

<b>POLICY AND PROCEDURE</b>	
<b>Policy/Procedure</b>	<b>Code of Ethics/Conflict of Interest</b>
Original Creation Date	07/02/2015
Policy Approved by	Lorrie Heffernan (Chief Executive Officer)
Policy Effective	08/26/2021
Policy Revised	08/26/2021
Policy Review	08/26/2022
Policy Owner	Deborah Paus (CHIEF HR & OE OFFICER)
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**Policy Statement**

Pathways to Independence reputation depends upon the integrity and behaviour of people involved in the direct or indirect delivery of or decision making regarding of Pathways services. It is imperative that a high standard of ethical, moral and legal conduct is evident in all Pathways to Independence practices and day to day operations.

**Scope**

This policy applies to all employees, students, volunteers, contracted professionals and Family Home Providers at Pathways.

**Definitions**

NA

**Policy**

All employees, Family Home providers, students and volunteers, including Board Members, are expected to share in preserving and enhancing Pathways to Independence's image and reputation of integrity, credibility and honesty.

The Code of Ethics is included in employee, student, volunteer, and Family Home Provider orientation training and each person is required to read, sign, and abide by the Code of Ethics Affirmation (Appendix A). It is expected that the spirit and intent identified by the Code of Ethics will guide a person's course of action in their day to day interactions with others in the course of their duties and responsibilities. The Code of Ethics will be reviewed annually by all employees and Family Home Providers.

Failure to adhere to the Code of Ethics may result in discipline up to and including termination of employment, professional services, volunteer, or student contract, or Family Home Agreement.

The following areas are included in Pathways Code of Ethics:

1. National Alliance of Direct Support Professionals Code of Ethics;
2. Responsibility to Supported Persons;
3. Conflict of Interest;
4. Business, Purchasing & Financial Practices;
5. Marketing Activities;
6. Personal Fundraising;
7. Gifts and Gratuities.

### **National Alliance of Direct Support Professionals' Code of Ethics (NADSP).**

Pathways has adopted the NADSP Code of Ethics to guide direct support professionals through ethical dilemmas that they may face on a daily basis. The Code provides clarity and expectations to direct support professionals in the following areas:

- Person Centred Supports;
- Integrity and Responsibility;
- Confidentiality;
- Justice, Fairness and Equity;
- Respect;
- Relationships;
- Promoting Physical and Emotional Wellbeing;
- Self- Determination.

The full text of the NADSP Code of Ethics forms part of this policy and is included as Appendix B.

### **Responsibility to supported persons.**

- In accepting a person for services at Pathways, employees agree to protect and promote the interests and informed choices of persons served by making it possible to develop their ultimate potential.
- With full knowledge that Pathways exists for the purpose of providing services to people with disabilities, the organization's employees will strive to provide the highest level of quality services prescribed for the people we support.
- Pathways employees will set a proper example for the people we support in the areas of personal development, proper social skills and good work habits.
- Supported individuals are informed of their rights and responsibilities by their case manager or appropriate personnel.
- Supported individuals retain all legal rights when they receive services from Pathways. Hence, a client's legal rights must be respected at all times.
- The organization must be ever mindful of the attitudinal, architectural and communication barriers that may exist in the agency. Where barriers exist, the organization will consider corrective action.
- Supported individuals receiving services must always be treated with respect and dignity, regardless of disability or other potential deficit areas.

### **Conflict of Interest**

- Employees, volunteers and Family Home Providers of Pathways are expected to conduct themselves with personal integrity, ethics, honesty and diligence in performing their duties for the organization. Employees are required to support and advance the interests of the organization and its supported clients, but to avoid placing themselves in situations where their personal interests actually or potentially conflict with the interests of Pathways or its clients.
- A conflict of interest occurs when a person's private interest differs from his/her professional obligations in such a manner that will result in the person directly or indirectly gaining a benefit (monetary or otherwise) from a situation. A position of undeclared conflict of interest may have both legal and

personal consequences.

- A statement of Disclosure of Conflict of Interest (Appendix C) must be reviewed and signed by employees, volunteers, students, contracted professionals and Family Home Providers at orientation.
- Any conflict of interest that arises after the initial orientation session to Pathways must be declared to the person's manager.

