in a manner calculated to evoke his/her full potential as a clinician conducting services in complex and high risk families; and
3. Supportive: the maintenance of harmonious working relationships, the cultivation of staff morale and team spirit.

IIC/BA staff are required to participate in case conferencing, team meetings, and individual supervision on a weekly basis. No supervisor of direct care staff should carry a caseload of no more than (5) supervisees. Program supervisors report to the Director of Social Services on a monthly basis to ensure all components of the program's operation is in compliance with DCF Children System of Care (CSOC) model.

### **Licensure, Credentials, and Certifications**

Clinical level staff are required to maintain their licensure as active and in good standing in the State of New Jersey and according to Board Regulations. Failure to do so will result in termination of employment. A copy of a valid and active license shall be maintained in each employee file.

Additional credentials and certifications shall be maintained in the employee file and updated as needed.

### **HIPAA Regulations**

The confidentiality of consumer information, including personal health information records maintained by this organization, and records pertaining to drug and alcohol treatment, is protected by State and Federal law. Generally, NJCCHS may not say to a person outside the program that a consumer receives services offer by the program or disclose any information identifying a child/youth or family member as a recipient of social services, mental health or alcohol or drug treatment services unless the following conditions are met:

1. The consumer provides written consent;
2. The disclosure is allowed by a court order;
3. The disclosure is made to medical personnel in a medical emergency;
4. The disclosure is made to authorized personnel for the purpose of program evaluation or audit.

Violation of the Federal and State laws and regulations regarding confidentiality is a crime. If you suspect that this Agency has violated these laws, you may report this in accordance with Federal regulations to the appropriate authorities. State and Federal laws do not protect any information about a crime committed by a client/patient either at the program, against any person

who works for the program, or about any threat to commit such a crime. Federal laws and regulations do not protect any information about suspected child abuse and/or neglect, or abuse/neglect of an older adult from being reported under state law to the appropriate state or county authorities. It is the Agency's duty to warn any potential victim when a significant threat of harm has been made.

### **Encounter Forms**

Service Delivery Encounter Documentation Form is designed to collect auditable documentation of every service delivery encounter occurring between a provider of Intensive In-Community (IIC) or Behavioral Assistance (BA) Services and the individual child who has been authorized to receive the services or for whom the services were provided on behalf of and to whose Medicaid/NJ FamilyCare or insurance number the treatment services will be billed. The services authorized and billed to Medicaid/NJ FamilyCare must be in direct support of the child, consistent with the plan of care.

Service Delivery Encounter Documentation Form must be completed accurately and completely and submitted within 10 days of the date of the earliest service delivery listed on the form. All forms must be received by the Tuesday preceding pay day (please see pay disbursement schedule).

### **Documentation**

Progress Notes are to be entered into CYBER within 24-hours after making client contact. Notes should reflect (a) the client's progress towards goals, (b) the client's level of participation, (c) the client's level of participation, (d) appointments attended (if applicable), (e) the outcome of Service Coordination Meetings (if applicable), (f) all communication with other services involved with client (including phone calls, emails, faxes, face-to-face contact). All attempts to contact other services need to be recorded, (g) referrals made on behalf of the client, and (h) any follow-up required.

When contact is not made with the youth or family (missed appointments, rescheduling, etc), it should be thoroughly documented in the case note including the reason why the services did not occur.

Bio-psychosocial Intake Assessments Form (BSP) must be completed in full with the family's participation by the end of the first session and submitted to your clinical supervisor for approval.

Treatment plans must be completed in full within 72-hours following the initial visit with the family. All Treatment plans must be document input from the family and approved by the

clinical supervisor. Treatment plans must be completed prior to reauthorization of services. It is the responsibility of the assigned IIC counselor to adhere to treatment plan due dates via CYBER.

All Monthly Summaries should be completed by the end of each month.. Please review monthly summaries requirements.

### **Case Referral Process**

At NJCCHS, we try our best to match our staff to the cases that is a best fit for the child(ren) and families who are in need of services. We take special consideration into IIC/BA age preferences, location, and availability. Once a referral is received, an email notification with the referral information attached is sent to the assigned counselor or behavioral assistant. It is the responsibility of the IIC/BA staff to confirm with the program supervisor their availability to accept the case. Once the case assignment has been accepted, it is mandatory that contact be made with the assigned child and family within 48 hours of receiving the referral.

If the child/family has an assigned BA, the assigned IIC counselor is responsible for coordinating the services. Ideally, the IIC counselor and BA will be conducting the initial visit together.

IIC should also contact the CMO Case Manager and conduct a general introduction. This action step allows for clear communication regarding the expectation of services. Any changes in the level of services should be clearly and properly documented.

