

CODE OF ETHICS

Mission Statement

The Achievement Center – Easterseals is in the business of providing vocational development services and extended employment programs for individuals with physical, mental, and developmental disabilities and for persons without disabilities who are culturally, socially, or economically disadvantaged. These services assist them in obtaining competitive or extended employment, help maximize their independent living skills and equip them to live at the highest possible level of independence within the community.

Purpose

To promote greater access to the community for individuals through competitive employment, supported employment, transitional employment, and integration assistance by removing barriers through education, training and advocacy.

Core Values

The Achievement Center - Easterseals has established this Code of Ethics to guide the actions and to serve as a basis for ethical decision making of staff, board members, volunteers, consultants, intern/practicum students, along with their treatment of those receiving services, business/financial practices, and marketing.

Each staff member, board member, volunteer, consultant, and intern or practicum student will be required to review and sign the Declaration Receipt in person or electronically, indicating acceptance of the Code of Ethics. Any staff member who violates one of the Center's Code of Ethics may face corrective action up to and including termination. Board action may be taken with any board member who violates the Code of Ethics. Volunteers, consultants, and interns/practicum students may be asked to discontinue serving in this capacity if they violate the Code of Ethics.

These core values are the foundation of the Achievement Center - Easterseals Code of Ethics and will guide our actions:

- **Professional Responsibilities and Human Resources -**

Achievement Center – Easterseals goal is to establish a high standard of performance, professionalism, and ethical conduct. We create an environment that fosters ethical behavior, where no employee will ever feel the need to compromise personal integrity to help achieve our mission.

We are committed to providing quality services to all persons served and maintaining a high level of professionalism. We place high emphasis on the Human Resources Department and will be dedicated to the education of personnel and believe that it is necessary for all employees to be qualified for the tasks they perform; therefore, we encourage pursuit of professional resources, professional development, and the maintenance of any licensing/certification for positions. We believe in honesty and accepting responsibility to work within the limits of our abilities and training and will abide by ethical codes established within our profession.

The code of conduct is applicable to all staff, consultants, and contractual employees, regardless of their professional functions, the settings in which they work, or the population they serve.

To that end, staff will strictly adhere to established rules of confidentiality regarding all records, materials and knowledge concerning persons served in accordance with all current government and program regulations.

While working under Achievement Center – Easterseals Code of Ethics, the staff, consultants, and contractual employees must be conscientious, committed, and honest in their work and all duties related to their respective jobs within the organization.

In addition, Achievement Center – Easterseals employees are expected to comply with the code of ethics outlined by their respective licensing or certifying boards.

As stated in Social Media Procedure, Center employees are encouraged to participate responsibly when using social media. Social media should never be used in a way that violates any policies/procedures or employee obligations.

- **People focused** - We value and strive to continually understand and pro-actively respond to the increasing and changing needs of each other and the people we serve.

- **Business Integrity** - We conduct business ethically and with a commitment to moral integrity. We expect people to hold to a high moral standard. When faced with an ethical dilemma, we do what is right, regardless of the consequences. Staff shall encourage and expect ethical and competent behavior from co-workers and shall attempt to rectify behavior which is contradictory. All financial practices of Achievement Center - Easterseals shall be handled in accordance with the applicable federal, state, local laws and policies established by the Achievement Center - Easterseals. All financial matters covered by the agency's bylaws shall be handled in accordance with those bylaws.

Personal fundraising activities should not be conducted during working hours. However, Achievement Center - Easterseals does not prohibit employees from asking for donations, pitching their charitable organization, or selling items during non-work hours, such as breaks or lunch hours if approved by management. As an organization, Achievement Center - Easterseals does not choose to participate in fundraising activities that would directly benefit the Center. We do not promote or engage in fundraisers as an organization.

- **Respect and Confidentiality** - We value the uniqueness and dignity of each individual and appreciate the strength of diversity and inclusion. Staff, board, volunteers and students shall respect the privacy of the individuals we serve and shall safeguard all information and material obtained during the rehabilitation and business process and is communicated only to those with an essential need to know as a part of these processes with consumer's written informed consent.
- **Shared Purpose** - We have an enthusiastic sense of mission; we believe that to better meet our mission we must be loyal and work as a unified organization. We value the privilege for each person to be accountable for lifting his/her share of the load.
- **Excellence** - We value people who get involved and show a sense of urgency; we believe that it takes excellent, confident, and accountable people to create innovative solutions that are valued by the people we serve. Customers and consumers are an integral part of our organization, and we strive for them to experience the highest level of satisfaction with our services.

