

FAMILY & CHILDREN SERVICES

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

CODE OF ETHICS

POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the Family & Children Services (F&CS) Board of Directors acts ethically, legally and in the best interest of the organization. Major portions of F&CS's funding are derived from public sources and charitable contributions from individuals, agencies and businesses who share a firm belief in the work of the organization and the reputation of its governing board. The nature of the belief necessitates the highest form of ethical conduct by the Board of Directors of F&CS in fact and appearance.

Directors owe the organization a duty of care and a duty of loyalty. Duty of care includes a duty to become informed of all business information reasonably available before making a business decision; a duty to consider alternative courses of action before choosing a particular course; and a duty to investigate and prevent mismanagement when evidence comes to light which would alert an ordinarily prudent director to potential problems within the organization. Duty of loyalty includes an affirmative duty to protect the interests of the organization; duty to refrain from conduct that would injure the organization and its stakeholders or deprive them of advantage. Finally, directors should act using the Business Judgement Rule. This is a judicial presumption that directors making a business decision not involving self-interest acted in good faith and with due care.

Adherence to the law is the minimum standard of expected behavior. F&CS must do more, however, than simply obey the law. We must embrace the spirit of the law, often going beyond legal requirements and making sure that what we do is matched by what the public understands about what we do. Transparency, openness and responsiveness to public concerns must be integral to our behavior.

This policy offers guidance for F&CS's Board of Directors across the broad range of responsibilities. It provides a framework for high quality, responsible, and accountable organizations and guidelines for decision making and action on the part of all members of F&CS Board of Directors. The guidelines set forth do not purport to deal with every circumstance that requires the exercise of judgement concerning conduct. In all circumstances, the organization holds the reasonable expectation that the individual and the organization will, at all times, be guided by honesty, good sense, and the highest sense of what the ethical course may be.

Policy:

In harmony with the agency's **mission** (See Attachment A) the Board of Directors commits itself and its members to ethical, businesslike, and lawful conduct, including proper use of authority and appropriate decorum when acting as board members.

The Board of Directors also commits itself to uphold the organization's **core values**. (See Attachment A). Each member of the Board of Directors for Family & Children Services will:

- Represent the interests of all people served by F&CS and not favor special interests inside or outside the organization. This accountability supersedes any conflicting loyalty such as that to community advocacy or interest groups and membership on other boards or staffs. It also supersedes the personal interest of any board member acting as a consumer of the agency's services
- Not use the F&CS or his/her service on this board for personal advantage or for the advantage of friends, relatives or supporters.
- Adhere to local, state, and federal laws and regulations that apply to nonprofit organizations and to F&CS's line of businesses.
- Adhere to the provision of F&CS's bylaws and articles of incorporation.
- Respect the confidentiality appropriate to issues of a sensitive nature. Confidentiality includes the commitment of members to internal review of grievances or concerns before sharing these with the public and adherence to HIPAA legal regulations.
- Respect and support majority decisions of the Board of Directors.
- Approach all board issues with an open mind, prepared to make the best decisions for everyone involved.
- Do nothing to violate the trust of those who elected to the Board of Directors or of those whom F&CS serves.
- Focus efforts on the mission of F&CS and not on personal goals.
- Only exercise authority as a Board member when acting in a meeting with the full Board of Directors, or as delegated to the Board of Directors, or as explicitly set forth in board policies.
 - Members' interactions with public, press or other entities must recognize this limitation and must not speak for the board except to repeat explicitly stated board decisions.
 - Members will not voice or take action on individual judgments regarding CEO or staff performance unless authorized by the Board of Directors.
- Consider oneself as a "trustee" of F&CS and do the best to ensure that it is well-maintained, financially secure, growing and always operating in the best interests of those whom we serve.
- Not furnish bribes or anything of value to governmental, regulatory or referring agencies or of such agencies' personnel to improperly induce favorable action.

