Platte County Board of Services for the Developmentally Disabled is committed to the highest standards of conduct in our relationships with each other, persons served, stakeholders, and others. This requires that Platte County Board of Services conducts its business in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations. This Code of Personal Conduct helps the organization and its board members and employees in this endeavor by providing a statement of fundamental principles and key policies and procedures that govern the conduct of its business.

No illegal conduct or unethical conduct in violation of this Code on the part of a board member or employee will be tolerated.

This Code applies to all board members and employees (referred to as members in this Code).

In complying with this Code, board members and employees should ask themselves the following questions:

- Is my action legal?
- Is my action ethical?
- Does my action comply with Platte County Board of Services policy?
- Am I sure my action does not appear to be inappropriate?
- Am I sure that I, or Platte County Board of Services, would not be embarrassed or compromised if my action became known within the organization or publicly?
- Am I sure that my action meets my personal code of ethics and behavior?

Members should be able to answer “yes” to all these questions before taking any action.

**Code of Ethics—Business**

In conducting PCBS’s business I shall:

- Never permit my personal interests to conflict, or even appear to conflict, with the interests of the organization or the persons it serves.
- Be particularly careful to avoid representing the organization in any transaction with others with whom I have an outside business affiliation or relationship and shall avoid using Platte County Board of Services’ contacts to advance my private businesses or personal interests.

**Code of Ethics—Contractual Relationships**

In contracting I shall:

- Only enter into a contract for Platte County Board of Services if authorized to do so.
If I or my family has a substantial economic interest in an entity aspiring to contract with Platte County Board of Services, I or they shall not:

- Enter into any contract, subcontract, or other transaction with Platte County Board of Services unless it is the lowest bid.

If I am a Board member and I or my family has a substantial economic interest in an entity aspiring to contract with Platte County Board of Services, I shall:

- Excuse myself from the discussion about and refrain from voting on the contract.

**Code of Ethics—Marketing**

When marketing Platte County Board of Services, I shall:

- Always respect the dignity and privacy rights of persons served.
- Never knowingly mislead or misinform the public or misrepresent Platte County Board of Services.

**Code of Ethics—Service Delivery**

A conflict of interest situation can arise when a member takes actions or has interests that make it difficult, or even appear to make it difficult, for him/her to perform the organization’s work objectively and effectively. Therefore, I shall:

- Disclose to my supervisor any situation that would reasonably be expected to give rise to a conflict of interest. These include, but may not be limited to:
  
  - Receiving material personal benefit as a result of a position or relationship to Platte County Board of Services.
  - Owning or otherwise possessing an interest in an organization that competes with Platte County Board of Services.
  - Participating in a business arrangement with Platte County Board of Services.
  - Having a family member on the board of directors or employed by Platte County Board of Services.
  - Having a family member receiving services from Platte County Board of Services.

On occasion, a member may be offered gifts, money or gratuities for services performed as part of the job. Therefore, I shall:

- Decline any gifts, money or gratuities whenever they are offered by persons served or their parents or guardians, except at holidays when I may accept token gifts.
- Under no circumstances accept gifts in the nature of payoffs, bribes or kickbacks of any type from persons served, stakeholders, or any business.
Platte County Board of Services supports the activities of charities and recognizes that members may wish to make donations to charitable organizations other than Platte County Board of Services. Therefore, if I choose to solicit funds on behalf of a personal cause, I shall not:

- Unreasonably disrupt work.
- Use excessive or coercive tactics in promoting the fundraising activity but shall raise funds on a fair and equitable basis. I may distribute brochures, display posters, send electronic communication or share information through staff meetings.
- Solicit funds from persons served.

Members should recognize their responsibility to protect and conserve personal property and resources. Therefore, I shall:

- Safeguard the property of the agency, persons served, visitors, and employees.
- Not borrow, purchase, or remove without permission the personal property of the agency, persons served, visitors, and other employees.

In my role as a human services professional, I shall set boundaries that:

- Avoid all dual relationships with persons served that may impair professional judgment, increase the risk of harm to persons served or lead to exploitation.
- Avoid all dual relationships with other employees that supervise me.

Unless I am a notary public, I shall not:

- Witness legal documents, such as powers of attorney, guardianship, or advance directives, for persons served and/or their families.

**Code of Ethics-Professional Responsibilities**

In my professional conduct, I shall:

- Treat others with courtesy, fairness, dignity and respect.
- Maintain an environment free from discrimination and harassment.
- Avoid duplicating another’s professional helping relationship with a person served.
- Consult with other professionals who are assisting the person served in a different type of relationship when it is in the best interest of the person served to do so.
- Seek appropriate consultation and supervision to assist in decision-making when there are legal, ethical or other dilemmas.
- Act with integrity, honesty, genuineness, and objectivity.
- Adhere to commitments made to Platte County Board of Services.
- When a conflict arises, work conjointly with all involved to manage the conflict.
**Code of Ethics - Human Resources**

In **human resources** I shall:

- Support the goals and objectives for human resource development at Platte County Board of Services.
- Encourage Platte County Board of Services to make fair and equitable treatment of all employees a primary concern.
- Strive to make Platte County Board of Services cost-effective through the support and encouragement of effective employment practices.
- Instill in members and the public a sense of confidence about the conduct and intentions of Platte County Board of Services.
- Maintain loyalty to Platte County Board of Services and pursue its objectives in ways that are consistent with the public interests.
- Uphold all laws and regulations relating to Platte County Board of Services' activities.

**Code of Ethics - Waste, Fraud, Abuse and Other Wrongdoing**

Platte County Board of Services will not retaliate against any individual who issues a complaint, files a grievance, or participates in any investigation or hearing toward the agency. This applies to allegations of waste, fraud, ethical violations, harassment, discrimination, and any other wrongdoing by the agency or its members.

I shall not intimidate, threaten, coerce, discriminate against or take other retaliatory action against any individual who:

- Issues a complaint toward this agency.
- Exercises his/her rights under any federal or state regulations.
- Participates in any process established by federal or state regulations, such as a complaint, investigation or hearing.
- Files a complaint with a federal or state agency having jurisdiction over the complaint. Examples could be the EEOC, Missouri Human Rights Commission, or the Secretary of Health and Human Services.
- Testifies, assists or participates in an investigation, compliance review, proceeding or hearing under applicable laws and regulations.
- Opposes any act or practice that is unlawful under federal or state regulations, provided that the individual:
  - Has a good faith belief that the practice is unlawful; and
  - Is reasonable in the manner of the opposition; and
  - Does not disclose protected health information in violation of HIPAA.

**Procedures:**

Each member is responsible for his/her own ethical behavior. The board president or supervisor is responsible for guiding the ethical behavior of his/her group.
An investigation of an alleged violation of the code of personal conduct will be initiated within 5 working days of the written notification of the board president or supervisor, whichever is appropriate.

Violations of the ethical standards will be addressed as follows:

1. Violations by employees will be addressed through standard disciplinary procedures (see policy on Disciplinary Action).

2. Violations by a member of the Board of Directors or Executive Director or violations not covered by staff disciplinary procedures will be addressed by the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors.