



# **Safety and Health Manual**

**An Employee Guide to Safety Policies and Procedures**

**June 2022**

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## Commitment to Safety

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Select Human Services, a Division of New Hope Community, Inc. (the Agency) recognizes that our employees drive the business. As the most critical resource, employees will be safeguarded through training, provision of appropriate engineering supports and procedures that foster protection of health and safety. All work conducted by Select Human Services, a Division of New Hope Community, Inc.'s employees will take into account the intent of this policy. No duty, no matter what its perceived result, will be deemed more important than employee health and safety.

The Agency is firmly committed to the safety of our employees. We will do everything possible to prevent workplace accidents and are committed to supporting a safe working environment for all employees.

We value our employees not only as employees but also as human beings critical to the success of their family, the local community, the individuals they serve and the Agency.

Employees are required to report any unsafe work practices or safety hazards encountered on the job. All accidents/incidents (no matter how slight) are to be reported his/her immediate supervisor and Human Resources.

A key factor in implementing this policy will be the strict compliance to all applicable federal, state, local, and Agency policies and procedures. Failure to comply with these policies may result in disciplinary actions.

Respecting this, the Agency will make every reasonable effort to support a safe and healthful workplace that is free from any recognized or known potential hazards. Additionally, the Agency subscribes to these principles:

1. Most accidents are preventable through implementation of effective Safety and Health Control policies and programs.
2. Safety and Health controls are a major part of our work every day.
3. Accident prevention is good business. It minimizes human suffering, promotes better working conditions for everyone, holds the Agency in higher regard with clients, and increases productivity. This is why the Agency will comply with all safety and health regulations that apply to the course and scope of operations.
4. Management is responsible for supporting the safest possible workplace for employees. Consequently, management of the Agency is committed to allocating and providing all of the resources needed to promote and effectively implement this safety policy.
5. Employees are responsible for following safe work practices and Agency rules, and for preventing accidents and injuries. Management will establish lines of communication to solicit and receive comments, information, suggestions and assistance from employees where safety and health are concerned.
6. Management and supervisors of the Agency will set an exemplary example with good attitudes and strong commitment to safety and health in the workplace. Toward this end, management must monitor Agency safety and health performance, working environment and conditions to ensure that program objectives are achieved.
7. Our safety program applies to all employees and persons affected or associated in any way by the scope of this business. Everyone's goal must be to constantly improve safety awareness and to prevent accidents and injuries.

Everyone at the Agency must be involved and committed to safety. This must be a team effort. Together, we can prevent accidents and injuries. Together, we can keep each other safe and healthy in the work that provides our livelihood and serves those with developmental disabilities living in our community.

## Employee Safety Responsibilities

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The primary responsibility of the Agency employees is to perform his or her duties in a safe manner in order to prevent injury to themselves and those they serve.

As a condition of employment, employees **MUST** become familiar with, observe, and obey the Agency's rules and established policies for health, safety, and preventing injuries while at work. Additionally, employees **MUST** learn the approved safe practices and procedures that apply to their work.

Before beginning all new assignments, an employee should review applicable and appropriate safety rules.

If an employee has any questions about how to safely complete a task, he or she is under instruction **NOT** to begin the task until he or she discusses the situation with his or her supervisor. Together, they will determine the safe way to do the job.

If, after discussing a safety situation with his or her supervisor, an employee still has questions or concerns, he or she is required to contact Human Resources.

**NO EMPLOYEE IS EVER REQUIRED** to perform work that he or she believes is unsafe, or that he or she thinks is likely to cause injury or a health risk to themselves or others.

### **General Safety Rules**

#### **Conduct**

Horseplay, 'practical jokes,' etc., are forbidden. Employees are required to work in an injury-free manner displaying accepted levels of behavior. Conduct that places the employee or others at risk, or which threatens or intimidates others, is forbidden.

#### **Drugs and Alcohol**

Use and/or possession of illegal drugs or alcohol on Agency property, on Agency time or while on assignment is strictly forbidden. Reporting for work while under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol is forbidden.

#### **Housekeeping**

You are responsible to keep your work area clean and safe. Clean-up several times throughout the day, disposing of trash and waste in approved containers, wiping up any drips/spills immediately and storing equipment in the appropriate storage space. When on field assignment, always start each service period with an assessment of your immediate home environment for safety and take any actions necessary to support a safe service environment.

