



CODE OF CONDUCT

County of San Bernardino

Department of Public Health
351 N. Mt. View Ave, 3rd Floor
San Bernardino, CA 92415

Revised May 7, 2019

Table of Contents

Message from the Director	1
DPH Vision, Mission, Values and Goals	2
Purpose of DPH Code of Conduct	2
DPH Employees covered by the Code	3
DPH Leadership	3
Code of Ethics	3
Customer Service	5
Dress Code	5
Workplace Conduct and Employment Practices	5
Certification, Credentials, Licensure, Registration and Waivers	6
Confidentiality	6
Conflict of Interest	6
Discipline	6
Diversity and Equal Employment Opportunity	6
Emergency Services	6
Disaster Services Worker	7
Discrimination and Harassment	7
Employment of Relatives	7
Health and Safety	7
Non-Retaliation	8
No Smoking/Vaping in County Facilities	8
Protection and Proper Use of Resources	8
Standard Tour of Duty	8
Substance Abuse	8
Work Performance Evaluation	9
Work Place Violence	9
Acknowledgement Process	9
Questions Regarding the Code	10
 Code of Conduct Acknowledgement Form	

Message from the Director

The San Bernardino County Department of Public Health (DPH) is committed to the health, safety and quality of life for all County residents and visitors. We believe that our staff, the services we provide and the partnerships that we build with all sectors and throughout our communities will transform the standard of wellness in our County. DPH will continue in its endeavors with integrity and respect to those that we serve and with the utmost regard to ethical standards of conduct.

The DPH Code of Conduct (Code) was developed to provide guidance to DPH employees and to be followed in conjunction with all County, Human Services and Department policies, standard practices, and applicable federal, state and local laws and regulations. The Code will be updated periodically at the discretion of DPH Management.

New DPH staff and volunteers will receive a copy of the Code during DPH orientation and annually at the time of their WPEs. Employees should contact their supervisor with any questions.

Thank you for your commitment to the vision and mission of the Department of Public Health and for your cooperation in the implementation of the DPH Code of Conduct.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Trudy Raymundo', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Trudy Raymundo
Director

DPH Vision, Mission, Values and Goals

Vision

Healthy people in vibrant communities.

Mission

Working in partnership to promote and improve health, wellness, safety and quality of life in San Bernardino County.

Values

COLLABORATION: We build and nurture partnerships to achieve mutual success.

DIVERSITY: We celebrate and respect the uniqueness of cultures, communities and beliefs.

EQUITY: We ensure that all individuals and communities have equal opportunity for health and well-being.

INNOVATION: We implement creative solutions to address emerging problems.

TRANSPARENCY: We are open, honest and accountable in our relationships, processes and actions.

Goals

To have communities and environments support healthy lifestyles.

To educate individuals and communities to make informed healthy decisions.

To have each individual be able to achieve his or her full health potential.

To have health services address community health needs.

To have a department with the necessary tools to support healthy people and vibrant communities.

Purpose of DPH Code of Conduct

DPH's Code of Conduct builds upon the [County of San Bernardino Personnel Rule 1 – Code of Ethics and Commitment to County Public Services](#). Rule 1 articulates certain fundamental standards of conduct required by all public officials and employees for the proper operation of County government and carries the force of law. These standards are intended to strengthen public service and to maintain and promote faith and confidence of the people in their government. Rule 1 also covers Responsibilities of Public Office; Dedicated Service; Nondiscrimination; Oath of Allegiance; Confidential Information; Use of Public Property; Conflict of Interest; Political Activity; County/Employee Responsibility; and Delegation of Authority.

The purpose of the Code of Conduct is to strengthen the delivery of public health services by DPH employees while complying with laws, policies, regulations, rules and standard practices. At all times, the Code will remain consistent with the vision, mission, values, goals and objectives of the Board of Supervisors; the County Administrative Office; Human Services Administration; and DPH. The Code may not be interpreted in a manner that contradicts any federal, state, or local law or regulation, or authorized County, Human Services or department policy, standard practice, agreement, contract, directive, or Memoranda of Understanding (MOU), or any side letter agreements and amendments to current MOUs. Please see the following website links for reference:

[County Policy Manual](#)

[Human Services Policy and Standard Practice Manual](#)

[DPH Policies and Standard Practices](#)

[Human Resources MOUs](#)

DPH Employees Covered By the Code of Conduct

All full-time, part-time, temporary, and contract staff, including students, interns, externs, volunteers and work experience (WEX) workers are covered by this Code.