### **Business, Purchasing & Financial Practices**

- The organization's business and financial practices will be conducted in accordance with solid and recognized ethical business practices. All funds accruing to the organization will be accounted for, and regular financial reports will be developed, maintained, and reviewed by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and the Board on a regular basis.
- All funds kept for persons served receiving services will be strictly accounted to ensure the integrity of the system.
- All policies and procedures that guide the financial and business practices will be in writing, reviewed on a regular basis, and adhered to on a consistent basis.
- The CEO will submit to the Board of Directors a quarterly report which details the month's business and financial activities.
- All people involved with purchasing or other supply chain related activities must act, and be seen to act with integrity and professionalism. Honesty, care and due diligence must be integral to all supply chain activities within and between organizations, suppliers and other stakeholders. Confidential information must be safeguarded.
- Supply chain activities must be open and accountable. In particular, contracting and purchasing activities must be fair, transparent and conducted with a view to obtaining the best value for public money. All participants must ensure that public sector resources are used in a responsible, efficient and effective manner.
- All people involved in purchasing or other supply chain related activities must comply with this Code of Ethics and the laws of Canada and Ontario.

### **Marketing**

- Marketing programs are part of Pathways accountability to the public, the people we support and other stakeholders, and will not knowingly mislead, misinform the public or misrepresent Pathways.
- Marketing programs will respect the dignity and privacy of those receiving services and supports.
- Marketing programs will uphold the integrity of Pathways so as to merit the continued support and trust of the public, the people we support and other stakeholders.

### **Fundraising**

- Any fundraising event or promotion that involves the use of the Pathways to Independence logo or name must be approved in advance. Employees are to submit their fundraising proposals to the Chief Human Resources & Organization Effectiveness Officer.
- Approval must be obtained for any fundraising event or promotion that involves persons served

solicitation and involvement on behalf of Pathways. All requests for persons served participation are to be submitted to the Chief Human Resources & Organization Effectiveness Officer.

- Requests for individual employee fundraising activities such as Girl Guide cookie sales, sales of candy bars to support a child's school and various walk-a-thons for organized charities are to be submitted and approved by the Chief Human Resources & Organization Effectiveness Officer.

**Gifts and Gratuities**

- In order to avoid a conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest employees of Pathways are prohibited from soliciting or accepting gifts or gratuities of a nominal value in excess of \$50.00.
- An occasional nominal business courtesy, such as a lunch, dinner, or promotional item provided by a vendor, contractor, or service provider is acceptable. Gifts, gratuities or favours valued in excess of \$50 are not acceptable, nor is a cash distribution of any amount.
- Pathways approved gifts to employees or prizes that are part of Pathways sponsored events such as acknowledgements of years of service, recognition rewards, raffles are not considered gifts for the purposes of this Code of Ethics.
- Employees who are uncertain as to whether a conflict of interest exists should confer with their Manager or the Human Resources Department.

**Procedure**

<b>Responsibility</b>		<b>Action</b>
Employee, Volunteer, Student, Family Home Provider, Contracted Professionals.		Read and sign Code of Ethics policy and affirmation at orientation and annually thereafter.
<b>Manager</b>		Review Code of Ethics annually with employees

**Appendices:**

Appendix A: Code of Ethics Affirmation

Appendix B: NADSP Code of Ethics

Appendix C: Statement of Disclosure of Conflict of Interest



## Appendix A

### Code of Ethics Affirmation

#### Policy

All employees, Family Home providers, contracted professionals, students and volunteers, including Board Members, are required to abide by and sign the Pathways to Independence Code of Ethics Affirmation upon commencing employment or an association with Pathways to Independence.

#### Preamble

The reputation of Pathways to Independence in the community is dependent upon the integrity and behaviour of its employees and volunteers in whom great trust rests. The way in which that trust is discharged determines the success of Pathways to Independence and the place of pride that it enjoys in the community. It is imperative that a high standard of ethical, moral and legal conduct is evident in all Pathways to Independence practices. All employees, Family Home providers and volunteers, including Board Members, are expected to share in preserving and enhancing Pathways to Independence's image and reputation of integrity, credibility and honesty.