The following areas must remain clear of obstructions:

- Aisles/exits
- Fire extinguishers and emergency equipment
- All electrical breakers, controls, and switches

#### **Injury Reporting**

All work-related injuries must be reported to your supervisor and Human Resources immediately. Failure to immediately report injuries can result in loss of Workers' Compensation benefits. After each medical appointment resulting from a work-related injury, you must contact your supervisor to discuss your progress. You must also give your supervisor any paperwork that you received at the appointment.

The Agency may provide Transitional Return to Work (light duty) jobs for in-office staff injured at work if the staff is cleared for such duty with a written physician's note.

## **Off-Site Safety**

- a. Agency employees are required to follow all safety and security procedures during off-site assignments.
- b. If your contact person does not advise you regarding safety hazards, consider the following:
  - Emergency exit location(s);
  - Keep your eye on the path you are walking and avoid any tripping/slipping hazards. When on stairs maintain three point contact (hand on rail and feet on stairs);
  - Wear shoes that support your feet and are slip resistant.

These rules are established to help you stay safe and injury free. Violation of the above rules, or conduct that does not meet minimum accepted work standards, may result in discipline, up to and including discharge.

When working at a client location, employees are required to follow the above rules, as well as all client rules and procedures, and work in a manner that reflects positively on the Agency.

## **Safety Orientation Training**

The Agency is committed to providing safety, health related orientation, and training for all employees at all levels of the Agency. The Agency will maintain and support a program to educate and familiarize employees with safety and health procedures, rules, and safe work practices. The training subjects and materials have been developed using industry best practices criteria and site-specific data.

The training may include, but not be limited to the following:

1. Agency specific accident and incident data
2. Hazards associated with the work area
3. Hazards associated with a specific job or task
4. Operation of specific equipment
5. Personal protective equipment
6. Emergency procedures
7. Employee accident reporting requirements
8. Return to work program
9. Any OSHA required training not included or addressed above

## **Periodic Inspections**

It is the Agency's policy that workplaces are subject to periodic site visits that include safety and health to ensure implementation and execution of our policies and procedures as relates to employees and clients receiving services.

All employees are responsible for cooperating during these site visits and managers and supervisors are responsible for initiating corrective actions to improve items discovered during the site visit.

## **Incident Reporting**

1. Any work-related injury or suspected injury must be reported immediately to your supervisor and to Human Resources. An accident form must be completed. Failure to promptly report an injury may result in disciplinary action.
2. Human Resources will issue appropriate medical forms for the injured employee to take to the treating medical practitioner. The employee must return this form to Human Resources by the next business day.
3. After each practitioner appointment, the employee must report to his/her supervisor and Human Resources to review his or her progress.

4. The Agency may provide light duty work for employees recovering from injury.
5. An accident investigation will be conducted to determine the cause of the accident. The injured employee will be asked to participate in the investigation.

## **Return to Work**

It is our goal to prevent work-related injuries from happening. We are always concerned when one of our employees is injured or ill due to a work-related condition. We believe that such absences cost both the Agency and its employees. We want our injured employees to get the best possible medical treatment immediately to assure the earliest possible recovery and return to work.

The Agency has a workers' compensation program available for employees who have suffered work-related injuries. The program's administrator will determine, based upon their guidelines, whether you are eligible for wage loss and/or medical expenses under that program.

The Agency wants to provide meaningful work activity for in-office employees who become unable to perform all, or portions, of their regular work assignment. We are committed to exploring transitional or light duty work opportunities to support an employee's ability to return to work.

### **Employee Procedures**

- All work-related injuries should always be reported immediately to your supervisor and Human Resources no later than the end of the shift on which the injury occurs.
- You must complete and sign a Report of Injury or Illness form.
- When medical treatment is sought, the injured employee must advise their supervisor that they are seeking treatment and obtain a Return to Work Evaluation form. Regardless of the choice of physicians, the Return to Work form must be completed for each practitioner visit. The Agency will not accept a general note stating that you are only to be off from work.
- Temporary light duty work may be available while you are temporarily unable to work in your regular job capacity. Transitional or light duty work beyond will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.
- Employees who are unable to work and whose absences the Agency approves must keep us informed on a weekly basis of their status. Failure to do so will result in a reduction in benefits available and discipline, up to and including termination from employment.
- If you are unable to return to your regular job or transitional duty, your absence must be approved under the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) program. For this purpose, you need to obtain and complete a Family Medical Leave Request form and submit it to Human Resources. You must also have your practitioner complete both the Return to Work Evaluation form and Return to Work Request / Physician's Authorization form.
- Employees who are not eligible for leave under FMLA must return to light duty or regular work if possible. If you are unable to return to any available work, your job position may be filled after a reasonable time. When able to do so, you will be entitled to return to a suitable position, if available and consistent with any limitations. However, you must keep us regularly informed of your status and any changes in your condition.
- Employees must provide a Return to Work form indicating they are capable of returning to full duty. Permanent restrictions will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis and relate to the performance of essential job functions. No permanent light duty positions will be created.
- Cooperate with our third-party administrator and provide accurate and complete information as soon as possible so that you receive all benefits to which you are entitled. If you have problems or concerns, please contact your supervisor and Human Resources.