DPH Leadership

Effective leadership requires a commitment to create an environment that encourages staff to raise concerns and to propose solutions and new ideas. DPH executive and management staff are expected to exercise responsibility in a manner that is professional and respectful; shall ensure that employees have sufficient information to comply with laws, regulations, policies and standard practices; must create a culture within DPH that promotes compliance with federal and state laws and professional standards of conduct and ethics; and shall also provide resources to employees to help them resolve ethical issues.

Code of Ethics

The Code of Ethics establishes minimum standards of employee conduct/behavior necessary for efficient business operations of the agency and/or each individual division within the Department of Public Health (DPH). The intent is to strengthen public service, and to promote and maintain faith and confidence of the public in our department and its employees.

DPH employees are agents of the public, serving for the benefit of the public and division clientele. As such, the highest standards of morality and ethics must be demonstrated. Truthfulness and honesty are an expectation of all employees on a daily basis. Inappropriate conduct that interferes with operations, discredits the County, or is offensive to clients or coworkers will not be tolerated.

Employees are expected to conduct themselves in a positive and professional manner at all times in order to promote the best interests of the County. Appropriate conduct includes, but is not limited to the following:

- A. Performing assigned duties in a competent and responsible manner, in accordance with the standards and expectations established for the position by the department.
- B. Working to prevent or eliminate discrimination or the perception of discrimination on the basis of any protected class as defined by applicable federal and state law (e.g. age, ancestry, color, marital status, medical condition, physical or mental disability, race, religion, gender, or sexual orientation).
- C. Giving precedence to professional and employment responsibilities over personal interests; distinguishing clearly between statements and actions performed as an individual versus those performed as a representative of the department in any communication, verbal or written, and in any public presentations or meetings where clientele, the public or news media may be present.
- D. Accepting responsibility for the quality and extent of the services provided, being accurate in statements and demonstrating the highest standards of morality and ethics. ([San Bernardino County Personnel Rule 1, Section 1.2](#)).
- E. Treating every person with whom you come into contact (including, but not limited to, clients, co-workers, other County employees, vendors and other members of the public) in a courteous and considerate manner.

- F. Refraining from on-duty and/or off-duty behavior or conduct that is offensive or undesirable, or which is contrary to the County's best interests.
- G. Cooperating with departmental and/or County investigations; providing truthful and complete information; and maintaining confidentiality in all aspects of the investigative process and subsequent information following any investigation.
- H. Reporting to work regularly and punctually, as scheduled; and being at the proper workstation, ready for work, at the assigned starting time. ([Memorandum of Understanding, Standard Tour of Duty](#)).
- I. Giving proper advance notice when practical per departmental requirements whenever unable to work or report on time.
- J. Maintaining cleanliness and order in the workplace and work areas.

The following conduct is prohibited and individuals engaged in it will be subject to discipline, up to and including termination:

- a. Discourteous treatment of the public or co-workers, including, but not limited to, using profanity or abusive language.
- b. Dishonesty.
- c. Tardiness and absenteeism from work, including excessive absences for "emergency matters," excessive absence for unprotected illness or injury, or pattern of absenteeism (i.e., the work day following a holiday, calling in sick when vacation time was previously denied for the same day, regularly calling in sick on Fridays, etc.)
- d. Possessing firearms or other defensive weapons on County property and/or while conducting County business unless otherwise specifically permitted by your job duties.
- e. Engaging in violent conduct (fighting, assaulting, threatening, intimidating, etc.) or making threats of violence, implied, actual, direct or indirect, directed toward any person, occurring at a County work place or in connection with the conduct of County business.
- f. Engaging in any form of sexual or other illegal harassment and/or discrimination.
- g. Possessing, consuming, selling, purchasing, distributing, manufacturing, or being under the influence of alcohol and/or illegal drugs (or prescription drugs if use adversely affects the employee's ability to perform County employment safely and effectively) during employee's work hours, in County vehicles, personal vehicles used for County business, while in County uniform, or on County property.
- h. Disclosing confidential information, whether intentional or done negligently. This includes, but is not limited to: client information, Protected Health Information (PHI), Personally Identifiable Information (PII) and information from ongoing investigations, personnel information, etc.
- i. Accessing confidential information that is not required to complete the employees' duties.

