

The logo features a solid black triangle pointing upwards, positioned above the letter 'H' in the company name.

Home Companion Solutions

Companion Policies and Procedures



MISSION, VISION & VALUES STATEMENT

MISSION

We are committed to providing high quality, client-centered and affordable Home Care services to our clients to assist them to lead dignified and independent lives in the comfort and safety of their own homes. Their individual needs are carefully assessed, understood and met through the selective assignment of qualified, trustworthy and compassionate personnel.

VISION

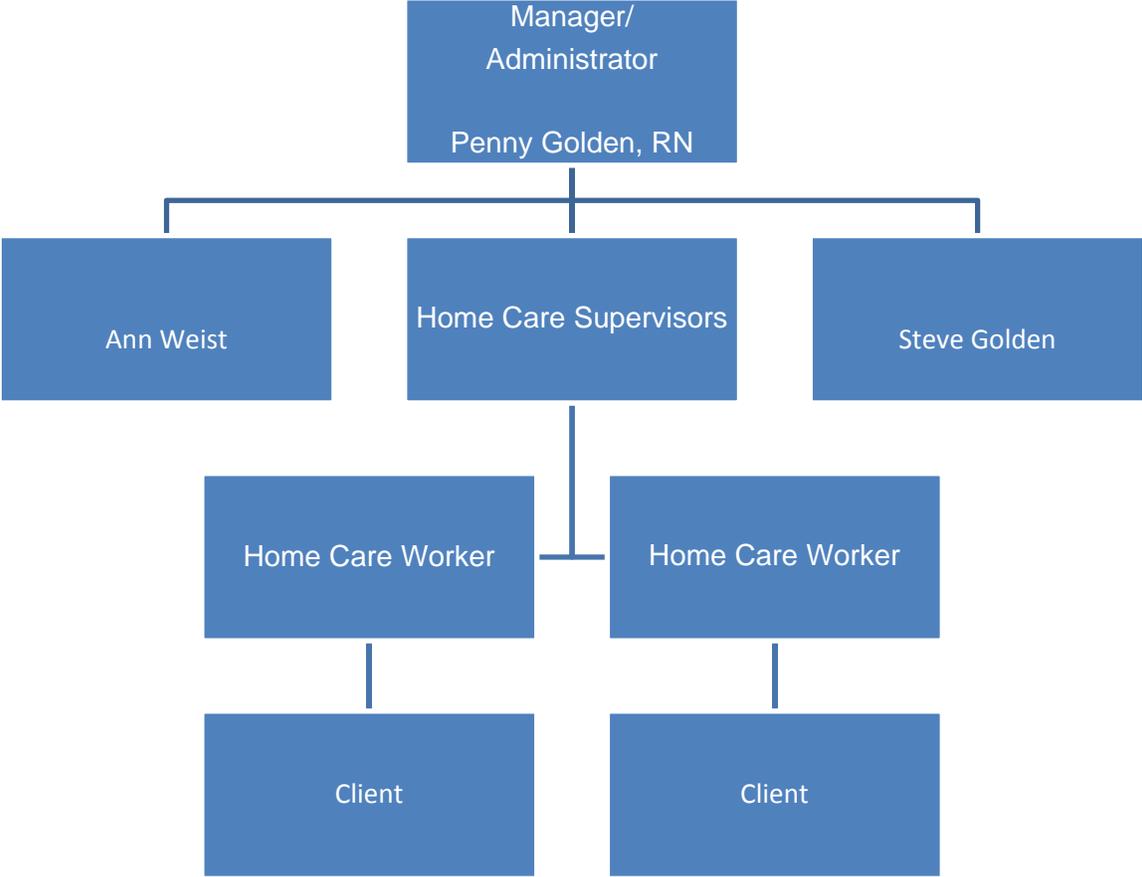
- ◆ To be known and valued for providing the highest standard of in-home care services.
- ◆ To be the provider of choice in the community.
- ◆ To be the employer of choice in the community.
- ◆ To be a financially viable agency.

VALUES

Our mission and vision will be achieved through the application of our core values, which include:

- ◆ keeping our client's health, quality of life and well-being central in the design and delivery of services;
- ◆ treating and interacting with our clients with respect, dignity, compassion, empathy, honesty, and integrity while recognizing and maintaining confidentiality of client information;
- ◆ showing respect for all cultures, religions, ethnicities; sexual orientation, ages, gender and disabilities;
- ◆ recruiting, training and retaining competent staff;
- ◆ valuing, supporting, recognizing and appreciating our staff who are our greatest asset;
- ◆ nurturing a work environment that encourages personal enjoyment and enhances job satisfaction and performance through recognition and reward;
- ◆ developing and maintaining positive relationships with the community, including local Home Care and Health Care personnel/organizations;
- ◆ conducting our business in an accountable and responsible manner;
- ◆ adhering to the professional code of ethics of the Home Care industry; and,
- ◆ applying continuous quality improvement measures throughout our Agency.

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART
Effective January 1, 2012



STANDARDS of CONDUCT

Compliance

It is the responsibility of all members of the governing body, management and employees of the Agency to comply with federal, state and local laws, professional standards and the polices/ regulations of relevant federally funded health care programs in order that care provided to its clients and business interactions reflect integrity and ethical conduct.

