

Effective Date: 2/04/10  
Revision Date:  
Revision No:  
Date: 2/04/10

## **CONDUCT TOWARD CURRENT AND FORMER CLIENTS**

BCHHHC's first obligation is to serve its clients, and it is committed to doing so in a manner which is effective, safe and supportive of their dignity. To avoid the risk of exploitation or harm to a client, all employees (or classes of employees, as specified), shall perform their job with integrity and refrain from the following conduct:

### **Prohibited Conduct toward Current Clients: All Staff**

- Fraternization with clients; that is, any contact or association by an employee with a client at or away from the worksite which is social, personal, or intimate in nature.
- Any physical contact with clients except in cases of self-defense, crisis intervention, and/or medical emergency. (See Dealing with Violent and Threatening Behavior policy.)
- Engaging in dual or multiple relationships with clients in which there is a risk of exploitation or potential harm to the client. (Dual or multiple relationships occur when employees relate to clients in more than one relationship, whether professional, or business, such as acting as a case manager and a partner in a business deal. Dual or multiple relationships can occur simultaneously or consecutively.)
- Accepting gifts, gratuities, or money from clients.
- Borrowing money or items from clients.
- Lending or giving money to clients.
- Holding/keeping money for clients (except for the money management and savings Program).
- Holding/keeping items for clients.
- Serving as Representative Payee, Power of Attorney or other representative or similar position for any client.
- Accepting bribes from a client.

- Hiring a client to work in his/her home.
- Purchasing anything from a client or sell anything to a client.
- Providing a ride to a client at anytime in a non-BCHHHC vehicle.
- Accompanying a client outside BCHHHC when not on BCHHHC business.
- Serving as sponsor to a client, or have a client serve as sponsor to a staff person in 12-step or similar programs.

**Prohibited Conduct toward Current Clients: Specific to Helping Professionals, i.e., Case Managers, Case Coordinators, Vocational Specialists, Teachers, etc.**

- Case Managers, Service Coordinators, Mental Health Specialists, Substance Abuse Specialists, Vocational Specialists, Teachers and others in these social worker, teaching or like positions should not engage in sexual activities or sexual contact with clients' relatives or other individuals with whom clients maintain a close personal relationship when there is a risk of exploitation or potential harm to the client.

Sexual activity or sexual contact with clients' relatives or other individuals with whom clients maintain a personal relationship has the potential to be harmful to the client and may make it difficult for the staff person and client to maintain appropriate professional boundaries. Staff members—not their clients, their clients' relatives, or other individuals with whom the client maintains a personal relationship—assume the full burden for setting clear, appropriate, and culturally sensitive boundaries.

- Social workers and others (as described above) in this type of position should not provide clinical services to individuals with whom they have had a prior sexual relationship. Providing clinical services to a former sexual partner has the potential to be harmful to the individual and is likely to make it difficult for the social worker and individual to maintain appropriate professional boundaries.

**Prohibited Conduct toward Former Clients**

To avoid the risk of exploitation or harm to a client, all employees (or classes of employees, as specified), shall refrain from the following conduct:

- Fraternalization with a former client unless the former client has received no services from BCHHHC for at least one year; **and** is not involved in counseling or treatment which indicates vulnerability.

- Engaging in dual or multiple relationships with former clients in which there is a risk of exploitation or potential harm to the client. (Dual or multiple relationships occur when employees relate to clients in more than one relationship, whether professional, or business, for example, as a case manager and as a business partner. Dual or multiple relationships can occur simultaneously or consecutively.)
- Social workers and other specific helping professionals, as described in a section above, should not engage in sexual activities or sexual contact with former clients because of the potential for harm to the client. If these staff engage in conduct contrary to this prohibition or claim that an exception to this prohibition is warranted because of extraordinary circumstances, it is the staff person—not their clients—who assume the full burden of demonstrating that the former client has not been exploited, coerced, or manipulated, intentionally or unintentionally.