- j. Knowingly falsifying, altering, or destroying any departmental documents, records or reports, including knowingly providing a falsified or altered document.
- k. Providing false testimony or statements within the course and scope of duties, i.e., court testimony, information provided to and/or during official court or other administrative processes, including administrative investigations.
- l. Stealing, destroying, defacing, or misusing County property or property of co-workers or members of the public, including clients and vendors.
- m. Misusing County communications systems, including e-mail, computers, Internet access, telephones, cellular phones, and other County-provided business equipment.
- n. Misusing County vehicles, including violations of law, such as but not limited to, speeding, running red lights, parking violations, smoking or vaping in County vehicles, using County vehicles for personal use, or otherwise using such vehicles inappropriately.
- o. Refusing and/or failing to follow management's instructions concerning a job-related matter or being insubordinate.
- p. Playing pranks or engaging in horseplay.
- q. Violating any County, Agency, or department rule, policy, and/or procedure.
- r. The examples of impermissible behavior described above are not intended to be an all-inclusive list.

Customer Service

DPH's clients and patients require the provision of efficient and effective quality services in compliance with professional standards of conduct. Employees shall interact with the public and one another (face to face or by telephone, letter, e-mail, or other manner) in a professional and respectful manner. Employees shall maintain and present a courteous, friendly and professional attitude in serving clients, patients or anyone else encountered in a DPH clinic or program.

Dress Code

Employees and volunteers shall follow [County Policy No. 07-16, Standards of Dress and Grooming](#) and [DPH Policy No. 02-13 Standards of Dress and Grooming](#). To promote the positive and professional image of DPH, employees shall present a clean and professional appearance. Employees will wear approved DPH and County identification badges while on duty, photo side facing out, except where specifically exempted or prohibited due to a safety issue or in cases where wearing an identification badge interferes with the execution of the employee's duties. Issues or disagreements arising from the dress and grooming policy shall be reviewed by the Program Manager, Human Resources Officer and/or DPH Director.

Workplace Conduct and Employment Practices

Certification, Credentials, Licensure, Registration and Waivers

Employees, contractors and volunteers must maintain the appropriate federal, state and local certification, credentials, licensure or registration required by law or licensing board for their position. Employees, contractors and volunteers must provide to program management copies of all legal documents demonstrating compliance with federal, state and local requirements within 30 days of obtaining such documentation. The same 30 day requirement is expected prior to the expiration of such documents. Failure by employees and contractors to maintain the required certifications, credentials, licensure or registration exposes DPH to significant civil and criminal liability and financial loss and may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Confidentiality

Employees, contractors and volunteers must ensure client/patient privacy and to protect confidential information at all times. Employees will receive training on the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and how to ensure the privacy and security of PHI and Personally Identifiable Information (PII). These trainings are available on the County's online [Learning Center](#) through the Performance Education and Resource Centers (PERC). Employee training must occur prior to accessing PHI/PII upon initial employment, transfer or promotion; in no case later than 30 days from the date appointed; and biennially thereafter. DPH program management must ensure staff are informed how to access DPH's privacy and security policies and standard practices. A completed and signed Information Privacy and Security Training Acknowledgment Form for each employee must be forwarded to the Compliance Unit, mail code 0010. The Compliance Unit will ensure the DPH Human Resources Officer (HRO) receives a copy for insertion in the employee's official personnel. Failure to ensure the confidentiality of PII and PHI exposes DPH to potential liability and may be grounds for disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Conflict of Interest

Employees must ensure they remain free from conflicts of interest or the reasonable appearance of a conflict of interest. A conflict of interest occurs when an employee's outside activities, employment, or enterprise, or other actions or relationships are inconsistent, incompatible or in conflict with his or her duties as a DPH employee or with the duties, functions or responsibilities of the County or DPH.

Diversity and Equal Employment Opportunity

DPH promotes diversity in its workforce at all levels of the organization. DPH is committed to providing an inclusive work environment where everyone is treated with dignity, fairness and respect. *For further information, see [County Policy 07-08, Equal Opportunity Employment Policy](#).*

Emergency Services

DPH provides emergency response services in "emergency situations" and has developed a [Department Emergency Operations Plan](#) (DEOP) to provide guidance and procedures to prepare for and respond to significant or catastrophic natural, environmental or conflict-related risks/events that produce situations requiring coordinated response. It further describes responsibilities and functions necessary to implement Department plans for Continuity of Government and Continuity of Operations. The primary goals of this DEOP are to protect life and property, preserve infrastructure, and continue the operations of government.

