



Code of Conduct Policy

5.9 P

POLICY

Policies direct required organizational practice/behaviour



Purpose:

The behaviours of everyone at Island Health are essential to maintaining the public’s confidence and trust. The behavioural expectations outlined in Island Health’s Code of Conduct Policy are derived from Island Health’s CARE values: Courage, Aspire, Respect and Empathy.

The purpose of the Code of Conduct Policy is to outline consistent, ethical standards of conduct to guide Island Health actions and interactions, organizational response and individual responsibility and response in the event of misconduct. The policy cannot anticipate all circumstances and situations individuals may encounter. The exercise of good judgment is expected at all times.

Context:

Island Health offers programs and services on the unceded and traditional territories of the Coast Salish, Nuu-chah-nulth, and Kwakwaka’wakw Peoples.

As a signatory to the 2015 Declaration of Commitment to Cultural Safety and Cultural Humility¹, Island Health is committed to addressing the ongoing impacts of colonialism and Indigenous-specific racism in order to provide a culturally safe, inclusive, healthy and respectful environment.

The organization is committed to strengthening diversity, equity and inclusion to enable excellence in health and care for everyone, everywhere, every time. Through these commitments, Island Health strives to deliver the highest possible standard of care and to promote safe workplaces.

Scope:

- **Audience:**
 - Board of Directors;
 - Staff and medical staff of Island Health and its subsidiaries;
 - Physicians, dentists, mid-wives and other allied health professionals with an Island Health appointment and privileges or who contract with Island Health who provide care or services on behalf of Island Health;
 - Residents;
 - Students, trainees and educators; and
 - Volunteers.
- **Environment:** Island Health-wide. Does not replace professional Codes of Ethics or Bylaws. Individuals covered under a professional Code of Ethics are expected to practice according to their profession’s Code of Ethics as well as this policy.
- **Exceptions:** Does not apply to individuals associated with Foundations or Auxiliary members.

1.0 Policy

- Island Health’s Code of Conduct Policy is principle-based and is an over-arching policy. It anchors all of the specific Island Health bylaws, policies, procedures, standards, guidelines, regulations and directives that set out the rules by which Island Health govern ourselves and the steps to take should we fall short.
- To enable Island Health to provide a culturally safe, inclusive, healthy and respectful environment that enables the pursuit of our vision of excellent health and care for everyone, everywhere, every time. Every individual covered by this policy will do no harm by:
 - Providing high quality, culturally safe, compassionate, kind care and service;

¹ <https://www.fnha.ca/wellness/wellness-and-the-first-nations-health-authority/cultural-safety-and-humility>

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- Demonstrating cultural humility in understanding how each person’s own lived experiences influence how they interact with others;
- Being courteous, respectful and considerate of others in words, actions and gestures;
- Standing up against all forms of hate, racism, bigotry and bullying;
- Treating others with respect and dignity, and not engaging in discriminatory conduct prohibited by the [Human Rights Code](#). The prohibited grounds are Indigenous identity, race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, religion, family status, marital status, physical disability, mental disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, political belief or conviction of a criminal or summary offence unrelated to the individual’s employment;
- Being curious about and open to the ideas and perspectives of others, handling differences respectfully and constructively;
- Demonstrating personal accountability and acting as an ambassador of Island Health’s CARE values;
- Fostering an environment of professionalism, sound judgement, openness and high ethical standards;
- Assuming ownership and accountability for own actions and behaviours;
- Working in collaboration with colleagues;
- Treating each other with dignity, fairness, and respect, regardless of position or authority;
- Operating within the law;
- Following organizational policies, procedures and guidelines;
- Maintaining confidentiality of individuals as well as organizational information;
- Using organizational assets for the purpose of performing work-related activities and legitimate Island Health business;
- Making decisions about recruitment, work assignments, educational opportunities, promotions or terminations fairly and equitably;
- Ensuring direct or indirect personal interests do not, potentially or actually, conflict with the interests of Island Health; and
- Performing assigned work as required by the position in a competent, careful and productive manner in compliance with acceptable standards of the applicable profession, learner role and/or job description.

