



**Unison Behavioral Health  
Corporate Compliance Plan  
&  
Employee Code of Ethics  
FY 2021**

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**Vision**

We envision healthy, vibrant, caring communities where all persons have the opportunity to live productive, meaningful lives.

**Mission**

We create health and wellness in our communities by providing quality mental health, substance abuse, and community support services.

**Guiding Principles**

In pursuit of our mission, we believe the following guiding principles are essential and timeless...

- Person-Centered Services
- Continuous Innovation
- Progressive Leadership
- Strengths Through Local Partnerships
- Sound Financial Management
- Outcomes Driven
- Accountability In All That We Do

**Purpose of Our Corporate Compliance and Ethics Program**

Our Compliance and Ethics Program provides guidance to all Unison colleagues and assists us in carrying out our daily activities within appropriate ethical and legal standards. These obligations apply to our relationships with clients, affiliated physicians, third-party payors, subcontractors, independent contractors, vendors, consultants, and one another.

The Program is a critical component of our overall Compliance and Ethics Program. We have developed the Program to ensure that we meet ethical standards and comply with applicable laws and regulations.

The Program is intended to be a statement that is comprehensive and easily understood. In some instances, the Program deals fully with the subject covered. In many cases, however, the subject discussed has so much complexity that additional guidance is necessary for those directly involved with the particular area to have sufficient direction.

Though we promote the concept of management autonomy at local facilities in order to meet local needs, the policies set forth in this Program are mandatory and must be followed. The Code of Ethics is posted at all sites for public viewing and on the agency's web site.

**Leadership Responsibilities**

While all Unison colleagues are obligated to follow our Program, we expect our leaders to set the example, to be in every respect a model. They must ensure that those on their team have sufficient information to comply with law, regulations, and policy; as well as the resources to resolve ethical dilemmas. They must help to create a culture within the Unison that promotes the highest standards of ethics and compliance. This culture must encourage everyone in the

agency to raise concerns when they arise. We must never sacrifice ethical and compliant behavior in the pursuit of business objectives.

### **Commitment to Stakeholders**

We affirm the following commitments to Unison stakeholders:

- **To our clients:** We are committed to providing quality care that is sensitive, compassionate, promptly delivered, and cost effective behavioral healthcare.
- **To our Unison colleagues:** We are committed to a work setting which treats all colleagues with fairness, dignity, and respect, and affords them an opportunity to grow, to develop professionally, and to work in a team environment in which all ideas are considered.
- **To our affiliated physicians:** We are committed to providing a work environment which has excellent facilities, modern equipment, and outstanding professional support.
- **To our regulators:** We are committed to an environment in which compliance with rules, regulations, and sound business practices is woven into the corporate culture. We accept the responsibility to aggressively self-govern and monitor adherence to the requirements of law and to our Compliance Program
- **To our judicial community:** We are committed to serving the judicial community in a professional manner by ensuring we honor our client's confidentiality regarding subpoenas, summons, search warrants, other requests for information.
- **To the communities we serve:** We are committed to understanding the particular needs of the communities we serve and providing the communities quality, cost-effective healthcare. We realize as an organization that we have a responsibility to help those in need. We proudly support charitable contributions and events in the communities we serve in an effort to promote good will and further good causes.
- **To our suppliers:** We are committed to fair competition among prospective suppliers and the sense of responsibility required of a good customer.
- **To our volunteers:** The concept of voluntary assistance to the needs of clients and their families is an integral part of the fabric of behavioral healthcare. We are committed to ensuring that our volunteers feel a sense of meaningfulness from their volunteer work and receive recognition for their volunteer efforts.

### **Relationships with our Healthcare Partners**

#### ***Clients***

##### ***Client Care and Rights***

Our mission is to create health and wellness in our communities by providing quality mental health, substance abuse, and community support services. We treat all clients with respect and dignity and provide care that is both necessary and appropriate. We make no distinction in the admission, transfer, or discharge of clients or in the care we provide based on race, color,

religion, or national origin. Clinical care is based on identified client behavioral healthcare needs, not on client or organization economics.

Upon admission, clients are informed of their rights and receive a summary statement of these rights. This statement includes the rights of the client to make decisions regarding behavioral healthcare and conforms to all applicable state and Federal laws. Clients are also given a statement of their rights in relation to the privacy of their personal health information, and of Unison practices to safeguard that information in compliance with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act 1996 (HIPAA). Full details are available in the agency's Notice of Privacy Practices. When applicable, staff will be required to witness legal documents, including power of attorney, guardianship, and advanced directives.

