

Code of Business Conduct

This training session will introduce you to or reinforce your knowledge of Beacon Health System's system-wide *Code of Business Conduct*.

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Objectives

At the end of this session, you should:

- recall what Beacon Health System's *Code of Business Conduct* is, how it relates to the organization's mission and values, and how you can review the policy yourself.
- recognize the organization's specific commitments to legal and ethical conduct as delineated in the *Code* and how those commitments apply to you.
- recognize that we are all responsible for ensuring that Beacon Health System meets these standards.
- recall whom to contact if you have questions about these standards.

Purpose and Relationship to Values

- Beacon Health System's *Code of Business Conduct* is the organization's formal commitment to legal and ethical conduct and follows directly from its mission and values.
- Beacon Health System is committed to the value of integrity; for many people, **this means honesty**.

Purpose and Relationship to Values

You may review the actual *Code of Business Conduct* on the Beacon Health System Corporate intranet site, which is accessible:

- at <http://bhs-sharepoint.bhsin.org/policies/Policies%20and%20Procedures/Forms/AllItems.aspx?RootFolder=%2Fpolicies%2FPolicies%20and%20Procedures%2FCorporate%20Compliance&FolderCTID=0x012000654B9DE05EF3F84D8E74ADF12712609C00D730E384CCE98846A5BCDFC0241B4792&View={CF30C0D5-33BD-45E1-8ADC-E9E5ECDBC169}>.
- By opening the intranet, hovering over the Beacon Health System tab, selecting BHS Policies and Procedures, and then selecting the Corporate Compliance folder.

Note: These methods of accessing the Code of Business Conduct will be available to new hires after they start work.

Commitment to Integrity and Reporting Non-Compliance

Beacon Health System is committed to conducting its business legally, ethically, and honestly:

- You are required to exercise the utmost honesty, accuracy, fairness, and respect for others when acting on behalf of Beacon Health System.
- You are **required** to report suspected violations of law or other wrongful acts in accordance with the SHOP method as described later and in Corporate Compliance training.
- No one may retaliate against you for, in good faith, reporting a possible violation of law or other wrongful act; you may not retaliate against anyone for doing so.

Example: Customary Actions

Drug company representatives routinely provide food for lunch meetings in a department. At these meetings, the sponsoring representative provides information about his company's products to attending staff members. The provision of food at this type of meeting is common in the healthcare industry.

- The guidelines for accepting or rejecting this type of business meal are found in the *Code of Business Conduct*. The guidelines do not allow associates to accept lavish or extravagant meals.
- The provision of meals or other remuneration should never be tied to a department's or Beacon Health System's actual use of a drug company's or other vendor's products.
- The fact that the provision of food at these meetings is common in the industry is irrelevant to determining whether Beacon Health System will participate in the practice.

Example: Non-Retaliation

Nurse Smith observes a co-worker put left-over medications in her pocket and honestly believes that she took them home at the end of her shift. Nurse Smith reports the incident to her supervisor but does not believe that her supervisor has addressed the issue. Nurse Smith escalates the issue to her supervisor's boss:

- If Nurse Smith had not reported the incident, she would have been in violation of the *Code of Business Conduct* and would have been subject to disciplinary action up to, and including, termination.
- Nurse Smith's co-worker cannot retaliate against her for reporting the incident, and her supervisor may not retaliate for her escalation of it.

Example: Non-Retaliation

Associate Johnson is having trouble getting along with a recently promoted colleague who is now his supervisor and who is disciplining him for attendance issues. To get even with the new supervisor and to hopefully get him demoted, Johnson makes several false allegations about the supervisor's conduct using the SHOP method.

- Associate Johnson's conduct is not protected by Beacon Health System's non-retaliation policy, because his reports are not good-faith – they are not statements of things he knows or honestly believes to be true.
- A report using the SHOP method will not stop or influence an ongoing disciplinary action unrelated to the subject of the report.

Commitment to Compliance with Laws, Accreditation Standards, and Agreements

Beacon Health System will comply with laws, including Medicare, Medicaid, and other federal healthcare program regulations, the accreditation standards applicable to its operations, and the agreements which it has made:

- You are responsible for knowing and understanding the laws applicable to your work – if you don't know, or don't understand, ask!
- Examples of agreements by which Beacon Health System agrees to abide include those with insurance companies and vendors.

