

Provider Advisory Council

Code of Ethics



Preamble

The PAC shall facilitate an open exchange of ideas, shared values, goals and visions and bring forward concerns and solutions while promoting collaboration, ethical operations, mutual accountability and quality services. The PAC strives to achieve best practices to empower members within our community to achieve their personal goals. PAC members commit to:

- Assure that their staff adhere to this Code of Ethics;
- Provide support to other member agencies; and
- Advocate for the further development of resources on a local and state level for members served.

Purpose

PAC members agree to abide by this Code of Ethics. Member agencies shall:

- Become familiar with and encourage their Board of Directors, owners and staff to adhere and follow the Code of Ethics;
- Agree that actions which violate the Code would be considered unethical;
- Agree that a lack of knowledge is not a defense for unethical conduct;
- Strive to achieve the highest standards of professional conduct;
- Acknowledge that all member agencies be committed to best practices in their specific area through involvement with continued education and review of relevant research;
- Report in writing any direct knowledge of perceived violations of the Code of Ethics;
- Offer age-appropriate services, which promote dignity and empower the individual; and
- Reflect the beliefs, values, heritage and customs of individuals supported by offering culturally competent services.

PAC members will discuss known violations of standard ethical practices by members with the offending colleague or agency director. In the event that this does not resolve the issue, the member shall consult with the Ethics Committee of the PAC regarding his or her responsibility.

Core Values

The PAC embraces the following core values, which serve as the foundation of the Provider Advisory Council:

- **Integrity:** Provide accurate and truthful representation.
- **Competence:** Honor responsibilities to achieve and maintain the highest level of professional competence for members and those in their employ.
- **Professional Conduct:** Promote the dignity and autonomy of the profession, maintain harmonious inter-professional and intra-professional relationships and accept the profession's self-imposed standards. All professional relationships should be directed to improving the quality of life of the individuals who receive supports from the member agency.
- **Individual Value, Dignity and Diversity:** Provide supports and services that promote respect and dignity of each individual supported.
- **Social Justice:** Assure that the right of individuals and those who make decisions regarding services to them are provided with complete and accurate information on which to make choices.

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- **Social Capital:** Network Providers support the importance of social capital in each individual supported.
- **Partnership:** Network Providers will work together in partnership to develop and achieve an individual's desired outcomes.

Ethical Principles

The following broad-based principles are based on the Core Values . These principles set forth ideals to which all network providers should aspire.

Value: INTEGRITY

Ethical Principle:

Network providers will not knowingly permit anyone under their supervision to engage in any practice that violates the Code of Ethics. Network providers will not engage in dishonesty, fraud, deceit, misrepresentation of themselves or other providers, or any form of conduct that adversely reflects on their profession, the PAC, or on the network provider's ability to support members/recipients professionally. Network providers will not commit unethical practices that include, but are not limited to, deceptive billing, falsification of documentation, commission of a felony, gross neglect, and fiduciary impropriety.

Value: COMPETENCE

Ethical Principle:

Network providers will represent their competence within their scope of practice. Network providers will engage in only those aspects of the profession that are within the scope of their competence, considering their level of education, training, and experience. Network providers will allow individual staff to provide only those services that are within the staff member's competence, considering the employee's level of education, training, and experience. Network providers will demonstrate compliance with state and federal rules, regulations, and laws regarding standards for training and credentials for supports provided.

Value: PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

Ethical Principle:

Network providers will not participate in activities that produce a benefit for themselves over the individuals they support or may potentially support, always giving priority to professional responsibility over any personal interest or gain. Network providers will make all reasonable efforts to prevent any incidents of abuse, neglect, and exploitation. Abuse means the infliction of mental or physical pain or injury by other than accidental means, or unreasonable confinement or deprivation by an employee of services, which are necessary to the mental or physical health of the individual. Temporary discomfort that is part of an approved and documented treatment plan or use of a documented emergency procedure shall not be considered abuse. Neglect means the failure to provide care or services necessary to maintain the mental or physical health and wellbeing of the individual. Network providers will promptly report and thoroughly investigate all allegations of abuse, neglect, and exploitation. Under no circumstance will the support relationship between the program, staff, and individuals receiving services and/or their families or legal guardian be exploited. Exploitation is defined as the illegal or unauthorized use of a service user or a service user's resources for

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another person's profit, business, or advantage. Network providers will train staff to recognize and report any suspected incidents of abuse and neglect and exploitation.

Value: INDIVIDUAL VALUE, DIGNITY, AND DIVERSITY

Ethical Principle:

Network providers will comply with all federal and state rules and laws related to confidentiality and protected health information, including but not limited to, N.C.G.S. 122C-52 through 122C-56; the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA); the HIPAA final administrative simplification regulations codified at 45 CFR Parts 160, 162, and 164; and 42 CFR Part 2. Network providers will not discriminate in their relationships or services provided to individuals receiving supports, contractor, and colleagues on the basis of race or ethnicity, gender, age, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, or disability. Network providers will provide individuals and families a means of submitting grievances that is fair and impartial. Network providers will comply with N.C.G.S. § 35A-1201, which allows individuals who are adjudicated incompetent to be involved in decisions and choices that impact their lives.

Network providers will make all reasonable efforts to ensure individuals and families participate in the development and revision of any plan for services. Network providers will not abandon individuals and families. Network providers will consistently demonstrate efforts to assure that their services eliminate the effects of any biases based upon individual and cultural factors. Network providers will support the recovery and self-determination of each individual.

Value: SOCIAL JUSTICE

Ethical Principle:

Network providers will accurately portray their services and capacities through public and private statements. Network providers will not engage in false and deceptive representation of their services. Network provider's marketing strategies will not offer inducements to primary individuals receiving supports or their legal representatives in exchange for business gained. Network providers will accurately portray their ownership, board of directors, and management through public and private statements. Network providers will follow required laws and standards regarding the hiring of staff. Network providers will not make initial contact with employees of other providers for the purpose of offering employment to that individual employee for the purpose of gaining clients. This does not preclude the individual client to make a choice. Network providers will use the standard means of advertising for hiring staff.

Value: SOCIAL CAPITAL

Ethical Principle:

Network Providers will support and promote opportunities for individuals they support to develop valued relationships with members of the community in which they live or work. Network Providers will support and promote opportunities for individuals they support they be treated with respect and dignity within the community they live or work. Network Providers will support and promote opportunities for individuals they support developing roles in the community in which they live or work.

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Value: PARTNERSHIP –

Network Providers will work together in partnership to develop and achieve individual desired outcomes.

Ethical Principle:

Network Providers shall collaborate to share resources that enhance the functions of the Network to develop solutions for gaps in services and will work in partnership:

- To assure continuity of care for members, and
- To assure linkage for services, and
- With members, stakeholders, parents, significant others and Vaya to support the attainment of each individual's goals.