We assure clients' involvement in all aspects of their care and obtain informed consent for services. As applicable, each client or client representative is provided with a clear explanation of care including, but not limited to, diagnosis, treatment plan, right to refuse and accept care, care decision dilemmas, estimates of treatment costs, and an explanation of the risks and benefits associated with available treatment options. Clients have the right to request transfers to other facilities. In such cases, the client will be given an explanation of the benefits, risks, and alternatives.

Clients and their representatives will be accorded appropriate confidentiality, privacy, security and protective services and the opportunity for resolutions of complaints. Any restrictions on a client's visitors, mail, telephone, or other communications must be evaluated for their therapeutic effectiveness and fully explained to and agreed upon by the client or client representative. Clients have the right to refuse to perform tasks in or for the agency.

Clients are treated in a manner that preserves their dignity, autonomy, self-esteem, civil rights, and involvement in their own care. Unison colleagues receive training about client rights in order to clearly understand their role in supporting them.

Compassion and care are part of our commitment to the communities we serve. We strive to provide health education, health promotion, and illness-prevention programs as part of our efforts to improve the quality of life of our clients and our communities.

Unison is committed to providing quality services in a compassionate and ethical manner. See Code of Ethics for Direct Care (policy 1201A) for additional information on Unison code of ethics standard.

#### *Transfers*

Clients will only be transferred to another facility if the persons' mental/emotional needs can be better met at the other facility. The client will be formally accepted by the alternate facility. We do not admit or discharge clients simply on their ability to pay.

#### *Client Information*

We collect information about the clients' medical and mental condition, history, medication, and family illnesses to provide the best possible care. We realize the sensitive nature of this information and are committed to maintaining its confidentiality. We do not release or discuss client-specific information outside the treatment team without written approval of the client or as may be required by law.

Unison colleagues must never disclose confidential information that violates the privacy rights of our clients. No Unison colleague, affiliated physician, or other healthcare partner has a right to any client information other than that necessary to perform his or her job.

### ***Affiliated Physicians***

Any business arrangement with a physician must be structured to ensure precise compliance with legal requirements. Such arrangements must be in writing and approved by the Unison's Chief Executive Officer.

In order to ethically and legally meet all standards regarding referrals and admissions and to avoid the perception of bribery, corruption, fee splitting or kickbacks for referrals i.e., accepting or seeking anything of material value from contractors, vendors, or service providers we will adhere strictly to two primary rules:

We do not pay for referrals. We accept client referrals and admissions based solely on the clients' clinical needs and our ability to render the needed services. We do not pay or offer to pay anyone—colleagues, physicians, or other persons—for referral of clients. Violation of this policy may have grave consequences for the agency and the individuals involved, including civil and criminal penalties, and possible exclusion from participation in federally funded healthcare programs.

We do not accept payments for referrals that we make. No Unison colleague or any other person acting on behalf of the agency is permitted to solicit or receive anything of value, directly or indirectly, in exchange for the referral of clients. Similarly, when making client referrals to another healthcare provider, we do not take into account the volume or value of referrals that the provider has made (or may make) to us.

### ***Third-Party Payors***

#### *Coding and Billing for Services*

We will take great care to assure that all billings to government and to private insurance payors reflect truth and accuracy of services provided and that services are billed as provided. This will emphasize the critical nature of complete and accurate documentation of services provided. As part of our documentation effort, we will maintain current and accurate medical records.

#### *Cost Reports*

Our business involves reimbursement under government programs which require the submission of certain reports of our costs of operation. We will comply with Federal and state laws relating to all cost reports. These laws and regulations define what costs are allowable and outline the appropriate methodologies to claim reimbursement for the cost of services provided to program beneficiaries. Given their complexity, all issues related to the completion and settlement of cost reports must be communicated through or coordinated with our Business Department.

### **Regulatory Compliance**

Unison provides varied behavioral healthcare services in eight counties. These services generally may be provided only pursuant to appropriate Federal, state, and local laws and regulations. Such laws and regulations may include subjects such as certificates of need,

licenses, permits, accreditation, access to treatment, consent to treatment, medical record-keeping, access to medical records and confidentiality, clients' rights, medical staff membership and clinical privileges, and Medicare and Medicaid regulations. The agency is subject to numerous other laws in addition to these healthcare regulations.

We will comply with all applicable laws and regulations. All colleagues and contract service providers must be knowledgeable about and ensure compliance with all laws and regulations; and should immediately report violations or suspected violations to a supervisor or member of management, or the Compliance Officer.