# Emergency Action Plan

## General Emergency Guidelines

- Stay calm and think through your actions
- Know the emergency numbers:  
Fire/Police/Ambulance 911
- Human Resources (ext.117)
- Know where the exits are located
- In the event of any emergency, use the stairs
- Do not hesitate to call or alert others if you believe that an emergency is occurring; you will not “get in trouble.”
- First aid supplies and emergency equipment are located in the Judy Voron Like Skills Studio and in Human Resources for use by those who are authorized and properly trained
- Fire extinguishers are located throughout the building

## Evacuation

- Employees will be notified of a fire alarm either by the fire alarm system or by a paged announcement.
- Upon becoming aware of a fire alarm, employees should immediately evacuate the job site. Do not delay evacuation to get personal belongings or to wait for co-workers. In addition, close all doors as the last person passes through. (Note: never use elevators during fire alarm situations).
- Supervisors should be the last persons to leave the area. Check the job site to be sure that all personnel have evacuated.
- Any employee having mobility, visual, hearing, or other condition, which may hinder them from becoming aware of an emergency or evacuating, should request special assistance through Human Resources.
- Upon exiting the building, all personnel should report for a headcount.
- If any employee is missing, notify the first available fire department officer.
- Employees should stay together in a group so that they can receive periodic updates on the situation.
- The order to re-occupy a job site or building will be issued by the fire department officer.
- In the event of inclement weather, the fire department officer or other assigned officer (i.e. police) will arrange for all personnel to move to shelter.

## Fire Safety

- Alert other persons in the immediate hazard area.
- Activate a fire alarm or call a supervisor to page an emergency announcement.
- If you have been trained, you can decide to use a fire extinguisher following these instructions:
  - P=Pull the safety pin
  - A=Aim the nozzle at the base of the fire
  - S=Squeeze the operating lever
  - S=Sweep side to side covering the base of the fire

*\*When using a fire extinguisher, always stay between the fire and an exit; stay low and back away when the fire is extinguished.*

*\*Never feel that using a fire extinguisher is required. If the fire is too hot, too smoky or you are frightened, evacuate.*

- Have someone notify the fire department officer or police in charge as to where the emergency is located. He or she will relay this information to the fire department and other emergency response units.

## Medical Emergency

- Upon discovering a medical emergency, call 911.
- Notify the supervisor and report the nature of the medical emergency and location.

- Stay with the person involved, being careful not to come in contact with any bodily fluids.
- Employees in the immediate vicinity of the emergency, but not directly involved, should leave the area.
- Human Resources will notify family members of the person suffering the medical emergency.

### **Severe Weather**

- Senior Management will monitor weather conditions via radio and internet. If a severe weather report is issued during business hours, she/he will immediately page an announcement and if safe and with sufficient time, grant early dismissal. If severe weather is forecasted during travel times prior to the start of a workday, staff are to check the Storm Center of WHUD on the internet ([www.whud.com/stormcenter/](http://www.whud.com/stormcenter/)) for any agency related delay or closing announcements. Staff can also hear announcements by tuning into WHUD 100.7 FM.

## **Emergency Contact Information**

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**FIRE DEPARTMENT:** Pleasantville Fire Department  
**TELEPHONE:** (914) 769-9741

**POLICE DEPARTMENT:** Pleasantville Police Department  
**TELEPHONE:** (914) 769-1500

## **Workplace Violence**

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- Any employee who feels that she/he has been threatened should immediately report their concern to the supervisor and to Human Resources.
- If any person is observed exhibiting threatening behavior or making threatening statements, the person discovering the situation should warn others in the area and immediately notify Human Resources and stay away from the person exhibiting threatening behavior.
- Depending upon the level of concern, the police department (911) should be called immediately.
- Never attempt to confront any person exhibiting threatening behavior.

If you have reason to believe that events in your personal life could result in acts of violence occurring at work, you are urged to confidentially discuss the issue with Human Resources so that a prevention plan can be developed.

