

LINK ASSOCIATES POLICY/PROCEDURE RELATING TO ETHICS

LINK ASSOCIATES POLICY/PROCEDURE

Section: Organizational Governance, Policy: 3, Organizational Purpose, Philosophy, and Ethical Code of Conduct

I. POLICY

It is the policy of Link Associates that the Board of Directors in unison with the Executive Director and staff hold the agency accountable to the organizational purpose and code of ethics. It is the intent of the Board of Directors that Link Associates operates within the highest moral, ethical and business standards for conduct and service in the communities we serve.

II. PROCEDURE

A. PURPOSE – The Link Associates By-laws outline the purpose of the association as:

1. To promote the general welfare of persons with mental disabilities.
2. To provide services, which pertain to prevention, care, education, training, or research in mental retardation.
3. To cooperate with all public, private, religious agencies, or professional groups who share in the goals and objectives of the Association.
4. To solicit and receive funds for the provision of services and activities set forth in this article.
5. Organized and operated under the provisions of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 Section 501(c) (3) or the corresponding provisions of future United States Internal Revenue Law.

B. PHILOSOPHY -The Link Associates Board of Directors along with the Executive Director will guide the agency by ensuring the values demonstrated in policy/procedure and implementation display the standard or quality considered inherently worthwhile and desirable. The values need to guide the company towards success and provide employees with a common direction and guidelines for day-to-day behavior.

1. Statement of Philosophy – It is the philosophy of Link Associates to promote quality services to people throughout all its program sites. The provision of services includes the comprehensive assessment of the developmental needs of all consumers. All services shall be provided in compliance with current Federal, State, County and Local regulatory guidelines and licensure and certification requirements. In addition to compliance with guidelines and certification requirements, Link Associates will make every effort to ensure that all consumers are treated with dignity and respect in all settings. Our employees will strive to provide the quality elements in life, beyond written guidelines, by setting a good example and role model by our words, action, and presence. We will work with families to assist the continuation of family bonds as much as possible. Link Associates encourages all people, including staff and consumers to strive to meet their personal goals. We are all part of a team whose goal will be to further our

mission of providing opportunities for persons with mental disabilities to achieve their personal goals.

2. Program Purposes – The purpose of programs is to maximize the potential of each person in areas including but not limited to functional living, social, self care/self-help, sensory motor, communication, cognitive/academic, work/vocational, leisure, and advocacy/coordination skills. Link Associates believes that all individuals, regardless of the degree of their disability, have potential for further development and learning.
3. Least Restrictive Surroundings – Services will be provided to meet each individual consumer’s needs in the setting with the least restriction possible. Link Associates ascribes to the concept that living, working and recreating in the community is preferable to institutional segregation.
4. Non Discrimination – Services are to be provided on a non-discriminatory basis without regard to race, creed, religion, sex, sexual orientation, age, or nationality.

C. CODE OF ETHICS

Link Associates pledges to set the standard for professional conduct by acting with integrity. We know that acting with integrity builds credibility, both within the organization and throughout the community within which we operate.

1. A reputation for integrity is a significant corporate asset.
 - a. It is expected that the Board of Directors and the staff of Link Associates will conduct themselves in a professionally competent manner that upholds the highest example for persons receiving services by the organization, other agencies, employers, fundors, and the community at large.
 - b. Link Associates interacts with many different stakeholder groups on a continuous basis. These include funding sources, employers, family members, other service agency staff, and the general community. The quality of this interaction has a direct impact on the quality of our services. It is expected that the board, management and staff of Link will treat all stakeholder groups in an open and forthright manner at all times.
 - c. An organization like Link can only achieve its mission if it is financially stable and utilizes honest, ethical and professional business practices. It is expected that the board and management will utilize honesty, fairness, responsible stewardship, and ethical behavior in all business, financial, marketing, and service practices.
 - d. It is expected that the Board of Directors and the staff of Link Associates are committed to employment practices that are fair and consistent for all employees. A continuous effort must be made to achieve genuine equal employment opportunities for all staff of the organization.
 - e. All financial practices of Link Associates shall be handled in accordance with the applicable federal, state, and local laws and within the standards of commonly accepted, sound financial management practices. All financial matters will be conducted in accordance with established policies and the bylaws of Link Associates.
 - f. Marketing activities are a part of Link Associates accountability to the public and shall always respect the dignity and a privacy right of the

person's served. Marketing activities will never knowingly mislead or misinform the public or misrepresent Link Associates and will uphold the integrity as to merit the continued support and trust of the public.