- **Stewardship** - We value effective and efficient utilization of all resources available to use. Quality and promptness in the delivery of all services and products is expected.
- **Board Members** - The Board of Directors of Achievement Center - Easterseals is selected to represent diversity in our community and its values and beliefs. The Board of Directors has the responsibility to set the governing policies for Achievement Center - Easterseals. As such, board members are expected to provide exceptional leadership for the organization by attending meetings, participating in discussions, representing the organization in the community, remaining current on issues of concern to Achievement Center - Easterseals and its mission, and monitor the operations of the organization.
- **Marketing** - Marketing activities are part of Achievement Center - Easterseals' accountability to the public. Marketing activities/efforts shall always respect the dignity and privacy rights of those receiving services and will not exploit the public by playing on their empathy toward persons who are disabled. Marketing activities will focus on the capabilities of persons served. Marketing activities will never knowingly mislead or misinform the public or misrepresent Achievement Center - Easterseals. Marketing activities will uphold the integrity of Achievement Center - Easterseals so as to merit the continued support and trust of the public.
- **Treatment of Community Members** - Community members will always be treated with respect and dignity. Requests for information from community members will be responded to in a timely manner. Concerns or complaints from the community will be addressed in a timely manner. Input will be solicited from the community and will be considered in a respectful manner.
- **Service Delivery & Advocacy**
 1. **Beneficence: the duty to promote the welfare of, and prevent harm to, all persons receiving services.**
We recognize the importance of responding promptly and courteously to the needs of service recipients. We are committed to providing the highest possible quality of care to

service recipients, and continuously monitor and seek to improve the quality of those services. We expect all persons providing services on behalf of the agency to vigorously and continuously pursue professional competence and excellence.

As reflected in the agency's Core Values, we are also committed to equal opportunity, equitable compensation, professional development, and the general welfare of staff/consultants/students/volunteers. We also recognize Achievement Center – Easterseals role as a citizen of the community, and our obligation to promote the welfare of the community and, whenever possible, to prevent harm to other citizens of the community (e.g., duty to warn).

2. Non-maleficance: the duty to do no harm to persons receiving services.

All persons providing services on behalf of the agency are expected to remain aware of the risk for harm, and to reduce that risk by all means possible.

Such means include, but are not limited to, the following:

- referral for services beyond the scope of our expertise or ability to provide
- strict avoidance of dual relationships (e.g., social, financial, sexual, etc.), intentional or inadvertent, with individual clients or their families at any time during or after services have been provided
- strict avoidance of all other conflicts of interest
- no legal document(s) will be signed for a person served by an employee of the Center
- reporting of ethical violations to supervisors, agency administration, and relevant certifying/licensing bodies
- honesty and integrity in reporting of all operations, both internally and externally

- regularly scheduled staff training which addresses the most common sources of inadvertently harmful effects such as boundary violations, violations of confidentiality, etc.
- continuous quality improvement activities
- contribute to a healthy work environment by encouraging open communication, free and open debate about issues impacting services, personal and professional growth, cooperation, a positive attitude toward the work we do, and by resisting the cynicism and passive-aggressiveness that so often undermines the human service organizations and ultimately harms service recipients

3. **Respect for client autonomy**

It is our duty to recognize the recipient's right and responsibility to make his/her own decisions, and recognizing the potential conflict between the duty to respect client autonomy and the duty to prevent harm. All recipients have:

- the right to participate in any plans made in their interests
- the right to due process; with regard to agency policy & procedures
- the right to expect that the details of their service program with Achievement Center – Easterseals will be treated confidentially
- the right to respect for their moral, religious, and cultural values, whether or not we as individuals share those values, and whether or not specific moral religious or cultural practices must be limited in order to prevent harm to self or others.

Professional ethical standards in recruiting, soliciting, and offering employment to personnel will be maintained at the highest level at all times. No person shall, on the grounds of race, color, age, sex, or national origin or disabling condition be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefit of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program, activity, or employment at the Achievement Center - Easterseals. The Achievement Center - Easterseals is an equal opportunity employer.

Addendum to Code of Ethics:

All addendum policies and procedures are found in the “Personnel Policies and Procedures” book and the “Administrative Policies and Procedures” book located in the administrative office. The following are intended to serve as a continuance to the Code of Ethics:

- Administrative - Policy on Contractual Agreements
- Administrative - Policy on Waste, Fraud, Abuse and Other Wrongdoing
- Personnel - Conflict of Interest
- Personnel - Employee Ethical Duties and General Responsibilities
- Personnel - Sales/Solicitation/Distribution
- Personnel - Grievance Policy