



# Employee Handbook

2023



Welcome to Dickinson Center, Inc.! Dickinson Center is respected for its employees and its quality service. That respect doesn't just happen. We work to earn it every day, with each client interaction. We are glad to have you as part of our team because we know you'll help us maintain what we have achieved in the community and help us grow in the future.

Never underestimate your own importance. You are an integral part of our team and you are also very important to our clients. We believe that each employee contributes directly to Dickinson Center's mission, and we hope you will take pride in being a member of our team.

In accepting employment with Dickinson Center, you are agreeing faithfully to perform your duties with loyalty, initiative, and to the very best of your ability. Only as we work and grow together as a team can we give the best possible service to our clients.

In an employment relationship, each of us assumes some responsibility for the other's reputation. I am committed to carrying out my responsibilities in such a way that you can be proud of our relationship. I expect that you will do the same.

This handbook was developed to describe some of the expectations of our employees and to outline the policies, programs, and benefits available to eligible employees. You should familiarize yourself with the contents of the employee handbook as soon as possible, because it will answer many of your questions about employment with Dickinson Center.

Safety is a top priority at Dickinson Center. We have established a workplace Safety Committee that evaluates, implements, administers, and monitors our safety program. Employees are provided information about, and attend training sessions dealing with, safety and health issues. You are expected to obey all safety rules and exercise caution in all work activities. Please report any unsafe conditions or safety concerns to your supervisor.

Just because this handbook is full, don't assume Dickinson is a Center of rules. We consider the variety of topics covered in this book evidence of our commitment to good communications with employees.

We hope that your experience here will be challenging, enjoyable, and rewarding. On behalf of your colleagues, I welcome you to Dickinson Center and wish you every success here.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'James Prosper'.

James Prosper  
Executive Director

## **Code of Ethics**

Our actions either directly or indirectly impact the consumers receiving services. Our employees engage in behaviors that positively support the consumers and/or the processes employees use in service delivery. Acts of abuse, harm, injury, neglect, exploitation, etc. are expressly prohibited. Business and job responsibilities should be performed with the highest standards and responsibility in accordance with Agency objectives.

We must honor our commitments to the consumer, each other, fund sources, and other stakeholders. This commitment includes upholding other professional Codes of Ethics as they apply within the organization.

Dickinson Center and its employees are subject to numerous regulations, laws, standards, policies and procedures, the employee handbook, best practices and other requirements as they apply to our positions. We are to be respectful and follow these standards. Employees must report any violation of these standards immediately and without fear of intimidation and/or reprisal.

Resources are essential to the ongoing success of Dickinson Center. Employees are to maintain responsible use of and control over the assets and resources entrusted to them for legitimate business purposes only. Employees must protect confidential and proprietary information from unauthorized disclosure.

Employees should take care of themselves to the best of their ability. Employees need to avoid actions that place themselves at risk of injury or harm on the job site. This includes remaining free from drugs and alcohol during the performance of their duties. Employees should also seek out opportunities to grow professionally and make use of training afforded to them. Employees are expected to use supervisory and human resource support mechanisms to ask questions, complete job responsibilities, report problems, enhance skill development, etc.

## **Section I. Introduction**

### **History of Dickinson Center**

Dickinson Center, Inc., formerly Dickinson Mental Health Center, Inc. and originally Ridgway Area Psychiatric Center, was founded in 1958. It is a private, non-profit Corporation providing mental health, intellectual disabilities and children's prevention services. Our primary service area consists of the counties of Cameron, Elk, McKean, and Potter, although we do provide a few services in other surrounding counties.

It was incorporated in May 1960 as a private, non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation under the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. It is supported, in part, by appropriations from the Department of Health Services, Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services, the Office of Developmental Programs, Cameron and Elk Behavioral & Developmental Program (CEBDP), and Potter County Human Services.

On September 12, 2016, Dickinson Center, Inc. affiliated with the Journey Health System, a management support organization from Bradford, PA. Journey Health System had previously affiliated with several other entities, which include Beacon Light of Bradford, PA and Stairways Behavioral Health of Erie, PA.