Unison will be forthright in dealing with any billing inquiries. Requests for information will be answered with complete, factual, and accurate information. We will cooperate with and be courteous to all government inspectors and provide them with the information to which they are entitled during an inspection.

During a government inspection, you must never conceal, destroy, or alter any documents, lie, or make misleading statements to the government representative. You should not attempt to cause another colleague to fail to provide accurate information or obstruct, mislead, or delay the communication of information or records relating to a possible violation of law.

In order to ensure that we fully meet all regulatory obligations, Unison colleagues must be informed about stated areas of potential compliance concern. The Department of Human Resources have routinely notified healthcare providers of areas in which these government representatives believe that insufficient attention is being accorded government regulations. We should be diligent in the face of such guidance about reviewing these elements of our system to ensure their correctness.

Unison will provide its colleagues with the information and education they need to comply fully with all applicable laws and regulations.

### **Accrediting Bodies**

Unison will deal with all accrediting bodies in a direct, open and honest manner. No action should ever be taken in relationship with accrediting bodies that would mislead the accreditor or its survey teams, either directly or indirectly.

The scope of matters related to accreditation of various bodies is extremely significant and broader than the scope of this Compliance and Ethics Program. The purpose of our Compliance and Ethics Program is to provide general guidance on subjects of wide interest within the agency. Accrediting bodies may be focused on issues both of wide and somewhat more focused interest. In any case, where Unison determines to seek any form of accreditation, obviously all standards of the accrediting group are important and must be followed.

### **Business Information and Information Systems**

#### ***Accuracy, Retention, and Disposal of Documents and Records***

Each Unison colleague is responsible for the integrity and accuracy of our organization's documents and records, not only to comply with regulatory and legal requirements but also to ensure that records are available to defend our business practices and actions. No one may alter or falsify information on any record or document.



Medical and business documents and records are retained in accordance with the law and our record retention policy. Medical and business documents include paper documents such as letters and memos, computer-based information such as e-mail or computer files on disk or tape, and any other medium that contains information about the agency or its business activities. It is important to retain and destroy records appropriately according to our policy. You must not tamper with records, nor remove or destroy them prior to the specified date.

### ***Confidential Information***

Confidential information about our agency's strategies and operations is a valuable asset. Although you may use confidential information to perform your job, it must not be shared with others outside of Unison or your departments unless the individuals have a legitimate need to know this information and have agreed to maintain the confidentiality of the information. As a quasi-governmental agency, Unison is subject to the provisions of the State of Georgia Open Records Act, and the state statutes related to the confidentiality of client records, and clinical practice guidelines. This provision does not restrict the right of a colleague to disclose, if he or she wishes, information about his or her own compensation, benefits, or terms and conditions of employment.

### ***Electronic Media***

All communications systems, electronic mail, Internet access, or voice mail are the property of the agency and are to be primarily used for business purposes. Highly limited reasonable personal use of the Unison communications systems is permitted; however, you should assume that these communications are not private. Client or confidential information should not be sent through the Internet until such time that its' confidentiality can be assured.

Unison reserves the right to periodically access, monitor, and disclose the contents of e-mail and voice mail messages. Access and disclosure of individual employee messages may only be done with the approval of the IT Department.

Colleagues may not use internal communication channels or access to the Internet to post, store, transmit, download, or distribute any threatening information; knowingly, recklessly, maliciously false or obscene materials including anything constituting or encouraging a criminal offense, giving rise to civil liability, or otherwise violating any laws. Additionally, these channels of communication may not be used to send chain letters, personal broadcast messages, or copyrighted documents that are not authorized for reproduction; nor are they to be used to conduct a job search.

Colleagues who abuse our communications systems or use them excessively for non-business purposes may lose these privileges and be subject to disciplinary action.

### ***Financial Reporting and Records***

We have established and maintained a high standard of accuracy and completeness in the documentation and reporting of all financial records. These records serve as a basis for managing our business and are important in maintaining public accountability and meeting our obligations to clients, colleagues, and the board. They are also necessary for compliance with governmental financial reporting requirements.

All financial information must reflect actual transactions and conform to generally accepted accounting principles. No undisclosed or unrecorded funds or assets may be established. Unison maintains a system of internal controls to provide reasonable assurances that all transactions are executed in accordance with management's authorization and are recorded in a proper manner so as to maintain accountability of the organization's assets.