1.1 Roles and Responsibilities

1.1.1 Responsibilities

- All individuals covered by this policy are responsible for:
 - Reading and understanding the Code of Conduct Policy and staying current with updates;
 - Acting in a way that is consistent with Island Health’s Code of Conduct Policy (understanding and applying the principles and terms of the Code of Conduct Policy in daily work interactions);
 - Signing and acknowledging you have read, understand, and agree to comply with the Code of Conduct Policy by signing the Code of Conduct Declaration, a minimum of bi-annually;
 - Speaking to colleagues when their behaviour is inconsistent with the Code of Conduct Declaration;
 - Avoiding the discussion of workplace conduct, concerns and conflicts in front of others; and
 - Addressing inappropriate behaviours as outlined in section [1.4 Reporting](#) of this policy.

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1.1.2 Consequences

- Breaches of the Code of Conduct Policy are considered to be a serious matter. The consequences are as set out in the terms of employment or other relationship agreements with Island Health, and may result in progressive interventions involving coaching, education/training and discipline up to and including termination of employment or other relationship with Island Health.

1.2 Addressing Concerns

- Leaders can be consulted regarding any general questions about the policy.
- If any behaviour is observed that is believed to be in violation of this policy, the following options are available:
 - Direct communication: Individuals are encouraged to speak directly, respectfully and privately to that person. Advise the person that their behaviour is inappropriate given the policy.
 - Seek assistance: If staff do not feel comfortable speaking with the person directly or if they are unable to resolve the issue and/or the behaviour persists, they can work with their leader or leader’s leader to prepare a report that documents the incident, including information such as:
 - The date and time of the incident.
 - The name of person(s) involved in or who witnessed the action.
 - The circumstances that precipitated the incident.
 - A description of the incident.
- Leaders may consult with designated subject matter experts such as individuals within Human Resources, Legal Affairs, Privacy Office, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, and Health, Wellness and Safety to conduct an investigation that involves all appropriate parties.

1.3 Reporting

- Island Health’s [Safe Reporting](#) and [Respectful Workplace](#) policies allow individuals bound by the Code of Conduct Policy to safely, anonymously and confidentially report violations considered to be of a serious nature, without fear of reprisal. Acts of retaliation or consequence targeted to any member of Island Health who reports violations to the Code of Conduct Policy will not be tolerated and will result in disciplinary action.
- Patients also have the ability to report Code of Conduct Policy concerns through the [Patient Care Quality Office](#).

2.0 Definitions

- **Compliance with Laws, Rules and Regulations:** Acknowledges rules beyond the Code of Conduct Policy that must be abided by, whether government, organizationally or through a union’s collective agreement.
- **Conflict of Interest:** Keeping one’s role as a private citizen distinct from their employment responsibilities.
- **Cultural Safety and Cultural Humility, Racism, Systemic Racism:** As defined by individual – reference “[In Plain Sight](#)” report.
- **Leader:** An individual that has direct reports within the organization or oversees the work of others.
- **Patient:** Also means client or resident.
- **Respectful Workplace:** Creating an environment free from discrimination and harassment.
- **Social Responsibility:** Inclusion for all and recognizes diversity.
- **Staff and Medical Staff:** Includes individuals in permanent and probationary positions and individuals in term roles, casuals and individuals that are providing services as part of an individual consulting or service contract.

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- **Theft, Fraud and Corruption:** emphasizes honesty and integrity required from everyone.
- **Use of Social Media:** Guidelines for use or non-use of social media in the workplace.
- **Volunteer** – A person who has been screened by the Volunteer Resources and Engagement Department or is a member of an affiliated Auxiliary or Foundation, then assigned a role through which they give their time, energy and skills freely in service, without monetary compensation, and contribute positively to the overall experience of patients, residents, clients, visitors, and/or staff and Medical staff at Island Health.
- **Workplace:** All owned and operated facilities including parking lot areas.

