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## Code of Conduct

### Policy Statement:

Employees, medical staff, volunteers, students, contractors and Boards of Trustees/Directors are expected to be guided by the commitment of the organization to the highest standards of ethics and compliance. Everyone is responsible for knowing and following the Code of Conduct. In addition, professionals must follow the ethical standards dictated by their respective professional organizations.

Employees will sign the Code of Conduct and BHS Values at time of hire; Board members and physicians will receive a copy at orientation. Supervisors are responsible for seeing that staff in their areas receive adequate information and training to permit full compliance and to monitor compliance.

### Standards of Conduct:

#### 1. Personal Conduct

##### a. **We respect confidentiality and privacy.**

All information and records pertaining to patients, as well as proprietary information, are private and confidential. Only authorized persons who must refer to them as a business necessity shall have access to them. You are to be respectful of the feelings, privacy, property, dignity, and rights of all patients. HIPAA policies provide guidelines to you related to the privacy of patient information. Employees, medical staff, volunteers and students are expected to take steps to safeguard Blessing Health System's intellectual property, patient/client/customer information, trademarks, copyrights and other proprietary information, and to respect the intellectual property rights of others.

##### b. **We will be responsive, caring, concerned, friendly and respectful.**

It is important all employees, medical staff, volunteers and students follow the standards of behavior of always identifying yourself and your role, explaining what you are doing, helping others find their way, being courteous and responding quickly. It is important you make contact and greet each visitor you meet. It is expected you will give customers and visitors priority in hallways, elevators and parking areas. Personally escort individuals to their destinations when they are lost. These caring expectations should help employees and physicians improve the quality and effectiveness of their relationships and encounters with the public. You are expected to refrain from actions that may negatively impact the quality and safety of care, intimidate staff or cause patients' to choose another provider.

c. **We do not offer or accept financial inducements.**

You should not offer or accept any financial inducement, gift, payoff, kickback or bribe to induce, influence or reward favorable decisions of any government personnel or representative, any customer, physician, contractor or vendor in a commercial transaction, or any person in a position to benefit the organization or other staff in any way. In accordance with the anti-referral and anti-kickback laws, you shall not make or offer payment or provide any other thing of value to another person with the understanding or intention that such payment or other thing of value is to be used for an unlawful or improper purpose.

d. **We work to achieve/maintain a healthy and safe environment for everyone.**

We will comply with all safety and health requirements established by the organization as well as federal, state and local laws of accrediting organizations. It is important to promptly report any incidents involving injury to a patient, employee or visitor. We do not permit possession or consumption of alcohol or unauthorized drugs in the workplace or while operating Blessing equipment, or reporting to work in an intoxicated manner or under the influence of drugs.

Infection Control policies and procedures have been developed for your safety and the safety of the patients and customers we all serve. You are expected to follow these policies related to such areas as hand washing, disposing of hazardous materials and handling of sharps. Weapons and other dangerous instruments are prohibited on all Blessing properties except in Missouri locations, pursuant to Missouri law, firearms can be locked in vehicles while on Blessing property but may not be in the facility or facility owned vehicles. Threats of weapons or violence are to be taken seriously and reported to your Manager, Security or to Human Resources. Refer to the BHS [Weapons](#) policy. You are expected to know the disaster plan for your work area as these policies related to such that in the event of a disaster you are prepared to appropriately respond.

e. **We work to achieve a workplace that is free of discrimination or harassment.**

You can expect to be treated fairly and treat others fairly without regard to race, color, religion, age, sex, ethnic origin, disability, sexual orientation, or any other protected status. This applies to hiring and other human resource practices and to the way we treat each other on a daily basis. This includes disruptive behavior or threats, derogatory comments or sexual harassment. Discrimination or harassment will not be tolerated. A prompt investigation will be conducted, and BHS will take appropriate corrective action where it is warranted. If you feel you have been subject

to such behavior notify your supervisor or Blessing Human Resources.

f. **We will submit properly incurred business expenses promptly and accurately.**

If you travel for business, all expenses will be paid according to the [Travel Policy](#) for BHS. It is expected the employee will promptly and accurately report all expenses documented with receipts.

g. **We are honest in our communications and business relationships.**

Actions are a reflection upon the organization. You are expected to be honest in your communications with patients and families, attorneys, customers, staff members, auditors, trustees, payers, vendors, suppliers, consultants, governmental representatives and all of those with whom we do business. This means no misleading statements may be made about our services or products or those of our competitors. It also means you do not copy materials in violation of copyright laws or use confidential business information obtained from a competitor.