## **Workplace Conduct and Employment Practices**

### ***Conflict of Interest***

A conflict of interest may occur if your outside activities or personal interests influence or appear to influence your ability to make objective decisions in the course of your job responsibilities. A conflict of interest may also exist if the demands of any outside activities hinder or distract you from the performance of your job or cause you to use Unison resources for other than Unison purposes. It is your obligation to ensure that you remain free of conflicts of interest in the performance of your responsibility at Unison. If you have any questions about whether an outside activity might constitute a conflict of interest, you must obtain the approval of your supervisor before pursuing the activity.

It is also your responsibility to inform your supervisor in a timely manner of any family relationship or personal relationship with a client or other employee to address any possibility of a conflict of interest.

### ***Controlled Substances***

Some of our colleagues routinely have access to prescription drugs, controlled substances, and other medical supplies. Many of these substances are governed and monitored by specific regulatory organizations and must be administered by physician order only. It is extremely important that these items be handled properly and only by authorized individuals to minimize risks to us and to clients. If you become aware of the diversion of drugs from the agency, you should report the incident immediately.

### ***Copyrights***

Unison colleagues may only make copies of copyrighted materials pursuant to the organizations' policy on such matters.

### ***Diversity and Equal Employment Opportunity***

Our colleagues provide us with a wide complement of talents which contribute greatly to our success. We are committed to providing an equal opportunity work environment where everyone is treated with fairness, dignity, and respect. We will comply with all laws, regulations, and policies related to non-discrimination in all of our personnel actions. Such actions include hiring, staff reductions, transfers, terminations, evaluations, recruiting, compensation, corrective action, discipline, and promotions.

No one shall discriminate against any individual with a disability with respect to any offer, or term or condition, of employment. We will make reasonable accommodations to the known physical and mental limitations of otherwise qualified individuals with disabilities.

### ***Harassment and Workplace Violence***

Each Unison colleague has the right to work in an environment free of harassment. We will not tolerate harassment by anyone based on the diverse characteristics or cultural backgrounds of those who work with us. Degrading or humiliating humor, slurs, intimidation, or other harassing conduct is not acceptable in our workplace.

Any form of sexual harassment is strictly prohibited. This prohibition includes unwelcome sexual advances or requests for sexual favors in conjunction with employment decisions. Moreover, verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature that interferes with an individual's work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment has no place at Unison.

Harassment also includes incidents of workplace violence. Workplace violence includes robbery and other commercial crimes, stalking cases, violence directed at the employer, terrorism, and hate crimes committed by current or former colleagues. As part of our commitment to a safe workplace for our colleagues, we prohibit colleagues from possessing firearms, knives, other weapons, explosive devices, or other dangerous materials on Unison premises. Colleagues who observe or experience any form of harassment or violence should report the incident to their supervisor, the Human Resources Department, a member of management, the Corporate Compliance Officer, or the Compliance Hotline.

### ***Health and Safety***

All Unison facilities must comply with all government regulations and rules and with Unison policies or required facility practices that promote the protection of workplace health and safety. Our policies have been developed to protect you from potential workplace hazards. You should become familiar with and understand how these policies apply to your specific job responsibilities and seek advice from your supervisor whenever you have a question or concern. It is important for you to advise your supervisor or the Safety Committee of any serious workplace injury or any situation presenting a danger of injury so that timely corrective action may be taken to resolve the issue. Any workplace injury should immediately be reported to personnel and workers comp.

### ***License and Certification Renewals***

Colleagues and individuals retained as independent contractors in positions which require professional licenses, certifications, or other credentials are responsible for maintaining the current status of their credentials and shall comply at all times with Federal and state requirements applicable to their respective disciplines. To assure compliance, UNISON may require evidence of the individual having a current license or credential status.

Unison will not allow any colleague to work without valid, current licenses or credentials that are a requirement of their position.

### ***Personal Use of Unison Resources***

It is the responsibility of each Unison colleague to preserve our agency's assets including time, materials, supplies, equipment, and information. Agency assets are to be maintained for business related purposes. As a general rule, the personal use of any Unison asset without the prior approval of your supervisor is prohibited. The occasional use of items, such as copying facilities or telephones, where the cost to the Unison is insignificant, is permissible. Any

community or charitable use of agency resources must be approved in advance by your supervisor. Any use of agency resources for personal financial gain is prohibited. In addition, ethical conduct will also include respect for and safeguarding of the personal property of the persons served, visitors, and personnel.

