



## CODE OF ETHICS

Family Advisors (Case Managers and/or Service Coordinators) shall act with integrity in their relationships with colleagues, other organizations, agencies, institutions, referral sources, and other professions to facilitate the contribution of all providers toward achieving optimum benefit for recipients.

### 1. MORAL AND LEGAL STANDARDS

Family Advisors shall behave in a legal, ethical, and moral manner in the conduct of their employment, maintaining the integrity of this Code and avoiding any behavior which would cause harm to others.

- a. Family Advisors shall not exploit relationships with recipients for personal advantage.
- b. Family Advisors shall not engage in sexual activities with recipients.
- c. Family Advisors shall not involve the recipient in any illegal activities, nor promote the use of any substance which could potentially be abused.
- d. Family Advisors shall discuss termination of services furnished to a recipient with their Supervisors when services are no longer required or no longer serve the recipient's needs or interests.
- e. Family Advisors shall not withdraw services abruptly, but must carefully consider all factors in the situation and take care to minimize possible adverse effects.
- f. Family Advisors who anticipate the termination, interruption or reduction of services to recipients shall notify recipients promptly and seek the transfer, referral, or continuation of services in relation to the recipient's needs and preferences. The Family Advisor shall also advise recipients of their rights and responsibilities regarding transfer, referral or reduction in services.
- g. Family Advisors shall respect the integrity and protect the health and welfare of people and groups with whom they work. The Family Advisor's primary responsibility is to the recipient and Family Advisors must endeavor at all times to place that interest above their own.
- h. Family Advisors shall not mentally, physically, emotionally, spiritually, or in any other manner abuse, neglect or exploit any recipient.
- i. Family Advisors shall not accept anything of value from a recipient or for making a referral.
- j. Family Advisors shall not alter documents and other information provided from other sources, nor knowingly use documents containing untrue information, including backdated documents.
- k. The majority of services furnished by SKIP of New York are funded by the New York State Medicaid Program and the Office for People with Developmental Disabilities. Family Advisors should be aware of SKIP's mandatory compliance program in regard to these funding sources.

### 2. ADVOCACY

Family Advisors shall serve as advocates for recipients.

- a. Family Advisors must safeguard the interests, autonomy, and the rights of the recipient.
- b. When an individual has been legally authorized to act on behalf of a recipient, the Family Advisor shall consider the expressed interest of the recipient as well as those articulated by the legal guardian.
- c. Family Advisors shall not engage in any action that violates or diminishes the civil or legal rights of recipients.
- d. Family Advisors shall act to prevent practices that are inhumane or discriminatory against any person or group of persons.

### **3. PROFESSIONAL RELATIONSHIPS**

Family Advisors shall possess and maintain integrity and dignity in their professional relationships.

- a. Family Advisors shall not attempt to influence a recipient's choice of family advisors or service providers.
- b. Family Advisors shall cooperate with colleagues to promote professional interests and concerns.
- c. Family Advisors shall respect the confidences shared by colleagues in the course of their professional relationships and transactions.
- d. Family Advisors shall create and maintain conditions of practice that facilitate ethical and competent professional performance by colleagues.
- e. Family Advisors shall accurately and fairly represent the qualifications, views, and findings of colleagues. Appropriate administrative channels shall be used to resolve differences.
- f. The Family Advisor who replaces, or is replaced by, a colleague in professional practice shall act with consideration for the interest, character and reputation of that colleague.
- g. The Family Advisor shall not assume professional responsibility for recipients of another agency or of a colleague without appropriate communication with that agency or colleague as authorized by the appropriate parties.
- h. The Family Advisor who serves the recipient of a colleague during temporary absence or emergency shall serve those recipients with the same consideration as that afforded any recipient.
- i. Family Advisors shall not misuse the resources of the employing organization, including business-only use of electronic devices; internet, fax, etc.
- j. Family Advisors shall not exploit professional relationships for personal gain.

### **4. CONFIDENTIALITY**

Family Advisors shall respect the confidentiality of information obtained from recipients in the course of their work. Recipient information is held in accord with HIPAA and New York State confidentiality requirements and is on a 'need-to-know' basis.

- a. Family Advisors shall inform recipients about the limits of confidentiality in a given situation, the purposes for which the information is obtained, and how it will be used.
- b. Family Advisors shall not discuss the case outside of work.

### **5. ASSESSMENT/EVALUATION**

Family Advisors shall promote the health and welfare of recipients in the selection, utilization and interpretation of assessment measures.

- a. Family Advisors shall not in any way tamper with the results of assessment measures administered to the recipient.
- b. Family Advisors shall explain assessments as requested and explain results in a professional and sensitive manner.

### **6. COMPETENCE**

Family Advisors shall establish and maintain their professional competencies at such a level that their recipients receive the highest quality of services SKIP of New York is capable of offering.

- a. Family Advisors shall strive to become and remain proficient in professional practice and in the performance of case management functions.
- b. Family Advisors shall attend all mandated trainings and staff meetings.
- c. Family Advisors shall not misrepresent professional qualifications, education, experience or affiliations.
- d. Family Advisors shall retain responsibility for the quality and extent of the service he/she assumes, assigns or performs.

### **7. CODE of ETHICS VIOLATIONS**

Family Advisors who violate the code of ethics may be sanctioned in relationship to the severity of the offense. Offenses could result in termination.

## **8. CODE of CONDUCT**

The law requires that the Justice Center Code of Conduct be read and signed by any "custodian" who will have both regular and substantial contact with people with special needs covered by the Act.

The Code of Conduct form must be signed at the time of employment and at least annually thereafter for those employees specified below.

SKIP has determined that based on the type and frequency of contact by staff all Community Habilitation Instructors and Respite Specialists must sign a new Code of Conduct form each year.

In order for this to be a seamless process the HCBS Department will send these forms to the employee in their last paycheck of each year with the instruction to sign and return the form back to SKIP by or before the 15<sup>th</sup> of January of the following year.