

Code of Ethics

Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth and Families

Policy: 100.0160

Effective Date: February 11, 1991 : Version: 1

In accordance with RIGL 36-14-1, "It is the policy of the State of Rhode Island that public officials and employees must adhere to the highest standards of ethical conduct, respect the public trust and the rights of all persons, be open, accountable, and responsive, avoid the appearance of impropriety, and not use their position for private gain or advantage".

RIGL 36-14-5 (e 2) specifically states that "no person subject to this Code of Ethics shall represent any other person before any state or municipal agency of which he/she is a member or by which he/she is employed." For clinical staff of the Department of Children, Youth, and Families, there is an opportunity to engage in private practice or outside employment as therapists and/or counselors. Private practice as used in the context of this policy would be any activities outside the scope of the staff member's employment with the Department.

DCYF employees, who by virtue of some outside position, whether for monetary or voluntary purposes, find themselves in a position of making recommendations to the Department and/or the Family Court, that could impact on the client's case plan development, would be in violation of the provisions set forth in RIGL 36-14-5 (e 2). If the employee avoids making recommendations to the Department or the Court relative to his/her work with the client, it is unlikely that the outside position would constitute a violation of the Code of Ethics.

The Rhode Island Ethics Commission has investigatory and adjudicative powers relative to alleged violations of the various sanctions, including a civil penalty of no more than ten (10) thousand dollars and, in extreme cases, removal from office.

It is the policy of the Department of Children, Youth, and Families that its employees will not engage in activities prohibited by RIGL 36-14-5 (e 2). It would also be inappropriate for any employee to continue in or initiate such activities in the future.

Related Procedure

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Procedure From Policy 100.0160: Code of Ethics

- A. All existing employees and new hires will be made aware of the Code of Ethics as set forth in RIGL 36-14-1 et. seq. Existing employees will be made aware of the State Code of Ethics and its implications by virtue of this policy. New employees will be made aware of this policy by the Chief Legal Counsel at the time of orientation.
- B. Any employee who continues to provide or initiates private clinical services to a client of this Department after the effective date of this policy, may be subject to review by the Rhode Island Ethics Committee.
- C. The Chief Legal Counsel is available for any employee who requires additional clarification, specifics and/or information on the State's Code of Ethics.
- D. All employees are at liberty to present their specific circumstances to the Ethics Commission and request an advisory opinion.