Every attempt should be made to have work related celebrations (birthdays, baby showers, etc) during the lunch break times. Should additional or off lunch break times be requested, it will be up to the individual program manager to approve the activity and to ensure proper time keeping of staff accordingly. Productivity requirements will not be adjusted for work related celebrations and at no time will a client be left waiting for services during a work related celebration.

### ***Relationships among Unison Colleagues***

In the normal day-to-day functions of an organization like Unison, there are issues that arise which relate to how people in the organization deal with one another. It is impossible to foresee all of these, and many do not require explicit treatment in a document like this. A few routinely arise, however. One involves gift giving among colleague for certain occasions. While we wish to avoid any strict rules, no one should ever feel compelled to give a gift to anyone, and any gifts offered or received should be appropriate to the circumstances. A lavish gift to anyone in a supervisory role would clearly violate organization policy. Another situation, which routinely arises, is a fund-raising or similar effort, in which no one should ever be made to feel compelled to participate.

It is, however, a universal expectation that all employees will treat their co-workers professionally and with respect. Unprofessional conduct includes but is not limited to the following:

- Failing to maintain the confidences shared by co-workers in the course of professional relationships and transactions with those co-workers.
- Taking credit for work not personally performed whether by giving inaccurate information or failing to give accurate information.
- Allowing personal considerations to affect professional conduct and relationships at work.

### ***Relationships with Subcontractors, Suppliers, and Educational Institutions***

We must manage our subcontractor and supplier relationships in a fair and reasonable manner, consistent with all applicable laws and good business practices. We promote competitive procurement to the maximum extent practicable. Our selection of subcontractors, suppliers, and vendors will be made on the basis of objective criteria including quality, technical excellence, price, delivery, adherence to schedules, service, and maintenance of adequate sources of supply. Our purchasing decisions will be made on the supplier's ability to meet our needs, and not on personal relationships and friendships. We will always employ the highest ethical standards in business practices in source selection, negotiation, determination of contract awards, and the administration of all purchasing activities. We will not communicate to a third-party confidential information given to us by our suppliers unless directed in writing to do so by the supplier. We will not disclose contract pricing and information to any outside parties.

The acceptance of donations in kind from any subcontractor, supplier, or third party is allowable if it serves the best interest of clients. Such items may include training material, drug samples, meals that accompany informational exchange, etc. Items that are strictly prohibited include (but not limited to) travel, entertainment, training events designed to promote specific products,

material or equipment, or financial incentives of any kind. Trade shows and professional development seminars are not prohibited. These events are generally open to the public.

### ***Substance Abuse and Mental Acuity***

To protect the interests of our colleagues and clients, we are committed to an alcohol and drug free work environment. All colleagues must report for work free of the influence of alcohol and illegal drugs. Reporting to work under the influence of any illegal drug or alcohol, having an illegal drug in your system, or using, possessing, or selling illegal drugs while on Unison work time or property may result in immediate termination. We may use drug testing as a means of enforcing this policy.

It is also recognized that individuals may be taking prescription drugs, which could impair judgement or other skills required in job performance. If you have questions about the effect of such medication on your performance, consult with your supervisor.

### **Marketing Practices**

#### ***Antitrust***

Antitrust laws are designed to create a level playing field in the marketplace and to promote fair competition. These laws could be violated by discussing Unison business with a competitor, such as how our prices are set, disclosing the terms of supplier relationships, allocating markets among competitors, or agreeing with a competitor to refuse to deal with a supplier. Our competitors are other health systems and facilities in markets where we operate.

We should avoid discussing sensitive topics with competitors or suppliers, unless you are proceeding with the advice of the Business Department. You must not provide any information in response to oral or written inquiry concerning an antitrust matter without first consulting the Business Department.

#### **Gathering Information about Competitors**

It is not unusual to obtain information about other organizations, including our competitors, through legal and ethical means such as public documents, public presentations, journal and magazine articles, and other published and spoken information. However, it is not acceptable for you to obtain proprietary or confidential information about a competitor through illegal means. It is also not acceptable to seek proprietary or confidential information when doing so would require anyone to violate a contractual agreement, such as a confidentiality agreement with a prior employee.

#### **Marketing and Advertising**

We may use marketing and advertising activities to educate the public, provide information to the community, increase awareness of our services, and to recruit colleagues. We will present only truthful, fully informative, and non-deceptive information in these materials and announcements. All marketing materials will reflect services available and the level of licensure and certification. The inclusion of clients in marketing and advertising will be done with their written consent and must be closely managed and limited to activities which respect their rights to privacy by prohibiting their exploitation.