## **Mission, Vision and Values**

### **Our Mission Statement**

We are committed to helping individuals reach their full potential by providing a comprehensive spectrum of behavioral health, intellectual disability, and prevention services.

### **Our Vision**

We are recognized by our consumers and communities as the provider of choice in Northwestern Pennsylvania. To achieve this level of excellence, we:

- Put our consumers first
- Respect and care for our co-workers
- Operate with integrity and sound business principles

### **Our Values**

- Compassion for our consumers, co-workers, and communities
- Excellence in service provision
- Hope for a brighter future

## **(Regarding Refusal to Treat)**

### **Nondiscrimination Statement (Regarding Provision of Services)**

Admissions, the provision of services and referrals of consumers, shall be made without regard to race, color, religious creed, disability, ancestry, national origin, age, sex, sexual orientation, veteran's status and non-English speaking status. Program services shall be made accessible to eligible individuals with disabilities through the most practical and economically feasible method available. These methods include, but are not limited to equipment redesign, the provision of aids, and the use of alternative service delivery locations. Structural modifications shall be considered only as a last resort among available methods.

## **(Regarding driving policy)**

Employees are responsible for all citations issued as a result of parking or traffic violations.

## **(Regarding business travel)**

With prior approval, a family member or friend may accompany you on business travel, when the presence of a companion will not interfere with successful completion of business objectives. Generally, you also are permitted to combine personal travel with business travel, as long as time away from work is approved. Additional expenses arising from such non-business travel are your responsibility.

## **Confidential Reporting of Financial Impropriety or Misuse of Organization's Resources**

Any member of the staff, member of the Board of Directors, or volunteers affiliated with the organization with information about known or suspected financial improprieties or misuse of Dickinson Center's resources or other ethical problems is encouraged to report their concerns to Human Resources who will then ask the ED to investigate. In the event that the Human Resources Department is identified, the employee may contact the ED. In the event the ED is identified, the employee may contact the HR Director, who will contact the CEO of JHS.

The sources of reports about financial improprieties and misuse of resources will be held in confidence to the extent

possible, consistent with the need to conduct an adequate investigation. In some cases, the individual who reports the situation may agree to reveal his/her identity or the report may lead to legal actions and a court order may be issued for information regarding the case.

### **Consulting and Honoraria**

If you are asked to consult with others or to speak at a conference as a representative of Dickinson Center, you must obtain prior approval from the ED. All monetary compensation you earn as a representative of Dickinson Center shall be paid to Dickinson Center. This includes, but is not limited to, compensation paid for speaking engagements, written work, and attendance at events.

### **Diversity in the Workplace**

Dickinson Center will foster a workplace environment that will respect, appreciate and value employee differences and similarities, making it an organizational strength in meeting our mission statement. Diversity offers a variety of views, approaches, experience and actions for use in strategic planning, problem solving and decision-making.

It is our goal to provide and support a work culture that encourages diversity, facilitates understanding of perceptions, and builds a cohesive work environment. We are fully committed to providing opportunities for professional employee growth within DCI through ongoing recruitment strategies, educational opportunities, skill identification and enhancement, opportunities for promotional advancement, skill utilization regarding program and service development and ongoing evaluation of services and policies.

By providing and supporting a work culture that fosters and builds upon diversity and its strengths, Dickinson Center will be able to better serve our local communities and continue to provide quality services.

### **Duty to Warn**

Dickinson Center, Inc. is committed to the safety of the consumers, staff, and community by fulfilling a duty to warn intended victims of serious threats of harm and maintain all legal and ethical obligations to all parties involved.

Following are procedural steps and guidance in order to provide for the safety of intended victims, community, staff, and the individual making the threats of harm, as well as, following professional codes of ethics, legal and regulatory obligations.

A duty to warn may exist when a consumer makes threats of harm towards a readily identifiable third party, and when these threats are determined to present a danger, the intended victim will be notified of the expressed threat. When staff are making this determination they should consider the following and complete the agency Duty to Warn Form:

- Has a clear threat been made?
- Is the victim identifiable?
- Does the client have the means to carry out the threat?
- Is the threat imminent?
- Does the client have a history for violence? How long? What type of violence?
- What is the client's diagnosis?
- What is the relationship to the identified victim?