Fraud

Employees shall not undertake any of the following fraudulent activities:

1. bill for services, which were not provided;
2. submit fraudulent claims including:
 - a. claims for services that were not provided;
 - b. claims billing for a service that varies from the service actually delivered;
 - c. claims for services that do not adhere with program/contract requirements;
 - d. make false representations to obtain a program's benefits or to remain eligible for a program's benefit; and,
 - e. make false representation to obtain payment for any service;
3. insert inaccurate information on medical claims; and/or,
4. compensate another individual for referring clients.

Concerns regarding fraud should be directed to the Compliance Officer/Designee.

Abuse

Abuse, involves practices that are not consistent with sound service delivery and economic practices. Such practices could, directly or indirectly, result in unnecessary program costs or in payment for services, which do not meet the standards of care or which are not medically necessary. Employees shall avoid all actual or perceived misconduct and shall report any noted non compliances or risk potential disciplinary action, in accordance with the Agency's Disciplinary Action Policy for failure to report. Concerns regarding abuse should be directed to the Compliance Officer/Designee.

Reporting Fraud and/or Abuse

Fraud and Abuse laws apply to *Medicare* and *Medicaid* programs, Indian Health programs, maternal and child health care programs and Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Uniformed Services (*CHAMPUS*). Allegations of Medicare or Medicaid fraud or abuse shall be reported to: Toll Free: 1-866-666-7390 Ext. 1320 or 877-247-5566 and/or

Kickbacks

The Agency is committed to following federal and state anti-kickback laws and regulations and thus prohibits members of its governing body, management and employees from accepting money or anything of value to:

1. refer Agency clients to other service providers; and/or,
2. to influence decisions pertinent to Agency operations.

The Agency shall consider unacceptable conduct to include, but not be limited to the following actions:

1. falsifying personal education and/or experience information during the Job Application Process;
2. falsifying job and character references during the Job Application Process;

3. having a previous conviction or receiving a conviction for crimes committed;
4. falsifying data on clients' charts and other Agency records;
5. falsifying information on billings for client services;
6. using codes which are in violation of federal rules and/or regulations;
7. destroying or altering Agency and client records without authorization;
8. exhibiting any behavior that reflects poorly on the Agency;
9. using, possessing and/or being under the influence of alcohol and illegal substances while on the job;
10. being discourteous to clients, co-workers, health care professionals and members of the community-at-large;
11. possessing dangerous weapons or guns while on the job;
12. doing malicious damage to the Agency's or clients' property;
13. stealing from the Agency or clients;
14. conducting actions/activities, which are dishonest in any way;
15. disclosing clients' names, addresses, phone numbers and other personal information to non-Agency employees, without the clients' permission;
16. disclosing confidential information without authorization or legal direction to do so;
17. accepting inappropriate gifts or money from clients;
18. accepting appropriate gifts from clients without approval from the Compliance Officer/Designee;
19. engaging in financial transactions with the client other than those required for the performance of duties such as exchange of currency for purchasing items for clients;
20. bringing pets, children or any other unauthorized persons to clients' homes while performing job duties; and,
21. being absent without permission or without advising Supervisor, when able to do so.

Confidentiality

The Agency is committed to the appropriate protection of confidential information and enforces its Confidentiality and Privacy of Information Policy. A number of staff have access to various forms of sensitive, confidential, and medical information, which is maintained to serve clients, health care providers, the Agency and third party payors, in accordance with legal, accrediting and regulatory requirements. Agency policy prohibits the unauthorized seeking, disclosing or giving of such information, including confidential information contained in clients' records, except on a need-to-know basis, to consulting physicians, health care professionals and employees who may be providing client service and to third party payors to facilitate reimbursement. The operations, activities, business affairs and finances of the Agency shall also be kept confidential and shall only be discussed or made available to authorized persons.

Business Ethics

The Agency is committed to upholding the highest business ethics and integrity. Members of the governing body, management and employees are required to conduct themselves in a professional manner at all times. They shall not:

1. falsely represent the Agency;
2. defraud individuals of money, property or candid services;
3. make false or misleading comments about the Agency's clients, employees, services, business contacts, competitors or competitor's services;
4. participate in any activity intended to, inappropriately, obtain Agency services or provide services to the Agency through payment, intimidation, or enticement;

5. engage in any corrupt business practice either directly or indirectly; or,
6. provide compensation to another person for unlawful or improper purposes.

Reporting and Investigating

Staff shall be held responsible for reporting any violations of laws, regulations or Agency policies, procedures and Standards of Conduct. Any violation of the aforementioned, which an employee either knows about or thinks he/she knows about another person/organization, associated with the Agency, has committed, is committing or may commit must be relayed to the Compliance Officer/Designee immediately. That employee shall be assured his/her anonymity will be protected.

The Compliance Officer/Designee shall investigate and document all allegations of misconduct or wrongdoing immediately by conducting an interview(s), reviewing relative documentation and evaluating the facts and circumstances. Factors to be considered during an investigation include, but are not limited to:

1. the degree to which behavior varied from the Standards of Conduct;
2. the seriousness of the behavior,
3. the employee's work history; and,
4. other data and information deemed to be relevant.