## **Environmental Compliance**

It is our policy to comply with all environmental laws and regulations as they relate to our agency operations. We will act to preserve our natural resources to the full extent reasonably possible. We will comply with all environmental laws and operate each of our facilities with the necessary permits, approvals, and controls. We will diligently employ the proper procedures with respect to handling and disposal of hazardous and biohazardous waste, including but not limited to medical waste.

In helping Unison comply with these laws and regulations, we must understand how job duties may impact the environment, adhere to all requirements for the proper handling of hazardous materials, and immediately alert supervisors to any situation regarding the discharge of a hazardous substance, improper disposal of medical waste, or any situation which may be potentially damaging to the environment.

## **Business Courtesies**

### ***General***

There is nothing in this Compliance and Ethics Plan to be considered in any way as an encouragement to make, solicit, or receive any type of entertainment or gift. For clarity purposes, please note that these limitations govern activities with those outside of Unison. This section does not pertain to actions between the agency and its colleagues or actions among Unison colleagues themselves.

### ***Solicitation of Donations, Goods or Services for the Purpose of Unison Program Support or Enhancements***

The agency may accept contributions on behalf of one or more clients from individual donors, community groups or businesses. The Board of Unison BH Board may also authorize fundraising initiatives consistent with the agency's Mission, to allow staff to solicit charitable gifts, donations, or in-kind contributions which may be used directly or sold through raffles, yard sales, or door prizes. All authorized solicitations must be issued only by the Chief Executive Officer, or designee, and operate in compliance with Unison's policies on fund raising.

Programs may also request Board authorization to raise funds for an initiative consistent with the agency's mission. Such requests should be submitted to the Corporate Compliance Office and the CEO for consideration before presentation to the Board. The proposals should explain the fundraising method, describe how the funds will be secured and accounted for within the program's budget, and explain in detail how the funds raised would be utilized by the program.

### ***Fundraising for other purposes***

Unison does not promote personal or community fundraising activities which may be disruptive to the work place or which utilize agency property. There are a number of ways in which staff may communicate fundraising efforts within their department or program such as posting flyers in the breakroom or displaying information on centrally located bulletin boards.

Under unique circumstances, fundraising information may be communicated through agency wide email with the approval of the Corporate Compliance Office or CEO. The proposal for

agency wide communication should include explanation of the purpose of the fundraising efforts, the fundraising method and a detailed explanation of how the funds will be utilized.

### ***Receiving Business Courtesies***

There may be times when you may wish to accept from a current or potential business associate an invitation to attend a social event in order to further develop your business relationship. These events must not include expenses paid for any travel costs (other than in a vehicle owned privately or by the host company) or overnight lodging. The cost associated with such an event must be reasonable and appropriate. As a general rule, this will mean that the cost will not exceed \$100.00 per person.

Sometimes a business associate will extend training and educational opportunities that include travel and overnight accommodations to you at no cost to you or Unison. Similarly, there are some circumstances where you are invited to an event at a vendors' expense to receive information about new products or services. Prior to accepting any such invitation, you must receive approval to do so consistent with the corporate policy on this subject.

As a Unison colleague, you may not accept any gift, money or gratuity from any individual or organization that has a business relationship with Unison.

### ***Extending Business Courtesies to Non-referral Sources***

No portion of this section applies to any individual who makes, or is in a position to make, referrals to a Unison facility. There may be times when you may wish to extend to a current or potential business associate (other than someone who may be in a position to make a client referral) an invitation to attend a social event in order to further or develop your business relationship. The purpose of the entertainment must never be to induce any favorable business action. During these events, topics of a business nature must be discussed and the host must be present. These events must not include expenses paid for any travel costs (other than in a vehicle owned privately or by the host entity) or overnight lodging.

We will routinely sponsor events with a legitimate business purpose. Provided that such events are for business purposes, reasonable and appropriate meals may be offered. As a public agency, giving or receiving gifts from business suppliers, vendors, and referral sources is strictly prohibited.

### **Political Activities and Contributions**

The agency is prohibited by law from political activities other than client advocacy. Unison funds or resources are not to be used to contribute to political campaigns or for gifts or payments to any political party or any of their affiliated organizations. Agency resource include financial and non-financial donations such as using work time and telephones to solicit for a political cause or candidate or the loaning of Unison property for use in a political campaign. Promotions, distributions, or displays of any political material is prohibited from all Unison operated premises, vehicles, and facilities.