g. Community members must always be treated with respect and dignity. Requests for information from the community are to be responded to in a timely manner and concerns and complaints will be addressed. Input solicited from members of the community will be treated in a respectful manner.

h. The Board of Directors and staff of Link Associates are:

1. Bound to keep confidential all matters concerning the persons served.

2. Committed to each individual's right to self-determination and the person's right to make their own life choices.

3. Committed to seek and provide culturally appropriate services to the best of their ability

4. Committed to not allowing their words or actions to reflect prejudice or discrimination concerning any race, culture, creed, gender or lifestyle.

5. Committed to supporting colleagues by keeping confidences, being honest with self and others.

6. Committed to fighting stigma and promoting community integration, advocate for the rights, equal treatment of and resources to meet the needs of the people served.

7. Responsible to report physical, emotional and verbal abuse to the appropriate authority and warn anyone believed to be in danger of physical harm.

2. Violations by employees to the code of ethics will be processed through the disciplinary procedures as identified in the employee handbook. Violations to the Code of Ethics by the Executive Director or any member of the Board of Directors will be investigated by the President of the Board and the Officers. For the Executive Director, disciplinary action up to and including termination may be implemented. Members of the Board may be asked to resign as outlined in the By-Laws.

LINK ASSOCIATES
POLICY/PROCEDURE

Section: Organizational Governance, Policy: 6, Nepotism

I. POLICY

It is the policy of Link Associates that members of the Board of Directors and employees shall not participate in the selection, hiring, supervision, performance review of, or decisions regarding compensation for any person who is a member of the Board Member's or employee's family or household.

II. PROCEDURE

A. POLICY PURPOSE AND APPLICABILITY.

The purpose of this policy is to provide a process that allows members of the same family or household to be considered for employment or employed by Link Associates without placing them in a real or apparent conflict of interest under the Code of Ethics and Conflict of Interest policies. Applicants for employment shall not be denied employment opportunities because of their status as a family or household member of another employee. This procedure applies to all employees of Link Associates.

B. DEFINITIONS.

Family or household member is defined as the Board Member or employees: spouse or live in companion, natural, step, or significant others; parents, children, grandchildren, siblings, nephew or niece, and grandparents.

C. PREVENTION

To prevent a situation where nepotism can occur, family members as defined above are eligible for employment as long as a direct supervisory relationship does not exist between family or household members. Additionally, one member of a family or household can not assume the role of investigator, or decision-maker with respect to:

1. Processing complaints or allegations against
2. Making decisions on personnel matters, concerning the continued employment or promotion of, a family or household member.

D. EXCEPTIONS

In exceptional circumstances, a direct supervisory relationship may exist between employees who are family or household members. Such circumstances may be necessitated by factors such as the unique qualifications or responsibilities of the individuals involved or the lack of other available appropriate supervisory personnel. Any exception must be approved by the Executive Director and all employment decisions affecting the subordinate employee, such as selection, hiring, discipline, investigation, performance review, compensation, or furlough, must be assigned to other supervisory personnel. Exceptions involving the Executive Director's family or household member must be approved by the Board of Directors.

E. CHANGE IN RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EMPLOYEES.

The supervisor or manager involved in a relationship covered by this procedure shall notify their immediate supervisor when the change occurs which affects this policy. This includes employees in a supervisor and subordinate relationship who become family or household

members, or the development of a supervisor and subordinate relationship between family or household members after employment. The Executive Director is to be notified and Link Associates will make suitable arrangements, which may include:

1. The transfer of one of the employees
 2. The assignment of a different supervisor
3. The determination that an exception is necessary

LINK ASSOCIATES POLICY/PROCEDURE

Section: Environmental/Safety, Policy: 9 Crisis Management Plan

I. POLICY

Link Associates is committed to taking a preemptive approach to public relations crises, using disclosure whenever possible as the preferred strategy for preventing or minimizing public relations crises. The Link Associates' Crisis Management Plan was created to implement effective management of crisis situations from inception until all issues are resolved.