3.0 Related Island Health Policy Documents

- [Confidential Information – Privacy Rights of Personal Information](#)
- [Confidential Information – Third Party, VIHA Business and Other Non-Personal Information](#)
- [Conflict of Interest](#)
- [Information and Data Governance](#)
- [Mobile Computing](#)
- [Privacy and Related Information Security Breaches: Reporting, Investigation and Management](#)
- [Release of Patient information to Law Enforcement Personal in Urgent or Emergency Situation](#)
- [Respectful Workplace](#)
- [Remote Access](#)
- [Safe Reporting](#)
- [Security of Electronic Information](#)
- [Social Media Use by VIHA Employees](#)

4.0 References

- First Nations Health Authority. 2015 Declaration of Commitment to Cultural Safety and Cultural Humility. <https://www.fnha.ca/Documents/Declaration-of-Commitment-on-Cultural-Safety-and-Humility-in-Health-Services.pdf>
- First Nations Health Authority. *Cultural Safety and Humility*. <https://www.fnha.ca/wellness/wellness-and-the-first-nations-health-authority/cultural-safety-and-humility>
- Government of BC. Human Rights Code. (2022). https://www.bclaws.gov.bc.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/96210_01
- Turpel-Lafond, M.E.. (2020). *In Plain Sight: Addressing Indigenous-specific Racism and Discrimination in B.C. Health Care*. <https://engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/613/2020/11/In-Plain-Sight-Summary-Report.pdf>

5.0 Resources

- [Code of Conduct](#) (Island Health intranet page)

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Appendix A: Island Health – Code of Conduct Declaration

The Island Health Code of Conduct Declaration is to be digitally signed by all Staff, Medical Staff or Agents via the online Education Module. They must complete the Declaration when onboarding to or providing services on behalf of Island Health and it must be renewed on an annual basis while employment with or services on behalf of Island Health continue.

The Code of Conduct Declaration is embedded in the online Code of Conduct Policy Declaration Module which can be accessed via the Provincial Learning Hub.

Course number: 29781

URL: <https://learninghub.phsa.ca/Courses/29781/code-of-conduct-policy-declaration>

The Code of Conduct Declaration	<p>The Code of Conduct Policy Declaration:</p> <p>I confirm that the Code of Conduct and its Supporting Policies and Procedures apply to me and that I will comply with them.</p> <p>Specifically, I COMMIT AS A MEMBER OF ISLAND HEALTH:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I acknowledge and understand Island Health’s commitment to Cultural Safety and Cultural Humility¹, and to address Indigenous-specific racism in order to provide a culturally safe, healthy and respectful environment to enable excellence in health and care, for everyone, everywhere, every time; • I will take action against all forms of hate, racism, bigotry and bullying by bringing issues forward to the most appropriate and culturally safe leader or your leaders leader; • I will actively participate in cultural humility initiatives to promote and support an environment of Cultural Safety and Humility and speak out against racism and discrimination. • I will treat others with respect and dignity and not engage in discriminatory conduct prohibited by the Human Rights Code². The prohibited grounds are Indigenous identity, race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, religion, family status, marital status, physical disability, mental disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, political belief or conviction of a criminal or summary offence unrelated to the individual’s employment; • I acknowledge how my own lived experience and my understanding of the world influences how I interact with others and that intention and impact are not the same; • I will demonstrate commitment to continuous learning and leadership as part of my responsibility as an Island Health employee; • I will communicate in a respectful manner; interact without any abuse, harassment, discrimination, aggression or violence and avoid gossip and destructive communication including using social media tools responsibly; • I will operate within the law;
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I will follow organizational policies, procedures and guidelines including using organizational assets for the purpose of performing work-related activities and legitimate Island Health business; and • I will maintain the confidentiality of all private information and interactions.
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¹<https://www.fnha.ca/what-we-do/cultural-safety-and-humility>

²The [Human Rights Code](#) prohibits discrimination based only on certain personal characteristics. Sometimes these are called “protected characteristics” or “grounds of discrimination.”

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