If the family is not responsive to any attempts made to initiate services within the first two weeks of the initial visit, the program supervisor must be notified within a reasonable time frame. This allows for open and ongoing communication with the CMO Case Manager.

### **Child Family Team meeting (CFT)**

CFT meetings occur 2-4 weeks prior to the end of the authorization period and is coordinated by the CMO Case Manager. It is expected and encouraged that the IIC/BA attend CFT meetings.

IIC/BA participation is imperative and it is expected that IIC counselors provide treatment recommendations at the CFT meetings (i.e. level of service, other resources needed, etc.). CFT meetings are an excellent way to communicate to the CMO whether or not services will be reauthorized or discontinued.

### **Intensive In-Community Counselors Responsibilities (IIC)**

IIC's are the clinical lead with the families on their caseloads and have the responsibility to ensure that all interventions are clinically appropriate, evidence-based or evidence-informed.

IIC's are charged with creating treatment plans, which should include the responsibilities of assigned BA's. BA task assignments are delineated and monitored by the assigned IIC counselor(s). It is expected that all BA's adhere to the treatment plan. If a need for modification is requested, the IIC counselor should be contacted for further exploration and assessment.

All IIC counselors who are carrying a caseload is expected to maintain contact with the CMO Case Manager regarding their children and families on their caseloads. All contact and correspondences must be properly documented in the case file. Issues and/or concerns should be addressed in supervision with the program supervisor.

Please note, all IIC counselors must review the Need Assessment in Cyber. If changes are needed, conference the case with the program supervisor prior to contacting the CMO Case Manager.

### **Behavioral Assistant (BA) Responsibilities**

BA's are charged with the responsibility of understanding and implementing the intervention strategies outlined by IIC counselors in the treatment plans.

BA's are NOT to make clinical decisions regarding the children and families on their caseload. ALL interventions and activities MUST be approved by the assigned IIC counselor.

BA's and IIC counselors MUST maintain communication to ensure interventions outlined in the treatment plans are being adhered to.

### **Clinical Supervision**

NJCCHS IIC Program is required to provide face-to-face clinical supervision for a minimum of 1 hour every 40 hours worked or once monthly. It is not uncommon for supervision to be made available on a weekly basis, if needed. IIC/BA staff who work less than 40-hours per month are also required to attend supervision on a monthly basis.

All direct service staff (IIC/BA) providing face to face contact with children and families are mandated to participate in supervision.

The supervision process is used to review IIC/BA work progress to the ensure the efficacy of the services being provided. Supervision is also used for professional support and development, educational purposes. and for administrative purposes. Supervision is also helpful in providing best case practices in the field and as a professional. Supervision is not used to solve personal problems. At times, personal issues may be explored if it contributes to poor case practice;

IIC counselors and BA's should come to supervision prepared with an agenda to discuss their caseloads. During supervision, it is expected that IIC/BA staff identify child and family

successes, challenges, and areas of focus.

### **Incident Reports and Notifications**

If there is an incident, the IIC program supervisor, along with the Executive Director, must be notified immediately. Below are two examples of when an incident report must be submitted:

- A child or family member is injured or exposed to harm during an IIC visit.
- A IIC/BA sustains an injury or is exposed to harm during the course of their IIC work.

If a child is in imminent danger, the appropriate authorities MUST be notified, followed by the parents (if they are not present), and lastly NJCCHS administration and management. Incident reports can be found at NJCCHS administration office. Please consult your clinical and/or program supervisor for all incidents.

### **Out of Home placement**

When assigned a case consisting of a youth residing in an out of home placement, IIC counselors shall contact facility staff to coordinate services, especially if youth is under the age of 14. It is required that staff is present in the home/facility during therapeutic sessions. IIC/BA's are not allowed to leave the home with the youth, unless it is indicated in the treatment plan and approved by the clinical supervisor for therapeutic purposes.

### **Transportation**

At the current time, NJCCHS does not permit staff to transport children and families in their personal vehicles. Transportation assistance and/or services are not offered by NJCCHS. Families in need of transportation services should be directed to contact their CMO Case Manager.

### **Case Assignment**

Case referrals are fluent and occur on a daily basis. In an effort to maintain our reputation and the quality of our services, we are asking IIC/BA staff to communicate with the office regarding their hours availability.

NJCCHS requires IIC/BA staff to carry a caseload minimum of two families. There is no limit to the amount families IIC/BA can reasonably carry at one time. However, limits can be placed by the program/clinical supervisor if case documentation lacks in quality or timeliness. Furthermore, NJCCHS reserves the right to withhold new cases until past/pending documentation is complete.