## **OSHA Compliance Programs**

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### **Tuberculosis**

All staff will be trained upon employment to recognize the signs and symptoms of tuberculosis and be educated to the need to seek medical attention if symptoms such as blood in sputum, unexplained night sweats, unexplained weight loss, unexplained fevers, or persistent cough, are present. If tuberculosis is diagnosed, staff must immediately contact Human Resources and provide documentation specific to physician ordered treatment protocol. This will allow proper actions by management to support staff during the treatment period in an informed, appropriate manner.

### **Universal Precautions**

All staff will receive training on universal precautions prior to the start of employment. The number one defense against the spread of disease is good handwashing. As staff training states, you must wet your hands with clean, running water (warm or cold), turn off the tap, and apply soap. Lather your hands by rubbing them together with the soap. Be sure to lather the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails. *Scrub your hands for at least 20 seconds.*

## **Respiratory Hygiene/Cough Etiquette in Human Service Settings**

Prior to employment, all staff are required to complete training on proper respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette to disrupt the chain of transmission of infectious respiratory diseases. This is a primary prevention measure that goes hand in hand with good handwashing and as they say, *"prevention is better than cure"*.

### **Flu Season**

Flu season runs from November through March of each year. The Agency strongly encourages staff to receive the flu vaccine two weeks prior to the start of flu season (this is the time it takes for full vaccine protection to be in place). Each year the Center for Disease Control (CDC) offers a vaccine that targets the top three flu viruses for that season. The vaccine is not live and therefore cannot cause you to get the flu. During flu season, it is prudent to periodically sanitize shared surfaces in your home, in the work place and on assignment in individuals' homes. This would include telephone receivers, computer keyboards and mousepads, counters and other flat surfaces, TV remotes, light switches and switch plates, etc.

### **Bloodborne Pathogens**

1. All employees are required to complete web-based OSHA training prior to the start of employment. This includes passing all required tests with 80% or above. Such training must be completed annually and documented in the employee's training record.
2. All DSP's will be given the option to receive a Hep B vaccine (series of three intramuscular injections over a 6-month period), free of charge, upon accepted employment with The Agency. This will be provided through a local health care provider. If a DSP does not choose to receive the vaccine he/she must sign a Hep B declination form documenting this choice. This document will be maintained in the employee's confidential medical file.
3. Blood and other bodily fluids can carry pathogens, which are capable of causing diseases in others. This includes HIV, which leads to AIDS, and hepatitis.
4. It is critical to don the appropriate latex gloves when bodily fluids are released to provide a barrier to exposure (see more detail in the next section).

### **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) - Gloves**

Inspect latex gloves prior to using to ensure there are no imperfections in the surface (i.e., holes)

- a) Gloves – latex gloves must be worn at all times when assisting an individual with clean-up specific to: a) toileting, b) vomit, c) blood and other bodily fluids. Latex gloves may be provided on the assignment site or secured from Human Resources. It is important to choose the correct size and to take off correctly (as to not contaminate skin from contact with a used glove). All staff needing to use gloves on assignment must demonstrate proper glove use prior to such usage. Latex gloves must only be used once and disposed of properly in a sealed plastic bag.
- b) NOTE: Thick rubber gloves are only appropriate for use in light cleaning (i.e. if a community habilitation staff is supporting a valued outcome in which the individual wants to learn how to clean a kitchen counter after food preparation). Rubber gloves may be rinsed after use, stored in the appropriate place and re-used for future cleaning.

### **Exposure Control Plan**

Employees who have been exposed to bloodborne pathogens on assignment must immediately contact their direct supervisor and Human Resources. Follow-up medical attention will be immediately secured along with the completion of required OSHA documentation and steps (as per the Exposure Control Plan maintained on The Agency's site). All records will be maintained confidentially, as required. An employee experiencing an exposure event may have access to exposure control records upon request to Human Resources during normal business hours. The Agency has an Exposure Control Plan on site that provides a systematic description of proper processes and protocols to be followed in the event of an exposure event and as required by OSHA.

## Fire Prevention & Electrical Safety

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### Fire Prevention

1. Smoking is only allowed in designated exterior smoking areas.
2. No candles or open flames are allowed within the office facility or on remote assignment sites.
3. Only space heaters provided by the Agency, are approved for use within the facility. Employees using space heaters are responsible to turn the heater off when leaving their desk for extended periods of time (lunch, end of the workday, etc.).
4. No flammable chemicals are allowed inside the building at any time.

### Electrical Safety

1. Keep electrical cords out of areas where they will be damaged by stepping on or kicking them.
2. Turn electrical appliances off with the switch, not by pulling out the plug.
3. Turn all appliances off before leaving for the day.
4. Never run cords under rugs or other floor coverings.
5. Any electrical problems should be reported immediately.
6. The following areas must remain clear and unobstructed at all times:
  - Exit doors,
  - Aisles,
  - Electrical panels, and
  - Fire extinguishers.

