

Life Alliance, LLC

Code of Ethics

PURPOSE:

This Code of Ethics, in conjunction with various policies and procedures, is intended to provide standards for staff and volunteers (hereinafter referred to as “staff” in the plural, and “staff person” in the singular) of Life Alliance, LLC. The purpose of the Code of Ethics is to protect the welfare of the consumers to whom Life Alliance provides services, to create and maintain firm and therapeutic boundaries during service provision, and to create and maintain an ethical workplace. The Code of Ethics applies to the behavior of all staff and volunteers as well as to all policies and/or practices, either formal or informal, of Life Alliance, LLC.

It is expected of all staff of Life Alliance, LLC to conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the Life Alliance, LLC Code of Ethics – ethics referring to proper conduct or the standards of right practice. Failure to include a specific issue does not necessarily mean it is permissible. In addition, Life Alliance, LLC requires all professional staff to familiarize themselves with and abide by the codes of ethics of their respective professions.

All staff of Life Alliance, LLC are expected to be knowledgeable of and to adhere to all policies and procedures adopted by the agency.

Behavior that constitutes a violation of the Life Alliance, LLC Code of Ethics and/or the ethical code of associated professions may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

PROCEDURE

I – GENERAL ETHICAL BEHAVIOR

- A. All staff will conduct themselves in a professional manner at all times while providing services for Life Alliance, LLC.
- B. The needs of consumers and professional responsibilities of the staff will always take precedence over the personal interests of the staff. When conflicts arise related to care and/or treatment decisions, priority will always be given to the needs and rights of consumers.
- C. Staff are instructed to provide willing assistance to consumers in following Life Alliance’s Consumer Complaint Procedure.
- D. Every staff person will place service before material gain and strive at all times to provide services consistent with the need for quality health care and treatment.
- E. Life Alliance staff will refrain from activity that could constitute or cause waste, fraud, and abuse.

II – ETHICAL BEHAVIOR TOWARD COSUMERS

- A. No staff person shall discriminate against any consumer or applicant for services based on race, gender, color, creed, national origin, age, sexual orientation, or disability.
- B. All staff shall accord respect to the fundamental rights, dignity, and worth of all people. The rights of each individual to privacy, confidentiality, self-determination, autonomy, and freedom of choice will be upheld. All consumers will be involved in the decisions concerning their services, care, treatment, and providers of treatment, with available choices for each being discussed and explored.
- C. All staff shall accord respect to the diversity in all consumers' cultural, religious, and social backgrounds. Staff must refrain from influencing consumers in the area of the staff's own personal beliefs and preferences.
- D. The right to privacy and confidentiality relating to each consumer served by Life Alliance, LLC as defined by state and federal law will be protected.
- E. In the course of service provision human rights for each consumer as defined by state and federal law will be protected.
- F. All consumers have the right to refuse to participate in clinical studies or other research without the fear of negative consequences. No clinical studies or research will be done without the consumer's knowledge and consent.
- G. All services will be provided in a manner that promotes the integrity of decisions made about service or care based solely on the diagnostic and treatment needs of each consumer.
- H. Any conduct that puts a consumer at significant risk of physical or psychological harm may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.
- I. Life Alliance employees and staff are not allowed to exchange gifts, monies, gratuities, goods, or services with consumers or their family members. This includes any type of fundraising activities.
- J. Life Alliance employees and staff will respect our consumers' personal property. Employees may not take, borrow, or otherwise remove personal property from a consumer's home. Employees may not withhold use of personal property from a consumer unless such use would endanger the safety and well-being of the consumer.
- K. Life Alliance staff are not allowed to sign as witness to documents on behalf of consumers or family members.

III – Staff/Consumer Relationships

- A. Professional relationships between staff and consumers will be maintained at all times. Each staff person must recognize the vulnerability of consumers and recognize his or her ability to influence or coerce them positively or negatively. Therefore it is necessary to maintain objectivity and neutrality between staff and consumers.

- B. The boundaries of the therapeutic relationship will be maintained and respected at all times. Staff must maintain boundaries concerning self-disclosure with consumers. If there is any question about boundary issues staff shall obtain supervision.
- C. It is recognized that staff will at times have family members, friends, and acquaintances who may receive services from Life Alliance. However, staff will not initiate or develop personal relationships with consumers, or with parents or close family members of consumers to whom they provide direct services through the agency. This applies to clinical, administrative, and support services.
- D. All interactions with consumers will be characterized by respect. To that end, any remarks of a sexual nature, or any remarks that would be considered by most reasonable people to be derogatory, sarcastic, or inappropriate are prohibited.
- E. Under no circumstances is staff to use alcoholic beverages, drugs, engage in gambling, or view pornographic materials with consumers. Prohibitions against such actions apply to behavior during work hours and on agency premises as well as after work hours and off premises.
- F. Staff will not access confidential information unnecessary to fulfilling their official duties, or take advantage of any confidential information accessible in the workplace.
- G. Interactions with consumers should not result in personal gain for staff. Staff must not use any professional relationship or any information gained from consumers for their own financial gains or for enhancement of their own social or professional statuses. Staff must not buy or sell goods or services from consumers, unless the consumer is the owner or staff person of an established business. Staff must not accept gifts from clients, nor will they borrow from or lend money or goods to them.
- H. Life Alliance staff should be aware that engaging with consumers via social media could lead to a breach of confidentiality and carefully consider this before friending, following, etc a consumer or family member on social media.