### **Monthly Summaries/Reports**

Monthly summaries are a representation of the Clinical/Behavioral Health Services you have provided over a 30 period. Monthly summaries/reports are submitted to the referral source, DCP&P, and other outside providers upon request.

Monthly summaries and reports reflect outcome measurements, determine progress, and assess the need for re-authorization or termination of services. All monthly summaries/reports are due the last day of the month.

IIC providers who are assigned a new family on or before the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month are required to complete and submit a monthly summary.

IIC providers are responsible for submitting monthly summaries. In addition to the summary, IIC's must include monthly progress updates for all authorized BA services, when applicable.

The program supervisor must review all monthly summaries. In order for a monthly summary to be identified as completed, it must have the approval of the program supervisor. If the program supervisor request changes to the monthly summary, the IIC counselor has 2-days to make the changes and resubmit for approval.

It is the responsibility if IIC staff to submit monthly summaries in a timely fashion. .

### **DCP&P / Collaborative Partners**

When information is requested by the Department of Child Protection and Permanency (DCP&P) or any other outside agency, documentation must be sent from NJCCHS on agency letterhead. The request for information must be forwarded the Executive Assistance and cc'd to the program supervisor. Please adhere to HIPAA guidelines concerning confidentiality.

### **Termination of Services**

When a family enters into the IIC program, discharge planning becomes a part of the treatment process. Termination of services forms must be completed at the discharge planning stage or once services are no longer being provided. Termination of services is required whether treatment goals have been satisfied, the family is lost to contact, or treatment goals have been reached.

### **Mandatory Reporting and Prevention of Child Sexual Abuse**

Any employee, intern, or volunteer for NJCCHS who witnesses or has reasonable cause to suspect any sexual abuse of a child occurring on NJCCHS property or while off site during

official NJCCHS business or agency sponsored events shall have an affirmative obligation to report such conduct to the relevant child protection authority or the local police department immediately. Such report should include the names of the victim and perpetrator (if known), other identifying information about the victim and perpetrator, the location of the activity, and the nature of the activity. Upon making such a report, NJCCHS management, or the employee's direct supervisor must be contacted and an incident report completed. Further details may be explored during case supervision.

In addition, to aid in the prevention of crimes against children on property of NJCCHS and/or during official agency business at events sponsored by NJCCHS, relevant employees should be trained on the identification of such crimes and proper notification requirements. Contractors who engage in events, work related business, or activities that include participation of children shall ensure that they have in place procedures for training, implementation of applicable pre-employment screening requirements, and reporting of child sexual abuse. Background checks are mandatory for all NJCCHS employees and contractors who work directly with children.

### **Driving Record Checks**

In order to protect NJCCHS interests, agency resources, and the welfare of its youth and families, employees, and the public, it is the policy of NJCCHS to conduct conviction and/or driving record checks on all newly hired positions for full-time, part-time, contract, and temporary/wage positions. This policy also applies to certain intern positions and volunteer positions such as those that handle cash, work as child and family advocates, or other positions as defined by senior management. Applicants will be advised in the job advertisement that a conviction and/or driving record check is required as a condition of employment. The conviction/driving check should be initiated after a contingent offer is made. At no time should an IIC/BA employee begin work until Human Resources has reviewed and communicated the results of the check to those making the hiring decision.

## Appendix

### Receipt of Handbook

I have received a copy of the Employee Handbook which outlines the benefits, policies, and employee's responsibilities for the organization. I will familiarize myself and comply with the information contained in the Handbook.

I understand the importance of continuity of staffing in this organization, and I accept the need for flexibility as part of my job. I realize that job requirements may require me to work overtime.

Since the information in this handbook is necessarily subject to change as situations warrant, it is understood that changes in policies may supersede, review, or eliminate the existing policies in the handbook.

I understand that this is not an employment contract.

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Employee Signature

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Date Signed

NJCCHS Employee Counseling Session  
CONFIDENTIAL

For Supervisor Use Only (Copy Not Provided to Employee)

**Employee Name:**

**Date/Time of Session:**

\_\_\_ Coaching/Counseling Session

\_\_\_ Oral Warning

Problem Discussed with Employee:

Why Is It Important? (As Explained to Employee):

Assistance To Be Given To Employee (As Explained):

When And How Should The Problem Be Solved (As Agreed By Employee):

Employee Was Told The Following Would Occur If Problem Is Not Solved:

Other Comments (Employee Reaction, Notes for Follow-up, etc.):

Manager Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**NJCCHS Written Employee Disciplinary Notice**

CONFIDENTIAL

**Employee Name:**

**Date:**

First Written Notice

Final Written Notice

We believe that all employees want to know when there is a problem with their performance and/or when they have violated NJCCHS policies or procedures. This notice is provided to you for this purpose. It is our desire to help you solve the problem. If you disagree with this action, you may so indicate in the appropriate section of this form, or forward a written response to the board of directors (to be attached to this form when it is placed in your personnel file).