## General Safety Precautions

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### General Safety Rules

1. Do not store or leave items on stairways, obstruct stairwells, exits or accesses to safety and emergency equipment such as fire extinguishers or fire alarms.
2. Straighten or remove rugs and mats that do not lie flat on the floor.
3. Use the handle when closing doors, drawers and files.
4. Obey all posted safety and danger signs.
5. Use caution signs/cones to barricade slippery areas such as freshly mopped floors.
6. Clean up water around water coolers immediately.
7. Do not run on stairs or take more than one-step at a time.
8. Do not block your view by carrying large or bulky items.
9. Do not tilt the chair you are sitting in on its back two legs.
10. Use handrails when ascending or descending stairs.
11. Walk around wet, icy, slick or oily areas if possible.
12. If required to cross a slippery surface, walk slow and flat-footed. Hold onto a handrail or solid object, if present, to maintain balance.
13. Use provided aisles, walkways or sidewalks. Do not take shortcuts.
14. Clean shoes of ice, water, mud, grease or other substances that could cause a slip or fall.
15. Turn on lights when entering a dark room or dim surroundings.
16. Do not move faster than conditions allow on slippery surfaces or in congested areas.
17. Open one file cabinet drawer at a time.
18. Use a cord cover or tape the cord down when running electrical or other cords between desks or across entrances/exits.

### Electrical safety

1. Do not use appliances and extension or power cords that have the ground prong removed or broken off.
2. Do not connect multiple electrical devices into a single outlet.
3. Do not overload electrical circuits with multiple outlets.
4. Turn off electrical appliances and equipment when not in use.
5. Turn off and unplug office equipment before adjusting, lubricating or cleaning them.

## **Lifting Procedures**

1. As some lifting, assistance with ambulation or change in position may be part of a direct support professional's job role, all community habilitation and respite staff must complete required proper body mechanics training prior to the start of employment. Any questions should be referred to their immediate supervisor prior to starting an assignment.

### **General Lifting Principles**

2. Plan the move before lifting; remove obstructions from your chosen pathway.
3. Test the weight of the load before lifting by pushing the load along its resting surface.
4. If the load is too heavy or bulky, use lifting and carrying aids such as dollies and carts or get assistance from a co-worker.
5. If assistance is required to perform a lift, coordinate and communicate your movements with those of your co-worker.
6. Position your feet 6 to 12 inches apart with one foot slightly in front of the other.
7. Face the load.
8. Bend at the knees, not at the back.
9. Keep your back straight.
10. Get a firm grip on the object with your hands and fingers. Use handles when present.
11. Never lift anything if your hands are greasy or wet.
12. Wear protective gloves when lifting objects with sharp corners or jagged edges.
13. Hold objects as close to your body as possible.
14. Perform lifting movements smoothly and gradually; do not jerk the load.
15. If you must change direction while lifting or carrying the load, pivot your feet and turn your entire body. Do not twist at the waist.
16. Set down objects in the same manner as you picked them up, except in reverse.
17. Do not lift an object from the floor to a level above your waist in one motion. Set the load down on a table or bench and then adjust your grip before lifting it higher.

## **File Cabinets and Shelves**

Because file cabinets and shelves tend to support heavy loads, treat them with special care.

Follow these safety guidelines for file cabinets:

1. Ensure that file cabinet drawers cannot easily be pulled clear of the cabinet. Do not block ventilation grates with file cabinets.
2. Open only one drawer at a time to keep the cabinet from toppling.
3. Close drawers when they are not in use.
4. Do not place heavy objects on top of cabinets. Be aware that anything on top of a cabinet may fall off if a drawer is opened suddenly.
5. Close drawers slowly using the handle to avoid pinched fingers.
6. Keep the bottom drawer full. This will help stabilize the entire cabinet.
7. In addition, follow these safety guidelines for office shelves:
  - Place heavy objects on the bottom shelves. This will keep the entire structure stable.
  - Ensure that there is at least 18 inches between the top shelf items and the ceiling.
  - This space will allow ceiling sprinklers (if present) to function properly if a fire occurs.
  - Do not block ventilation grates with shelves.

## **Desks**

1. Keep desks in good condition (i.e., free from sharp edges, nails, etc.).
2. Ensure that desks do not block exits or passageways.
3. Do not climb on desks. Use an approved ladder.
4. Keep desk drawers closed when not in use.
5. Repair or report any desk damage that could be hazardous.