Crisis management functions may include immediate response to the incident, investigation, internal and external communications, and management of media and business relations, family notifications, benefit services, and counseling. Regardless of the situation, this crisis communication policy is intended to help the board and staff act swiftly and consistently under stressful circumstances.

II. PROCEDURE

A. DEFINITION

A crisis situation can be defined as any event that could focus negative attention on Link Associates, affect business, public, and/or employee relationships, hinder our reputation in the marketplace, or negatively affect our workforce. As a non-profit, Link could be faced with two kinds of crises: emergencies and controversies.

1. Emergencies are unpredictable events that wreak havoc on the organization and those it serves; they include everything from thefts and accidents to fires and tornadoes.
2. Controversies are crises that threaten the organization's reputation, such as accusations of fraud, legal disputes, or leadership conflicts.

B. THE CRISIS TEAM

Link Associates will have an identified crisis team including management staff, board and consultants. This plan is updated at the start of each fiscal year and included in the Board Orientation and the management staff handbook.

1. The plan identifies the crisis team and contact numbers.
2. The Executive Director is responsible for the overall coordination for crisis communication between staff and board, unless the Executive Director is actually involved in the controversy. In
3. No one is authorized to speak to the news media in a crisis without clearance from the Executive Director or Designee.

4. The crisis team will follow the plan to develop, organize for and present comments to the media and stakeholders.

C. ORGANIZATIONAL PRIORTIES

The crisis team will make crisis decisions based on the organizational priorities.

1. The safety of the consumers and employees is always the first priority
2. All information and statements will be released in keeping with the code of ethics
3. Whenever practical, Link Associates will inform employees of crises in any appropriate manner
Before details are released externally.

D. CRISIS PREVENTION

The management staff will maintain regular contact regarding internal issues or developments appear likely to lead to public relations problems as well as monitor local, state, and national news coverage of field issues to prepare for topics which might lead to negative stories or opportunities for Link Associates to support public dialogue on issues central to its work.

G. FOLLOW UP

The crisis team will follow the plan to complete the steps of follow up. The close out agenda includes at a minimum:

1. Review incident and outcome
2. Root Cause Analysis
3. Corrective Actions
4. Preventative Actions
5. Communications, internal and external
6. Accountability, rewards and consequences
7. Stakeholder Relationship Management
8. Path forward – “Lessons Learned” sharing

CASE MANAGEMENT CODE OF ETHICS

As a Case Manager, I.....

Am bound to keep confidential all matters concerning the individuals I serve.

Am committed to each individual's right to self-determination and the person's right to make their own life choices.

Am committed to seek and provide culturally appropriate services to the best of my ability.

Do not allow my words or actions to reflect prejudice or discrimination concerning any race, culture, creed, gender or lifestyle.

Am committed to embarking hopefully on a recovery journey with every person I serve, letting them direct their own healing process.

Am obliged to work from a strengths perspective, seeing and maximizing the recovery assets of each person I serve.

Support my colleagues and keep their confidences.

Am honest with myself, the people I serve and my colleagues.

Am committed to a regular assessment of my service recipients' expectations of me and to consistently improving my practice to meet their expectations.

Understand the power of self-help and peer support and encourage the people I serve to participate in those activities.

Am committed to fight stigma wherever I find it and promote community integration for the people I serve.

Have a duty to report physical, emotional and verbal abuse to the appropriate person in authority. Have a duty to warn anyone I believe to be in danger of physical harm.

Have a duty to urge impaired colleagues to seek help for their problems and failing this, to discuss the situation with my supervisor.

Have an obligation to use opportunities for continuing education in my field or profession.

Have an obligation to advocate for the people I serve, for their rights, for equal treatment and for resources to meet their needs.

Have a commitment to prevent crisis situations with the people I serve, to present and support crisis alternatives and to avoid forced treatment unless there is clear and present danger to the person served or another.

From the National Association of Case Managers

Signature of Case Manager: _____