Your conduct is not in keeping with NJCCHS policies/procedures for the following reason(s):

Your performance is unsatisfactory for the following reason(s):

This is important for the following reason(s):

The following improvements or actions are required immediately:

Failure to solve this problem will result in:

Suspension

Discharge

Other Disciplinary Action as Indicated:

Manager Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Employee Comments:

Employee Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Distribution:

Personnel File (original)

Employee (copy)

## NJCCHS Employee Suspension Notice

CONFIDENTIAL

**Employee Name:**

**Date:**

The purpose of this notice is to inform you that you have been/will be suspended from employment with NJCCHS without pay for the reason(s) indicated below. If you disagree with this action, you may so indicate in the appropriate section of this form, or forward a written response to the board of directors (to be attached to this form when it is placed in your personnel file).

You are suspended from working for the following reason(s):

The following cannot, and no longer, be permitted:

Upon your return, the following improvement or action is required:

Failure to accomplish required improvement, or action, will result in your termination from employment.

Manager Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Employee Comments:

Copy Received by (Employee Signature): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Distribution: Personnel File (original)

Employee (copy)

## **NJCCHS Employee Termination Notice**

**CONFIDENTIAL**

Employee Name:

Date:

The purpose of this notice is to inform you that you have been terminated from employment with NJCCHS for the reason(s) indicated below. Unless this action is the result of a serious conduct violation, on or affecting your job, you have received previous warning(s) concerning the consequences of continued unsatisfactory performance, or violation(s), or policies and procedures of conduct. If you disagree with this action, you may forward a written response to the board of directors (to be attached to this form when it is placed in your personnel file).

You are terminated from employment for the following reason(s):

Manager Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Employee Comments:

Employee Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Distribution: Personnel File (original)

Employee (copy) Board Members (copies)

### Example Memo Documenting - Written Warning

September 2, 2016

**To:** Ms. P. Woodward

**From:** Mr. R. Davis

**Subject:** Disciplinary Action - Written Warning

This memo is to inform you that you are being reprimanded for your failure to complete assignments in a timely manner.

This reprimand is issued due to your poor work performance, specifically, your failure to perform work assignments in a timely manner. On September 1, 2016, there was a delay of one hour and nineteen minutes in the completion of the morning attendance reports. Normally, it takes only twenty minutes to complete the report, and it is required to be completed prior to lunch. When the lateness of the report was discussed with you, you responded by saying that the report was completed late because you decided to eat lunch early, and after lunch you left to get coffee before completing the report.

The timely completion of the morning attendance record is your responsibility. It is clear that the morning attendance record was not completed on time and that you were the person responsible. Such negligence and lateness is the basis for this disciplinary action. Your failure to complete your payroll responsibilities negatively impacts other employees who must ensure that the information is correct, and who must enter the data into the computer by the end of the day.

This is not the first time this problem has occurred. You have been orally warned on two other occasions for failing to complete assignments in a timely manner.

Any further problems involving your work responsibilities may result in further disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

cc: Personnel File



### **Example Memo Documenting - Suspension**

September 2, 2016

**To:** Ms. C. Jones

**From:** Ms. D. Wright

**Subject:** Disciplinary Action - Suspension

The purpose of this memo is to inform you that you are hereby suspended without pay for three (3) days because of your negligence, specifically failing to exercise confidentiality when accessing client information.

You acted negligently in the performance of your assigned duties on August 30, 2016 when you left sensitive client information in plain sight of others who were not authorized to review client data. The supervisor who supervises clinical staff, and who also witnessed it, stated that you were not present, or near the file, when the infraction was noted.

Because your negligence in violating confidentiality is a serious matter, I believe that this disciplinary action is necessary. Unfortunately this is not the first offense of this type. You access client data when not authorized to do on July 29, 2015. You received a written warning for that infraction. Previous oral warnings regarding your negligence of client information and data have also been issued.

You will be expected to obtain permission to access client information and data, at all times, from your supervisor or appropriate management staff. This requirement not only ensures HIPAA compliance, but the confidentiality of staff and other NJCCHS constituents. Any further performance problems of this type may result in further disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

cc: Personnel File

## NJCCHS New Employee Fact Sheet

**Employee Name:**

**Date of Hire:**

**Position:**

**Supervisor:**

**Normal working hours (days and times):**

If you will be absent from work, contact at \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_ .

\_\_\_\_\_ is the directly responsible for your training.

Your performance appraisals will be conducted by: \_\_\_\_\_.

cc: Personnel File