

Code of Ethics

Everyone at The John Howard Society of North Island must know and follow our Code of Ethics. A Code of Ethics is a set of rules about how we should act. If we fail to follow the rules in this Code of Ethics, there will be a consequence for us. Our union agreement, employee handbooks, and professional manuals explain those consequences.

John Howard Staff make a commitment to:

1. Promote the well-being of the people we work with.
2. Act with integrity.
3. Be competent in our job duties.
4. Respect the basic human dignity of the people we work with.
5. Help build a positive team environment at work.
6. Protect the confidentiality of information. We will only share information when we have permission, or when we need to for legal or professional reasons.
7. Not let our personal life interfere with our work.
8. Promote high quality service at John Howard.
9. Act for social change to benefit the community (as long as it doesn't hurt John Howard).

What this means

1. We will promote the well-being of the people we work with.

Our staff will do what we can to see that the people we work with are safe and have their basic needs met (food, clothing and housing). We will try to help them move forward so they can be happy and successful.

2. We will act with integrity.

Our staff will be fair and honest with people. We will act in a morally positive way. We will be professional about our job duties – we know there's a difference between a personal relationship and a professional one.

3. We will be competent in our job duties.

Our staff recognize that being competent is more than having a university degree. We will do more studying or training when we need to so we can do our jobs well. We also realize we need to look after ourselves so we can be on top of things at work.

4. We will respect the basic human dignity of the people we work with.

Our staff will respect clients' rights to make choices and be themselves. We will not discriminate – it's ok to be different. We will advocate for clients when their rights aren't being respected.

We won't expect clients to change faster than they are ready to. At the same time, we will encourage clients to change things that don't seem to be working for them.

5. We will help build a positive team environment at work.

Some things that build a positive team environment are:

- Communicating respectfully
- Treating each other's concerns as important
- Not gossiping

6. We will protect the confidentiality of information. We will only share information when we have permission, or when we need to for legal or professional reasons.

When we ask for a client's personal information, we will explain why we need the information and how it will be used. If the client ever wants to look at their client file, they just need to ask (we will remove information about other family members if needed).

We won't share a client's information unless they say it's ok. However, there are times when we have to share information:

- If the Court orders us
- To prevent a crime from happening
- To prevent someone from hurting themselves or someone else

7. We won't let our personal life interfere with our work.

Our staff won't do things outside of work that affect their job performance, or give the agency a bad name.

8. We will promote high quality service at John Howard.

We will look for ways we can make our programs better. If we see something happening in one of our programs that doesn't seem right, we will find out what's going on and talk to staff and the manager to see how we can fix it.

9. We will act for social change to benefit the community.

Our staff will take action against discrimination. We will advocate for people's rights, and will work to make opportunities available to all people. We have to be careful about how we do these things. Some actions can make a situation worse. Sometimes the people who fund our programs have rules about what we can do. Going against these rules could mean we lose the money for our programs.