Disaster Services Worker – Oath of Allegiance

It is the policy of DPH to ensure all current and new employees, considered to be Disaster Service Workers (DSW) by California Government Code Section 3100, have the opportunity to take and subscribe to the Oath of Allegiance as outlined in this policy and as required by California Government Code Section 3102.

All new employees shall be administered the Oath of Allegiance at DPH New Employee Orientation by the Public Health Director, or a designated official. Once the Oath has been taken, each new employee will print their name and sign the “Oath of Allegiance Confirmation Form” (Attachment A to the DPH Disaster Services Worker Oath of Allegiance policy) and a copy shall be filed with DPH Administration.

Discrimination and Harassment

County employees may not discriminate or harass on the basis of actual or perceived age, ancestry, color, race, sex, religion, national origin, marital status, physical or mental disability, medical condition, or sexual orientation or any other basis protected by law. Sexual harassment includes but is not limited to unwelcome sexual overtures, advances, or coercion, or actions or use of messages of an improper sexually derogatory or stereotypical nature. Employees shall adhere to a standard of conduct that is respectful to all persons within the workplace. DPH shall not tolerate any act of retaliation against any person filing a complaint of discrimination or harassment or who participates in the investigation of such complaint. Due to the sensitive nature of such investigations, employees interviewed or directed to be interviewed must not discuss the complaint, related actions, the questions asked of them and/or their responses with anyone other than the investigator(s) and authorized personnel. Employees withholding information or failing to provide truthful responses or requested documentation may be subject to disciplinary action per [County Policy No. 07-01, Non-Discrimination Harassment](#).

Employment of Relatives

[County Policy 07-05, Employment of Relatives](#), prohibits appointment to a position by, or working in a position under, the direct or indirect supervision of a relative, except for those specifically approved by the Board of Supervisors or the Civil Service Commission for the effective operation of a department.

Relative is defined by County Policy 07-05 as brother, sister, parent, child or spouse. Failure on the part of an employee to notify his or her supervisor that he or she has a relative in the Department is a violation of this policy and may be cause for disciplinary action for any participating employee or supervisor.

Health and Safety

County and DPH facilities shall comply with federal and state health and safety laws, regulations and rules (unless otherwise exempt). The County and DPH have adopted workplace health and safety policies and standard practices to be followed by employees to protect them from hazards in the workplace. Employees shall understand how workplace health and safety policies and standard practices relate to the performance of their job duties. Employees must seek direction from their supervisors when they have a question or concern related to a workplace health or safety issue. Employees must immediately advise their supervisors of any workplace injury or any situation presenting a danger of injury. *For further information*, see the [County Employee Safety and Health Manual](#).

Non-Retaliation

Retaliation or retribution against employees who report violations or who participate in investigations of violations is prohibited.

DPH does not tolerate employees committing or condoning retaliation. Employees who commit or condone any form of retaliation may be subject to discipline, up to and including termination. Employees who knowingly and intentionally report false or misleading information in order to harm or retaliate against another may be subject to discipline, up to and including termination. *For further information, see [County Policy 07-01, Non-Discrimination/Harassment](#).*

No Smoking/Vaping in County Facilities

Smoking, as defined as inhaling into the mouth or lungs the smoke or vapor from, or the possession of, a lighted pipe, lighted cigar, lighted cigarette, an activated electronic cigarette or other similar electronic device, whether or not such electronic device delivers nicotine, or any other lighted smoking equipment. Smoking includes, but is not limited to, smoking tobacco, marijuana, any other plant or plant derivative, and synthetic substances is prohibited in all County-owned or leased buildings and in County vehicles. Outdoor smoking must be conducted a minimum of twenty (20) feet away from any access (doors, windows, ventilation systems) to a County facility, in compliance with County codes. *For further information, see [Section 31.0301 through 31.0310 of the San Bernardino County Code/Charter](#).*

Protection and Proper Use of Resources

Public resources may only be used for the performance of official County business. Public resources include but are not limited to cash, equipment, furniture, labor, legal documents, licenses, materials, supplies, training materials, and vehicles. Employees shall prevent fraud, waste and abuse of public resources, and shall report the misuse of public resources immediately. Examples of reportable offenses include theft, embezzlement, bribes or kickbacks, conflicts of interest, misappropriation of resources, filing fictitious claims, and unauthorized use of county equipment. To make a report, call 1-800-547-9540 or file online with the Auditor-Controller/Treasurer/Tax Collector at <http://www.sbcounty.gov/ATC/Divisions/HotLineForm>. *For further information, see the County of San Bernardino Internal Controls and Cash Manual or [County Policy 10-06, Federal and State False Claims Act](#) also known as Fraud, Waste and Abuse.*

Standard Tour of Duty

DPH Employees are required to report to work regularly and punctually, as scheduled, and be at their assigned work location and ready to begin work at the start of their standard tour of duty.