You are expected to be honest in documentation of services provided, coding for services rendered, filing claims for reimbursement, in seeking payment for services, and filing reports whether for regulatory or accrediting purposes.

h. **Practitioners will maintain current licenses.**

Practitioners in positions that require professional licenses, certifications or other credentials are responsible for maintaining current status of their credentials and shall comply at all times with the federal and applicable state requirements for their discipline.

i. **We will be accountable for our actions.**

We believe accountability is critical to a successful organization and every employee is accountable for their actions or lack of action. You are expected to work directly with co-workers to resolve issues and find solutions rather than assign blame. You are expected to put the needs and desires of the customer first and approach every situation with an "I can" attitude. We are committed to gaining new knowledge and making improvements. We believe we all need to be in a state of continuous learning and seeking new knowledge to enhance skills and ability to serve. You are responsible to continually evaluate the way you do work and make suggestions for improvement whenever possible. You need to embrace and act on change when performing your day-to-day work.

## 2. **Conduct in Service to Patients/Customers/Family**

a. **We will respect patient/customer rights.**

Each patient/customer will be served on an individual basis and his/her dignity will be respected. Every patient/customer should have the opportunity to understand the reasons for the recommended treatment, how it will be accomplished, if follow-up consultations will be required and what role medications play. It is important to involve family when requested by the patient.

b. **We will treat all patients without discrimination.**

Admissions, transfers and/or discharges of patients from/to Blessing entities are based on the patient's clinical needs, and without regard to age, ancestry, color, disability, national origin, race, inability to pay, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or

veteran status. In accordance with the Emergency Medical Treatment and Labor Act (EMTALA), hospitals are committed to providing an appropriate initial screening to anyone requesting it, without regard to their financial situation or insurance coverage.

c. **Communications with Patients**

Employees should not offer information about possible cures, remedies, diagnoses, prognoses or any other facts/options, which could be interpreted as medical advice. Refer all such requests to the attending or consulting provider.

d. **We are committed to clinical quality and excellence in our service delivery.**

It is your responsibility to raise concerns by following the organization's policy for addressing quality issues. We are committed to exceeding our customer's expectations. We will anticipate needs and look for ways to exceed customer expectations. We will give 100% of our attention when interacting with customers. We will provide extra comfort and reassurance to our customers.

3. **Conducting Business on Behalf of a BHS Entity**

a. **We do business in accordance with antitrust laws.**

You must not engage in any behavior that might interfere with fair competition. For example, federal and state antitrust laws prohibit price fixing and bid rigging as well as collusion, which includes sharing price or cost data with competitors under most circumstances. Boycotts, certain exclusive dealings and price discrimination agreements against competitors, vendors or purchasers, including bribery, misappropriations of trade secrets, deception, intimidation and similarly unfair practices are also covered by these laws.

b. **We behave appropriately for a charitable organization.**

As a charitable, tax-exempt organization, we have a legal and ethical obligation to use our resources in a way that promotes the public good rather than the private or personal interests of any individual. We avoid compensation arrangements in excess of fair market value, accurately report payments appropriately to taxing authorities, and file all tax and information returns in accordance with applicable laws. It is also important to know that if you contribute to a political campaign, it is as an individual, not as a representative of BHS, and you must use your own personal funds. Both hospitals offer to their communities a community benefit report detailing the activities the hospital provided during the year to deserve its charitable status. (Denman Services, Inc. is not a tax-exempt organization.)

c. **We use the highest ethical business practices in source selection, negotiation, determination of award and in the administration of all purchasing activities.**

Any rebates, discounts and allowances that are customary business practices are acceptable so long as they do not constitute unlawful or unethical payments and are given to the Blessing entity. Such payments should be properly documented, be of reasonable value, competitively justified and properly invoiced/credited to the entity originating the agreement. Any payment to employees of BHS is not allowed. If an unsolicited (cash) payment is received, it should be forwarded to the Blessing Foundation office or promptly returned to the giver. Payments made to vendors will be made only for goods and services acquired in accordance with Materials Management policies.

d. **We do what is right for the organization when entering into agreements.**

You are obligated to ensure you remain free of conflicts of interest in the performance of your job. Your outside activities, personal financial interests or other personal interests could influence or appear to influence your ability to make objective decisions in the course of your job responsibility. You are obligated to ensure that you remain free of conflicts of interest in the performance of your job. Board members, senior management, and other individuals with decision-making authority are required to disclose actual and potential conflicts related to decisions that arise during the year. Refer to the BHS [Conflicts of Interest](#) policy.