#### Affirmation of Code of Ethics:

By signing the Code of Ethics, I as an employee, volunteer, student, contracted professional, or family home provider of Pathways to Independence, affirm that:

I will abide by the spirit, word and intent of the Code of Ethics and its Appendices:

- a) National Association of Direct Support Professionals Code of Ethics
- b) Board of Directors (applicable to Board Members only);

Name  
Please Print

Signature

Date:

Witness Signature

Date:

## **Appendix B: National Association of Direct Support Professionals Code of Ethics.**

Pathways has adopted the National Alliance of Direct Support Professional's Code of Ethics (NADSP). The Code guides Direct Support Professionals (DSP) through the ethical dilemmas they face daily and encourages the highest professional ideals and daily practice in providing supports. The Code is a road map to assist in staying the course to achieve the full benefits of citizenship for the people we support.

A primary purpose of the DSP is to assist people who need support to lead self-directed lives and to participate fully in our communities. The emphasis is on empowerment and participation in society so people with disabilities can enjoy a high quality of life.

As a result of their work duties, DSP's face ethical decisions on a daily basis and consistently feel the tension between the ideals of the profession and its practice. In order to maintain the promise of partnership and respect that must exist in a helping relationship, a strong ethical foundation is required to help DSP's successfully fulfill their mandate. This Code of Ethics is intended to serve as a straightforward and relevant ethical guide, shedding some light on the shared path to a self-directed life. It is intended to guide DSP's in resolving ethical dilemmas they face every day and to encourage DSP's to achieve the highest ideals of the profession.

### **1. Person-Centered Supports**

As a DSP my first allegiance is to the person I support; all other activities and functions I perform flow from this allegiance.

#### Interpretive Statements

As a Direct Support Professional, I will:

- a) Recognize that each person must direct his or her own life and support and that the unique social network, circumstances, personality, preferences, needs and gifts of each person I support must be the primary guide for the selection, structure and use of supports for that individual.
- b) Commit to person-centered supports as best practice.
- c) Provide advocacy when the needs of the system override those of the individual(s) I support, or when individual preferences, needs or gifts of people who cannot speak by seeking other ways of understanding them.
- d) Honor the personality, preferences, culture and gifts of people who cannot speak by seeking other ways of understanding them.
- e) Focus first on the person, and understand that my role in direct supports will require flexibility, creativity and commitment.

### **2. Promoting Physical and Emotional Well-Being**

As a DSP I am responsible for supporting the emotional, physical, and personal well-being of the individuals receiving support. I will encourage growth and recognize the autonomy of the individuals receiving support while being attentive and energetic in reducing their risk of harm.

### Interpretive Statements

As a Direct Support Professional, I will:

- a) Develop a relationship with the people I support that is respectful, based on mutual trust, and that maintains professional boundaries.
- b) Assist the individuals I support to understand their options and the possible consequences of these options as they relate to their physical health and emotional well-being.
- c) Promote and protect the health, safety and emotional well-being of an individual by assisting the person in preventing illness and avoiding unsafe activity. I will work with the individual and his or her support network to identify areas of risk and to create safeguards specific to these concerns.
- d) Know and respect the values of the people I support and facilitate their expression of choices related to those values.
- e) Challenge others, including support team members (e.g. doctors, nurses, therapists, co-workers, family members) to recognize and support the rights of individuals to make informed decisions even when these decisions involve personal risk.
- f) Be vigilant in identifying, discussing with others, and reporting any situation in which the individuals I support are at risk of abuse, neglect, exploitation or harm. Be aware of and comply with all relevant regulations and legislation such as the Quality Assurance Measures.
- g) Consistently address challenging behaviors proactively, respectfully, and by avoiding the use of aversive methods where possible.

### **3. Integrity and Responsibility**

As a DSP I will support the mission and vitality of my profession to assist people in leading self-directed lives and to foster a spirit of partnership with the people I support, other professionals and the community.

### Interpretive Statements

As a Direct Support Professional, I will:

- a) Be conscious of my own values and how they influence my professional decisions.
- b) Maintain competency in my profession through learning and ongoing communication with others.
- c) Assume responsibility and accountability for my decisions and actions.
- d) Actively seek advice and guidance on ethical issues from others as needed when making decisions.
- e) Recognize the importance of modeling valued behaviors to co-workers, persons receiving support, and the community at-large.
- f) Practice responsible work habits.
- g) Avoid any actual or perceived conflict of interest
- h) Ensure that any exchange of gifts or money with the those that I support is transparent, in the best of interest of the individual involved, and reported to the agency
- i) Refrain from any fundraising or advocacy that is not explicitly sanctioned by the agency.
- j) Safeguard the personal property of those I support

- k) Set and maintain appropriate personal boundaries Refrain from witnessing documents unless explicitly sanctioned by the agency.