It is important to separate personal and corporate political activities in order to comply with the appropriate rules and regulations relating to lobbying or attempting to influence government officials. You may, of course, participate in the political process on your own time and at your

own expense. While you are doing so, it is important not to give the impression that you are speaking on behalf of or representing Unison in these activities. You cannot seek to be reimbursed by Unison for any personal contributions for such purposes.

## **Code of Ethics and Combating Waste, Fraud, and Abuse**

### ***Program Structure***

The Corporate Compliance and Ethics Program is intended to demonstrate in the clearest possible terms the absolute commitment of the agency to the highest standards of ethics and compliance. That commitment permeates all levels of the organization. The Corporate Compliance Officer (CCO), and Client Rights Subcommittee Chairperson play an integral role in ensuring agency Compliance and Ethics.

The committee chairperson is responsible for investigating all Client Rights allegations and mediating Client Rights complaints. The outcome of these investigations and complaints are monitored and analyzed for trends. The data is then reported to the Corporate Compliance officer as well as to The Client Rights Subcommittee. The subcommittee shall be composed of an array of professionals from all programs within the agency.

The CCO will have ultimate responsibility for overseeing compliance with all applicable laws, this plan, the code of ethics, and all related policies and procedures. The CCO will review the update this plan annually. The CCO reports directly to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) through a process of supervision and participation with all executive level staff at Senior Management Team meeting. To ensure direct communication with the governing body, the CCO reports to the Board quarterly.

### ***Resources for Guidance and Reporting Violations***

To obtain guidance on an ethics or compliance issue or to report a suspected violation, you may choose from several options. We encourage the resolution of issues at a local level whenever possible. It is an expected good practice, when you are comfortable with it and think it appropriate under the circumstances, to raise concerns first with your supervisor. If this is uncomfortable or inappropriate, another option is to discuss the situation with another member of management at your facility or in the agency. Personnel concerns can be directed to the Human Resource Department at 912-449-7100 (x-8604). You are always free to contact the Compliance Line at 912-449-8609.

Unison will make every effort to maintain, within the limits of the law, the confidentiality of the identity of any individual who reports possible misconduct. There will be no retribution or discipline for anyone who reports a possible violation in good faith. Any colleague who deliberately makes a false accusation with the purpose of harming or retaliating against another colleague will be subject to discipline.

### ***Personal Obligation to Report***

We are committed to ethical and legal conduct that is compliant with all relevant laws and regulations and to correcting wrongdoing wherever it may occur in the organization. Each colleague has an individual responsibility for reporting any activity by any colleague, physicians, or vendor that appears to violate applicable laws, rules, regulations, or this plan. In the matter of client abuse, neglect, or human rights violations, the agency has mandatory reporting



requirements to the Regional Office of the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities, and Department of Family and Children Services.

### ***Georgia State False Medicaid Claim Act (5/24/2007)***

As of May 24, 2007 the governor signed the Georgia State False Claim Act which entitles whistleblowers to 25% of recovery monies if the claim was found to be made in good faith, 10% recovery monies goes back to the state, and the remainder goes back to the federal government.

**Whistleblower** is an employee, former employee, or member of an organization who reports misconduct to people or entities that have the power and presumed willingness to take corrective action.

### **COMPLIANCE GUIDE FOR LEADERS AND MANAGERS**

- Leaders and managers should be knowledgeable about the content and operation of the compliance and ethics program.
- Leaders and managers must perform their duties in a manner consistent with the exercise of due diligence.
- Leaders and managers should promote an organizational culture that encourages ethical conduct and a commitment to compliance with the law.

### **COMPLIANCE GUIDE FOR EMPLOYEES**

- Employees should be knowledgeable about the content and operation of the compliance and ethics program.
- Employees must perform their duties in an ethical and legal manner consistent with all policies, rules and regulations governing Unison.
- Employees must report behaviors and/or actions which they believe are not compliant with the laws and regulations that govern their work or the work of others.

### ***Internal Investigations of Violations***

We are committed to investigate all reported concerns promptly and confidentially to the extent possible. Upon receipt of notification of a concern the Corporate Compliance Officer will initiate an investigation into the concern. If the investigation cannot be completed within 20 working days the Corporate Compliance Officer will notify the Board of the concern and request an extension of time to complete the investigations. Once the investigation is completed the Corporate Compliance Officer will coordinate any findings from the investigations and immediately report to the Chief Executive Director and/or the Board those findings and recommend corrective actions or changes that need to be made. The investigation will also be staffed by the Rights Committee.