Never accept outside employment that may conflict with your position in the absence of prior written approval by a BHS Vice President or CEO/President. It is important you do not use BHS resources to support your second job, use your position to influence the BHS doing business with your secondary employer/ business or influence patient or customer referrals to your secondary employer/ business.

e. **We do not seek to improperly influence the decisions of our patients, customers or suppliers by offering business courtesies.** A business courtesy is a gift, whether in money, service, perquisites, entertainment or other items provided to a business associate. You should not solicit a business courtesy from a business associate that is inconsistent with common business practices or interferes with your judgment and in the Blessing Health System's best interest. Business courtesies could include meals, conferences, hotels, travel, etc.

f. **We do not knowingly contract with persons or entities ineligible to participate in Federal health care programs.**

The Federal government has authority to establish certain mandatory and discretionary exclusions for various types of misconduct such as convictions for program-related fraud and patient abuse, licensing board actions and default on Health Education Assistance loans. No payment may be made by Federal health care programs for any items or services furnished, ordered or prescribed by an excluded individual or entity.

g. **We respect the environment.**

BHS entities are subject to many legal requirements under a variety of environmental laws concerning the handling, release, transporting and disposal of hazardous materials and waste. If you handle or are responsible for hazardous materials or waste, you must be knowledgeable about these materials and the environmental regulations affecting them.

h. **We market only services that are available.**

Marketing will be truthful, accurate, complete and sensitive to the health care needs of the public, promoting informed choices about health care services. If you develop or approve marketing materials for the organization, the content must be consistent with the mission and values of the organization. The promotion materials must be data driven and not state or imply a guarantee of successful outcome or of complete patient satisfaction unless there is a basis for making such a claim. Solicitation, canvassing or distribution of literature on the BHS property is restricted. The purpose of this restriction is to prevent disruption in the operation and/or

interference with patient care and other business. Refer to the HR [Solicitation and Distribution of Literature](#) policy.

- i. **We are committed to compliance and do not put undue pressure to pursue profit over compliance.**

We believe it is critical staff understand the importance of complying with laws and regulations. Staff should not be placed in a position of pursuing profit or meeting a budget requirement by sacrificing legal compliance. Examples might include pushing for a higher level of reimbursement without documentation to support the level assigned or signing contracts that violate Stark regulations to enhance revenue. If you believe you are being put in this position, you are mandated to report it.

- j. **Electronic media systems are to be used primarily for business purposes.**

Data and information created, collected, aggregated, analyzed, stored and/or reported by or on behalf of a BHS entity are owned by the BHS entity. The electronic media systems are to be used primarily for business purposes, however, limited reasonable personal use of BHS communications systems are permitted. The E-mail and Internet systems are not to be used for inappropriate, illicit or offensive communications. E-mail messages are considered to be business records of the BHS entity and therefore may be subject to review by management. Those who abuse the system will be disciplined accordingly. (Refer to the BHS [Acceptable Use of Electronic Communication Tools](#) policy.)

- k. **We do not use hospital funds directly for political purposes.**

None of the Blessing entity names, funds or facilities shall be used for political purposes on behalf of candidates seeking political office. The Blessing entity may indirectly support political positions through membership in organizations like the Illinois Hospital Association and/or the American Hospital Association. Employees are encouraged to vote and participate in the political process.

## Scope:

Blessing Health System ("Blessing") entities and locations, as applicable

## Definitions:

**Antitrust:** Business practices that are intended to restrain fair competition.

**Entity:** An organization that has its own distinct corporate structure.

**Inducement:** To motivate or persuade by incentive, influence or persuasion.

**Retaliation:** To take or cause action to be taken, against an individual(s) as the result of some action against an individual or organization.

## Procedure:

### 1. Employee Concerns

- a. Employees are encouraged to raise questions or concerns with management or the Compliance Officer.



- b. Retaliation against employees who raise concerns in good faith to any member of management will not be tolerated.