#### **4. Confidentiality**

As a DSP I will safeguard and respect the confidentiality and privacy of the people I support.

##### Interpretive Statement

As a Direct Support Professional, I will:

- a) Seek information directly from those I support regarding their wishes in how, when and with whom privileged information should be shared.
- b) Seek out a qualified individual who can help me clarify situations where the correct course of action is not clear.
- c) Recognize that confidentiality of individual's information is subject to government and agency regulations.

#### **5. Justice, Fairness and Equity**

As a DSP I will promote and practice justice, fairness and equity for the people I support and the community as a whole. I will affirm the rights and responsibilities of the people I support.

##### Interpretive Statements

As a Direct Support Professional, I will:

- a) Help the people I support use the opportunities and the resources of the community available to everyone.
- b) Help the individuals I support understand and express their rights and responsibilities.
- c) Understand the guardianship or other legal representation of individual's interests and ensure they are honoured.

#### **6. Respect**

As a DSP I will respect the human dignity and uniqueness of the people I support. I will recognize each person I support as valuable and help others understand their value.

##### Interpretive Statements

As a DSP, I will:

- a) Seek to understand the individuals I support today in the context of their personal history, their social and family networks, and their hopes and dreams for the future.
- b) Honor the choices and preferences of the people I support.
- c) Protect the privacy of the people I support.
- d) Uphold the rights of the people I support.
- e) Interact with the people I support in a respectful manner.
- f) Recognize and respect the cultural context (e.g. religion, sexual orientation, ethnicity, socioeconomic class) of the person supported and his/her social network.



- g) Provide opportunities and supports that help the individuals I support be viewed with respect and as integral members of their communities.

## **7. Relationships**

As a DSP I will assist the people I support to develop and maintain relationships.

### Interpretive Statements

As a Direct Support Professional, I will:

- a) Advocate for the people I support when they do not have access to opportunities and education to facilitate building and maintaining relationships.
- b) Assure that people have the opportunity to make informed choices in safely expressing their sexuality.
- c) Recognize the importance of relationships and proactively facilitate positive relationships between the people I support, their family and friends.
- d) Separate my own personal beliefs and expectations regarding relationships (including sexual relationships) from those desired by the people I support based on their personal preferences. If I am unable to separate my own beliefs/preferences in a given situation, I will actively remove myself from the situation.
- e) Refrain from expressing negative views and stereotyping of people close to the individuals I support.

## **8. Self-Determination**

As a DSP I will assist the people I support to direct the course of their own lives.

### Interpretive Statements

As a Direct Support Professional, I will:

- a) Support individuals to speak for themselves in all matters where my assistance is needed.
- b) Represent the best interests of people who cannot speak for themselves by finding alternative ways of understanding their needs, including gathering information from others who represent their best interests.
- c) Promote the rights of all people and assist others to understand these rights.
- d) Find additional advocacy services when those that I provide are not sufficient.
- e) Consult with people I trust when I am unsure of the appropriate course of action in my advocacy efforts.



## Appendix C

### Statement of Disclosure: Conflict of Interest

#### **Definition:**

A conflict of interest occurs when a person's private interest differs from his/her professional obligations in a such a manner that will result in the person directly or indirectly gaining a benefit (monetary or otherwise) from a situation. A position of undeclared conflict of interest may have both legal and personal consequences.

#### **Policy**

Employees, volunteers, students, contracted professionals and Family Home Providers of Pathways are expected to conduct themselves with personal integrity, ethics, honesty and diligence in performing their duties for the organization. Employees are required to support and advance the interests of the organization and its supported clients, but to avoid placing themselves in situations where their personal interests actually or potentially conflict with the interests of Pathways or its clients.

#### **Agreement:**

I have read and understood the Conflict of Interest policy of Pathways to Independence.

Should a situation arise where I feel I may be in violation of this policy, and therefore in conflict of interest, I agree to inform my manager immediately either verbally or in writing indicating the nature and the extent of the interest and the potential benefit to myself.

I realize that a conflict of interest would occur if I participate in discussion, or decision making on behalf of Pathways or a client it supports, from which I may benefit directly or indirectly regardless of the level or nature of that benefit.

Employee Signature

Witness Signature

Date

Date