- Be truthful in solicitation materials for funds from the public and from individuals. In raising funds from the public, board members will respect the rights of donors, as follows:
 - To be informed of the mission of F&CS, the way the resources will be used and their capacity to use donations effectively for their intended purposes;
 - To exercise prudent judgment in its stewardship responsibilities,
 - To have access to F&CS most recent financial reports,
 - To be assured gifts will be used for the purposes for which they were given,
 - To receive appropriate acknowledgement and recognition,
 - To be assured that information about their donations is handled with respect and with confidentiality to the extent provided by the law.
 - To expect that all relationships with individuals representing organizations of interest to the donor will be professional in nature,
 - To be informed whether those seeking donations are volunteers, employees of the organizations, or hired solicitors.
 - To have the opportunity for their names to be deleted from mailing lists that an organization may intend to share; and
 - To feel free to ask questions when making a donation and to receive prompt, truthful and forthright answers.

- Serve as an ambassador for F&CS.

- Will, at the time of election to F&CS Board of Directors, sign an agreement to uphold the Code of Ethics (See Attachment B) and annually sign the Potential Conflict-of-Interest Statement (See Attachment C).

When interpretation of the words, phrases, or meaning of this policy, or any part of it, is required, the Chair of the Board of Directors shall provide such interpretations. If such interpretation deals with a matter involving the Chair of the Board of Directors, a group of directors designated by the executive committee of the Board shall provide the interpretation.

ATTACHMENT A

FAMILY & CHILDREN SERVICES

MISSION

Family & Children Services builds strong, safe and self-sufficient individuals, families and communities.

VALUES

To provide high quality, consistent services.

To respect and support co-workers, colleagues, clients and families.

To be responsive and adaptive to the needs of our community.

To foster a workplace that encourages initiative, creativity, teamwork and accountability in reaching our goals.

To be representative and respectful of the diverse community we serve.

To be trustworthy and perform our duties with integrity and within the ethics of our profession.

To always be mindful that our agency must be financially secure and sustainable.

To be good stewards of our clients', donors', funders' and contractors' trust in us.

ATTACHMENT B

FAMILY & CHILDREN SERVICES

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

COMMITMENT TO CODE OF ETHICS

As a member of the Board of Directors of Family & Children Services (F&CS) I have read the Board of Directors' Code and Ethics and promise to:

- Uphold the organization's mission and core values.
- Fulfill the roles, responsibilities and duties of Board members of F&CS
- Represent the interests of all people served by F&CS and not favor special interests inside or outside the organization.
- Not use F&CS or my services on this board for my own personal advantage or for the advantage of my friends, relatives or supporters.
- Respect and keep confidentiality appropriate to issues of a sensitive nature
- Respect and uphold majority decisions of the Board of Directors.
- Approach all board issues with an open mind, prepared to make the best decisions for everyone involved.
- Do nothing to violate the trust of those who elected to the Board of Directors and of those whom F&CS serves.
- Focus efforts on the mission of F&CS and not on personal goals.
- Only exercise authority as a Board member when acting in a meeting with the full Board of Directors, or as delegated to the Board of Directors, or as explicitly set forth in board policies.
- Consider myself a "trustee" of F&CS and do the best to ensure that it is well-maintained, financially secure, growing and always operating in the best interests of those whom we serve.
- Not furnish bribes or anything of value to governmental, regulatory or referring agencies or of such agencies' personnel to improperly induce favorable action.
- Be truthful in my solicitation materials for funds from the public and from individuals.
- Serve as an ambassador for F&CS.

Board Member Signature

Date

Printed Name

ATTACHMENT C

FAMILY & CHILDREN SERVICES

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

POTENTIAL CONFLICT-OF-INTEREST STATEMENT

I have read the statement of policy regarding conflicts on interest.

To the best of my knowledge and belief, except as disclosed herewith, neither I nor any person with whom I have or had a personal or business relationship is engaged in any transaction or activity or has any relationship that may represent a potential competing or conflicting interest, as defined in the statement of policy.

Further, to the best of my knowledge and belief, except as disclosed herewith, neither I nor any person with whom I have or had a personal, business, or compensated professional relationship intends to engage in any transaction, to acquire any interest in any organization or entity, or become the recipient of any substantial gifts or favors that might be covered by the statement of policy regarding conflicts of interest.

- Without exception
- Except as described in the attached statement

Date: _____

Signature: _____

Printed Name: _____

To be executed by each board member at the beginning of each fiscal year