## 2. Education Requirements

- a. The Compliance Officer will establish a corporate ethics and business conduct education program designed to ensure all employees have an awareness of the core principals and the Code of Conduct. At the time of hire, each employee will sign a document indicating receipt of the Code, understanding of the Code, and agreement to live by the Code.

## 3. Employment Application

- a. Prospective employees review the BHS Values as part of the employment application process and sign at the time of hire.

## 4. Evaluation

- a. Each employee's compliance to the Code of Conduct and BHS Values will be evaluated at the time of their annual evaluation.

## Summary:

These principles form the basis for our commitment to ethical behavior that complies with all legal and regulatory requirements. However, this document cannot cover every legal or ethical issue that may arise. You must also use your own judgment.

If you have a concern about a legal or ethical issue, please report it to your supervisor. If you do not receive a satisfactory answer in a reasonable amount of time, please raise your concern to senior management or call the Corporate Compliance Officer at 217-223-8400, extension 7899 or call the hotline at 888-495-4387 and leave a detailed message.

Although calls to both the Compliance Officer and the hotline may remain anonymous, please remember to enable a thorough investigation, you are encouraged to disclose as much information as possible, including names. Reports to Compliance will remain confidential to the fullest extent possible or as permitted by law.

## BHS Values

### **Integrity: Be honest and trustworthy**

- Tell the truth and do the right thing, and ensure the highest ethical decisions
- Earn and maintain the trust and confidence of all with whom you engage
- Be a positive voice for BHS in the workplace and in the community
- Keep internal issues internal; do not discuss in front of patients, their families or the public
- Follow through in a timely manner on commitments and requests or seek assistance

### **Compassion: Be empathetic to the needs, concerns and suffering of others**

- Make eye contact, smile, greet everyone and be intentionally attentive
- Give customers priority in hallways, elevators, and parking areas; escort visitors/patients to

their locations

- Use AIDET and interact in such a way to reduce patient and family anxiety
- Anticipate the needs of others instead of waiting to be asked; pursue every avenue to help
- Keep patients/customers informed of progress and delays

**Accountability: Take ownership and foster an environment of ownership**

- Take responsibility for your words, work, actions, and outcomes without making excuses, creating a 'we/they' or blaming someone else
- Take initiative to resolve issues or collaborate with others to achieve the best outcomes
- Provide feedback privately for behaviors that do not reflect BHS values; accept feedback respectfully
- Admit mistakes and take action to correct them
- Stop negativity and gossip
- Arrive on time, ready to focus for assigned duties
- Ensure a clean professional image for yourself and our environment

**Respect: Value others' feelings, wishes, rights, identities, traditions, and beliefs**

- Use words/body language that communicates courtesy, dignity and seeks to put every person at ease
- Protect the privacy, property, dignity, and rights of everyone
- Allow others to share concerns, ask clarifying questions, or offer ideas without fear of judgment
- Communicate in ways others can understand (e.g. no medical jargon)
- Make thanking others for their contributions and accomplishments a habit
- Manage up providers and coworkers by communicating their strengths to others
- Use personal electronic devices for emergency purposes only or during breaks/meals
- Use proper names vs nicknames unless given permission to do differently

**Excellence: Strive for exceptional performance in work, care, quality, safety, service, and finance**

- Learn patient/customer needs and expectations and work to exceed those expectations
- Apply consistent effort to achieve superior performance in department and organizational goals
- Look for ways to improve how we work by challenging the status quo
- Use resources (time, personnel, equipment, supplies, technology) responsibly
- Practice service recovery if we miss the mark
- Continually learn to enhance your skills and abilities to serve
- Use tools/equipment properly; follow policies and procedures designed for safety and do not take shortcuts
- Report actual or near miss safety events



- Make effective handoffs
- Ensure a clean professional image for yourself and our environment

## Reference(s):

Prescription Drug Benefit Manual (Chapter 9, Part D) – Program to Control Fraud, Waste and Abuse

## Form(s):

[BHS Values](#)

[Code of Conduct Acknowledgment](#)

## All Revision Dates

05/2024, 01/2023, 05/2022, 11/2020, 08/2020, 02/2017, 01/2003

## Approval Signatures

Step Description

Approver

Date

Megan Parks: DOCUMENT  
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05/2024

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05/2024

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05/2024

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05/2024

## Applicability

Blessing Hospital, Denman Services, Inc., Illini Community Hospital