### ***Corrective Action***

Where an internal investigation substantiates a reported violation, it is the policy of the agency to initiate corrective action, including, as appropriate, making prompt restitution of any overpayment amounts, notifying the appropriate governmental agency, instituting whatever disciplinary action or additional training found necessary, and implementing systemic changes

to prevent a similar violation from recurring in the future at any Unison facility involving personnel and/or stakeholders.

### ***Discipline***

All violators of this plan will be subject to disciplinary action. The precise discipline utilized will depend on the nature, severity, and frequency of the violation and may result in any of the following disciplinary actions:

1. Verbal warning
2. Written warning
3. Written reprimand
4. Reduction in salary
5. Demotion
6. Suspension
7. Termination
8. Restitution

### ***Internal Audit and Other Monitoring***

Unison is committed to the aggressive monitoring of compliance with its policies. Much of this monitoring effort is provided by the Quality Improvement Department, through the use of a published audit tool which is utilized by to review charts and provides feedback to the Quality Management Team for quarterly review of issues that have regulatory or compliance implications. These audits will include a billing review, if applicable. Billing records, contracts, medical records, and bills or claims submitted for services, supplies, or equipment will be monitored on a quarterly basis to detect violations of state and federal fraud and abuse laws. The agency also routinely seeks other means of ensuring and demonstrating compliance with laws, regulations, and Unison policy.

### ***Acknowledgment Process***

Unison requires all personnel to receive education on ethical codes of conduct upon hire and annually thereafter. Additionally, all staff are provided with a copy of the Corporate Compliance Plan and sign a statement of attestation acknowledging the receipt of the plan and the understanding that it represents mandatory policies of Unison. Board members receive education on ethical codes of conduct and the Corporate Compliance Plan as part of their board member orientation. Additional stakeholders receive education as applicable.

Adherence to Unison Corporate Compliance and Ethics Program and participation in related activities and training will be reviewed and considered when making decisions on the hiring, promotion, and compensation for all candidates and staff.

### ***Questions/Answers***

Below is a summary of questions and answers you may have about our Corporate Compliance and Ethics Program. These questions and answers are intended to increase your knowledge of how the specific guidelines must be applied.

*If I have a question about workplace conduct or saw something that I thought was wrong, whom should I contact?*

We encourage you to talk with your supervisor first. However, if for any reason you do not feel comfortable talking to your supervisor or if your supervisor did not answer the question or address the problem to your satisfaction, there are other options. You may speak to another member of management at your facility, or contact the Ethics and Compliance Officer at 912-449-8609.

*If I report something suspicious, will I get in trouble if my suspicion turns out to be wrong?*

As long as there is an honest concern, our policy prohibits anyone being reprimanded or disciplined. You have a responsibility to report suspected problems. In fact, you may be subject to discipline if you witness something you do not report to the company. The only time someone will be disciplined for reporting misconduct is if he or she knowingly and intentionally reports something that he or she knows to be false or misleading in order to harm someone else.

*What I should do if my supervisor asks me to do something that I think violates the Corporate Compliance and Ethics plan?*

Don't do it. No matter who asks you to do something, if you know it is wrong, you must refuse. You must also immediately report the request to a level of management above your supervisor or to the Ethics line.

*How do I know if I am on ethical "thin ice"?*

If you are worried your actions will be discovered, if you feel a sense of uneasiness about what you are doing, or if you are rationalizing your activities on any basis, you are probably on thin ice. Stop and think about what is right and redirect your actions to the right thing.

*In preparation for an accreditation visit, my supervisor has asked me to review medical records and fill in any missing signatures. May I do this?*

NO! It is absolutely wrong to sign another persons name in the medical record or other forms.

*A client wants to tip an employee. May the employee accept it?*

No. Cash gifts must never be accepted from anyone with whom we have a business relationship.

*Can I type my spouse's resume on my computer?*

Possibly. If you use the computer during non-working hours, you may be permitted to type personal documents. Check with your supervisor.

*I volunteer for Big Brothers. May I copy a fundraising leaflet?*

We encourage all colleagues to participate in volunteer activities. Organization equipment, however, must not be used for charitable or other non-business purposes without prior approval from your supervisor.

*I do volunteer work for a local candidate for office. May I use the copy machine to make flyers?*

No. You may not use the agencies' time or resources to support political activities that are undertaken on a personal basis, as is the case here.

*We need to buy a new computer and my brother works for a local business where computers are sold? May I pick his business if the prices are comparable to other businesses?*

All businesses need to have an opportunity to offer their prices and services. We must avoid the appearance of favoritism.