IV – AGENCY ETHICS

- A. Every staff person will represent truthfully his or her professional credentials, education, or experience.
- B. Each staff person will be aware of and conscientiously discharge his/her duties and responsibilities as an agent of Life Alliance, LLC.
- C. Every staff person will take steps to acquire continuing education in his/her field and apply current advancements in carrying out his/her responsibilities.
- D. Each staff person will seek help from fellow professionals, a supervisor, and/or co-workers when he/she lacks the capability to serve.
- E. Life Alliance staff will be treated fairly and honestly by the agency.
- F. Life Alliance staff have the right to submit complaints, grievances, and suggestions without fear of reprisal or retaliation.

- G. All staff must be truthful in documenting expenses and number of hours worked and bill for compensation only in accordance with services actually performed.
- H. Any use of agency property in an illegal or unsafe manner that puts the agency at risk for liability or could be detrimental to the agency's services and/or operations may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.
- I. Staff must refrain from utilizing any property of Life Alliance, LLC for personal benefit. Conducting private practice on Life Alliance's premises is prohibited. Taking money or property from the agency is prohibited even if it is the staff person's intention to return it after use.
- J. In order to provide a positive work environment, courtesy and respect shall characterize relationships with co-workers. Staff must refrain from any expressions of violence, hostility, derogatory remarks, overt or implied threats, destructive criticism, personal attacks or innuendos to or about co-workers. Workplace harassment shall not be tolerated; i.e. any harassment based on race, gender, color, creed, national origin, age, sexual orientation, or disability.
- K. Because staff come from a wide variety of diverse backgrounds, all staff must behave in a manner that is sensitive to and respectful of this diversity in the areas of humor, language, and other areas of potential sensitivity to others.
- L. It is recognized that personal relationships will exist between staff members of Life Alliance, LLC. Staff must take care to ensure that those relationships remain inside the boundaries of ethical and professional conduct and are characterized by mutual benefit. This applies particularly in the case of the supervisor and subordinate relationship, which is characterized by inequality of power and influence.
- M. The relationship between supervisor and supervisee must be one of mutual respect. The supervisor shall not take advantage of that relationship for personal gain, gratification, or inappropriate discharge of duties. It is inappropriate for money to be borrowed or loaned between the supervisor and subordinate.
- N. Supervisors are expected to abstain from engaging in dating and/or intimate relationships with supervisees.
- O. It is acknowledged that circumstances may exist or develop that could affect the professional nature of the supervisor /supervisee relationship and either party's objectivity. These circumstances may include, but are not limited to: the development of an intimate or dating relationship, familial relationships, or unresolvable conflicts. In such circumstances the individuals involved must notify their immediate supervisor and subsequently the owner of Life Alliance, LLC for review of the situation and development of a plan of action. Dating and intimate relationships between Life Alliance employees and consumers are prohibited.
- P. Each staff person shall refuse to participate in or to conceal unethical practices or procedures. All staff have the obligation to refrain from commenting disparagingly about the professional work of other staff; however, if there is just cause to believe that a fellow

staff person is engaging in unethical behavior, or any behavior which may be jeopardizing the quality of care expected by the agency, staff are duty-bound to report this to the fellow staff person's immediate supervisor. All staff must report any situation in which there is a question of breach of ethics. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

- Q. Any staff person who has a duality of interest will hold Life Alliance, LLC first in his/her priority and avoid situations which involve a conflict of interest. Examples of duality of interest include outside consultation services, committee appointments, elected office, business enterprises, private practices, etc.
- R. Recruitment or transfer of consumers to a staff person's private business when he/she leaves Life Alliance, LLC is prohibited.
- S. Staff separating from Life Alliance to join another private practice shall not solicit, pressure, or in any way cause consumers to believe that they should and/or need to transition also. If a former Life Alliance staff person solicits or recruits current Life Alliance consumers to transfer to another private provider, this constitutes a breach of confidentiality and will be reported to applicable licensing boards and authorities.
- T. Life Alliance will deal honestly in all business practices and relationships.
- U. Life Alliance will honor all contractual obligations.
- V. All representation of Life Alliance in marketing literature or oral presentation is to be accurate and truthful.
- W. Life Alliance will conduct self-audits to prevent or uncover incidents of waste, fraud and abuse as set forth in our Corporate Compliance Plan.

V – VIOLATIONS

- A. Violations of the Life Alliance Code of Ethics should be reported to any Life Alliance supervisor or office staff.
- B. Violations may be reported in-person, over the phone, orally, or in writing.
- C. Violations may be reported anonymously.
- D. Life Alliance adheres to a strict non-retaliation, no-reprisal policy for whistle-blowing, complaints, grievances, and reported violations of the Code of Ethics.
- E. Unless otherwise noted in Policy and Procedure, violations of the Code of Ethics will result in a response or action within ten working days.
- F. If the response or action is unacceptable, an appeal can be made directly to the President/Owner who will make a final decision within ten working days.