Example: Compliance with Agreements

Beacon Health System's agreement with Company A indicates that Company A will sell Beacon a certain product at a specific price if certain purchasing thresholds are met. Among Beacon Health System's return commitments is a promise of confidentiality about the price. A representative of Company B offers to beat Company A's price by five percent if the Beacon Health System procurement specialist shares that information:

- Because Beacon Health System has agreed to confidentiality, the purchasing agent should not disclose Company A's price.
- When Beacon Health System makes an agreement, we will keep it even if the perception is that violating that promise would benefit the organization.

Commitments to Compliance with Professional Ethical Standards and Excellent and Ethical Patient Care

Beacon Personnel will abide by the ethical standards of the professions to which they belong.

Beacon Health System is committed to providing excellent and ethical patient care:

- You must respect patients' rights as described in law and Beacon Health System policies.
- Only competent persons may provide care to our patients.

Commitment to Recordkeeping and Asset Stewardship

Beacon Health System's business and clinical records will be accurate, complete, and reliable, and the organization will safeguard its own assets and the assets of others entrusted to it:

- Every record you complete on behalf of Beacon Health System must be free from intentional miss-statements and negligent errors.
- You may use Beacon Health System property, including supplies and work time, only for Beacon Health System business.
- Only dispose of Beacon Health System property in approved ways.
- Process and record patient personal property in accordance with policy.

Example: Accurate Recordkeeping

Mr. Johnson is responsible for recording the temperature of a certain freezer in the kitchen at the beginning, middle, and end of his shift. He always does so at the beginning and end of his shift, but he sometimes gets busy and forgets to read and record the temperature midway through his shift. When this happens, Mr. Johnson records the average of the two readings that do occur as his reading for the middle of his shift:

- Mr. Johnson's reporting of an average as though it was an actual temperature reading is an intentional misstatement of the record.
- If Mr. Johnson had been honest and not recorded a temperature reading for the middle of his shift, then the record would have been incomplete – this also is not acceptable.

Example: Safeguarding of Assets

Associate Chandler observes another associate become angry and intentionally shove an unoccupied Beacon Health System wheelchair so that it rolls into another chair, damaging them both.

- Associate Chandler is required by the *Code of Business Conduct* to report the incident in accordance with the SHOP method.
- The associate who intentionally damaged Beacon Health System's property is subject to disciplinary action.

Commitment to Confidentiality

Beacon Health System is committed to confidentiality:

- The requirement to maintain the integrity of Beacon Health System's information applies to patient information and Beacon's financial, operational, legal, employment, and other data.
- You should always maintain the confidentiality of patient information as directed in Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act training.
- Do not share private information about Beacon Health System or its personnel with people who do not have a valid reason for needing the information.

Example: Confidentiality of Non-Healthcare Information

As part of her job responsibilities, Ms. Adams learns the pay rate of Mr. Jones. During a conversation in the breakroom, she tells Ms. Smith that “I can’t believe that they pay Mr. Jones so much money” and shares Mr. Jones’ pay rate.

- Ms. Adams’ sharing of Mr. Jones’ pay rate violated the confidentiality requirements of the *Code of Business Conduct*.
- Beacon Health System associates should use all information which they obtain as part of their job duties only for the business purpose for which they were provided with the information.
- Further, Beacon Health System associates should access the organization’s information only when they have a legitimate business purpose to do so.

Responsibility for Meeting the Standards in the Code

Everyone with Beacon Health System is responsible for meeting its commitment to legal and ethical conduct:

- **You** are responsible for ensuring that your conduct is in accordance with the *Code*.
- **You** are also responsible for reporting potential violations of the *Code*.
- Management is responsible for implementing internal controls reducing the risk of non-compliance.
- The Compliance Officer is responsible for implementing a Compliance Program, supplementing rather than replacing management implemented internal controls.

Whom to Contact with Questions

The SHOP method is the preferred method for obtaining answers to compliance, legal, and ethical questions:

- **S**upervisor – If possible, discuss your concern with your supervisor.
- **H**igher Up – If you are not comfortable discussing the issue with your supervisor, or if you are not satisfied with his or her response, your best course of action is often to discuss the issue with someone higher up the chain of command.
- **O**fficer – You are free to contact the Compliance Officer at any time.
- **P**hone – You may call the confidential compliance hotline (1-833-389-5505) at any time.

How to Contact the Compliance Officer

You may contact the Compliance Officer, Warren R. Mattson, CPA, JD, as follows:

E-Mail: wmattson@beaconhealthsystem.org

Telephone: (574) 647 – 3309

Mailing Address: 615 N. Michigan St.
South Bend, IN 46601

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