Substance Abuse

DPH is committed to providing a safe work environment. This commitment is placed in jeopardy when any employee participates in the illegal use or abuse of drugs or alcohol on or off the job. Substance abuse is a serious problem that can endanger County operations and the safety of employees and those who seek services from the County. Employees who abuse drugs and/or alcohol, on or off duty, tend to be less productive and have substandard performance; and are less reliable and prove to have greater absenteeism, accidents, injury to themselves and others, resulting in the potential for increased loss, delay, risk and liability.

DPH strictly prohibits the possession, consumption, sale, purchase, or being under the influence of alcohol and/or illegal drugs during an employee's work hours, during any event or activity at which the employee is

present in his or her capacity as a County employee, in County vehicles or personal vehicles being used for County business, while in County uniform, while on County property or property leased by the County, or at any formal or informal County or Department function. DPH strictly prohibits an employee reporting to or remaining on duty if the employee's use of prescription drugs adversely affects the employee's ability to perform County employment safely and effectively. In accordance with [County Policy No. 07-17, Substance Abuse/Reasonable Suspicion Drug and Alcohol Testing](#), DPH employees must report to the DPH HRO any alcohol and/or drug-related criminal arrests for possible violations within five (5) days after such arrest. The HRO shall determine whether the conduct that led to the arrest is reasonably related to and/or may affect the employee's ability to perform the duties of his or her position.

Work Performance Evaluations

All job classifications have job duties and criteria for Work Performance Evaluations (WPEs). DPH, through its managers and supervisors, will evaluate the work accomplishments and conduct of employees, inform employees of their evaluations in writing, and assist employees in improving work effectiveness. *For further information*, please see [County Personnel Rules, Rule 8](#).

Workplace Violence

The County and DPH have a "Zero Tolerance Standard" with regard to threats and violent behavior in the work place. This includes threats and violent behavior, direct, indirect, implied or actual, from any person, and directed toward any person, occurring at any County facility or in connection with the conduct of County business, without regard to location. In addition, all threatening comments or behavior, direct, indirect, implied or actual, are to be taken seriously, and are never to be dismissed as "harmless" or "just blowing off steam." Threatening comments, actions, or violent behavior at any County location or at any location where County business is being conducted are to be reported immediately to DPH supervision. Supervisors shall take necessary steps to assure the incident is immediately reported to an appropriate Manager and/or Division Chief. Unauthorized possession of weapons of any type is forbidden either on County property or during the course of County employment. *For further information*, please see [County Policy 13-07, Violence and Threats in the Work Place – Zero Tolerance](#).

Acknowledgement Process

Employees are required to sign an acknowledgement form indicating they have received, understand and agree to abide by the DPH Code of Conduct; they understand it contains mandatory policies of DPH in which they agree to abide by. New employees must review and acknowledge the DPH Code of Conduct and all identified policies and procedures within 30 days of employment. Acknowledgement forms will be placed in the employee's official personnel file. Adherence to DPH's Code of Conduct and participation in related training are considered in decisions regarding hiring, promotion and compensation for all DPH employees. Employees should use the Code as a resource in the successful performance of their job duties. The Code will be made available to all employees in electronic or hard copy format.

Questions Regarding DPH Code of Conduct

Employees shall contact their supervisor for clarification regarding the Code of Conduct. If an employee has questions about a situation in which ethics or integrity may have been compromised, he or she may consult with his or her direct Supervisor, Program Coordinator, Program Manager, Division Chief, Director and/or the DPH HRO. Additional information about the County of San Bernardino's Code of Ethics is available through the [County's Office of Compliance & Ethics](#) and they can also be contacted with any concerns, anonymously or otherwise, at 157 W. Fifth St., First Floor, San Bernardino CA 92415-0440, via email at EthicsLine@cao.sbcounty.gov, or by phone at (909) 387-4500.