#### **Steps after duty to warn is determined:**

1. As soon as possible after making a determination that duty to warn exists, the staff's supervisor and the agency DOD or ED should be notified.
2. A Duty to Protect/Warn Form will be completed by the staff member who assessed the consumer.

3. Staff will make a reasonable effort and assume responsibility to locate the intended victim(s) when adequate identifying information is available or notify law enforcement if identifying information is not available.
4. Initiating involuntary emergency commitment proceedings (302) will be considered in accordance with usual practice. Staff will also notify the appropriate law enforcement agency as appropriate.
5. Staff will clearly document the specific threat, all efforts to notify and protect the intended victim (s), the results obtained, and the notification of law enforcement or the reasons for deciding not to inform in the consumer's chart.
6. Complete any additional program specific and/or regulatory required reporting and documentation if victim(s) notification occurs.

## **Mail**

All Dickinson Center employees are responsible to ensure that mail is properly processed and delivered to the appropriate person in a timely manner. All mail must remain confidential and be transported in compliance with HIPAA policies and procedures. Furthermore, interoffice mail must be placed in a sealed envelope with the exterior clearly marked with the recipient's name.

In the event an employee receives mail that doesn't belong to them, they should give the mail to their supervisor who will ensure proper routing of the information.

NOTE: Due to specific regulations, mail that arrives at a group home with a resident's name on it will not be opened without the expressed permission of the individual.

All employee mailboxes should be in a location that is not accessible by the general public. This will help to maintain the confidentiality of protected information.

Employees should not place mail with protected client information on a desk without first placing the information in a sealed interoffice envelope.

## **Ownership of Material**

All information that you write, develop, receive or compile specific to Dickinson Center, including but not limited to publications, articles, speeches, reports, manuals, etc., during the performance of your duties at Dickinson Center automatically becomes the property of Dickinson Center whether or not written, developed, or compiled in your home or in our offices.

## **Pets and Animals in the Community**

Dickinson Center, Inc. makes every attempt to ensure the safety and well-being of its employees. Many times employees working in a community based settings encounter family pets in the homes they are entering. These pets are recognized as often being an important part of a person's day to day life. Following are guidelines for employees who must go to homes in the community where pets are present.

### Guidelines

- When scheduling the first visit at a consumer's home, employees should inquire whether there are any pets that are free to move around the inside or outside of the home. If there are pets there, the employee should ask about the pet's behavior around people with whom the pet is not familiar.
- If the employee is not comfortable with the consumer's answer, or has allergies or other concerns about the

- pet, the employee may ask the consumer to secure the pet in another room during visits.
- If the employee feels comfortable around the pet, it may stay in the room while services are provided. If the pet is disruptive or impacts the effectiveness of provision of services, the employee may ask for the pet to be secured.
  - Employees should make their supervisors aware of any issues surrounding specific pets in consumer's homes. When a pet has proven itself to be unfriendly or disruptive, supervisors may support the employee by letting the consumer know that the pet must be secured.

### **Purchased Services**

In addition, accounts related to the consumers must have prior approval from the program supervisor at a minimum and must be in accordance with the finance policy.

Employees who violate this policy will be subject to disciplinary action. In addition, employees are responsible for any financial costs associated with unauthorized transactions.

### **Vehicle Fleet Safety**

Dickinson Center, Inc. (DCI) maintains a number of vehicles for the purpose of transporting employees (and in some programs, consumers) in the performance of their daily work duties. It is critical to ensure the safety of those employees who drive DCI vehicles. Vehicle accidents are costly to our agency, but more importantly, they may result in injury to employees or others. It is the driver's responsibility to operate the vehicle in a safe manner and to drive defensively to prevent injuries and property damage. As such, DCI endorses all applicable state motor vehicle regulations relating to driver responsibility. DCI expects each driver to drive in a safe and courteous manner.. The attitude a driver takes when behind the wheel is the single most important factor in driving safely.