Discrimination and Harassment

The Agency is committed to treating all persons equally without bias or prejudice, in part, through the enforcement of its policies on human rights, cultural diversity, equal opportunity and sexual harassment. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national or ethnic origin, age, disability, sexual orientation or military service. Members of the governing body, management and employees are required to promote and maintain a productive work environment that is free from harassment, discrimination and/or disruptive activity. No form of harassment or discrimination will be tolerated. Any employees or clients who experience harassment or discrimination on the basis of the aforementioned shall inform the Compliance Officer/Designee immediately.

The Agency prohibits retaliation against anyone who makes a complaint of harassing or discriminatory conduct.

Retaliation

The Agency is committed to disclosure of non-compliance concerns and forbids any action being taken against a member of the governing body, management or employees for making a report. Because employees have a responsibility to report actual or potential wrongdoings, the Agency shall not permit any consequential retaliative, revengeful or harassing actions/activities to be taken against the reporter. Anyone who is involved in retaliation measures shall be subject to disciplinary action, in accordance with the Agency's Disciplinary Action Policy and/or as dictated by law. Should staff members report their own inappropriate or inadequate actions/activities, they shall still be subject to disciplinary action, in accordance with the Agency's Disciplinary Action Policy and/or in accordance with the law.

Competition

The Agency is committed to complying with state and federal antitrust (monopolies) laws and regulations. The Agency shall not establish charges in collusion with competitors and shall not share confidential information with competitors. Additionally, staff shall not share confidential information with competing service providers, such as salaries or charges for services rendered.

The Agency shall not take anticompetitive measures to reduce its competition without first obtaining legal counsel. Communication with competitors about matters that could be interpreted as an attempt to reduce competition or an attempt to fix prices, shall take place only after consultation with legal counsel.

Inducements

The Agency does not allow members of the governing body, management and employees to offer any financial inducement, payoff, gift, bribe or kickback or to induce, influence or reward favorable decisions of any government personnel/representative, client, contractor, or person who is in a position of being able to benefit the Agency/its staff. All activities must be carried out without such solicitation and other improper inducements. Staff are prohibited from accepting, offering or soliciting anything of value from anyone doing business with the Agency including clients, physicians, contractors or third party payors. Small gifts and gratuities might be acceptable but only if the Supervisor gives authorization and if the acceptance meets the conditions delineated in the Agency's Acceptance of Gifts Policy

Employees shall notify the Agency's Compliance Officer/Designee, immediately, if anyone:

1. offers an inducement to the employee;
2. offers anything of value because of the employee's employment with the Agency; or,
3. has insinuated, solicited or requested compensation for referrals of business.

External Audits

The Agency is committed to cooperating with government investigators, as required by law. If an employee receives a subpoena, search warrant or other similar document, he/she shall immediately contact the Compliance Officer/Designee, Manager or Supervisor, before taking any action, The Compliance Officer/Designee, Manager and/or Supervisor are responsible for authorizing the release of, or the copying of, documents. If a government investigator, agent, or auditor comes to the Agency, the Compliance Officer/Designee, Manager or Supervisor should be contacted before an employee discusses any matters with such investigator, agent or auditor.

False Claims Act

As a deterrent against the submission of fraudulent claims to the federal government for programs such as *Medicare* and *Medicaid* and to provide incentive to report such fraudulent claims, the Agency shall advise its employees about the federal "*False Claims Act*", which states that:

“Any person who knowingly:

- 1. presents, or causes to be presented, to an officer or employee of the United States Government or a member of the Armed Forces of the United States a false or fraudulent claim for payment or approval;*
- 2. makes, uses, or causes to be made or used, a false record or statement to get a false or fraudulent claim paid or approved by the Government;*
- 3. conspires to defraud the Government by getting a false or fraudulent claim paid or approved by the Government;*
- 4. makes, uses, or causes to be made or used, a false record or statement to conceal, avoid, or decrease an obligation to pay or transmit money or property to the Government; or,*
- 5. submit, or cause another person or entity to submit, false claims for payment of government funds are liable for three times the government’s damages plus civil penalties of \$5,500 to \$11,000 per false claim.”*

The terms "knowing" and "knowingly" mean that a person, with respect to information:

- 1. has actual knowledge of the information;*
- 2. acts in deliberate ignorance of the truth or falsity of the information; or,*
- 3. acts in reckless disregard of the truth or falsity of the information, and no proof of specific intent to defraud is required.”*

“The False Claims Act contains “qui tam”, or whistleblower, provisions. “Qui tam” is a unique mechanism in the law that allows citizens with evidence of fraud against government contracts and programs to sue, on behalf of the government, in order to recover the stolen funds. In compensation for the risk and effort of filing a “qui tam” case, the citizen whistleblower or “relator” may be awarded a portion of the funds recovered, typically between 15 and 25 percent.”

Assets Usage

The Agency shall provide its staff with the necessary assets and equipment to perform their duties.

Employees shall be prudent and efficient in their usage of Agency equipment, products and supplies. Agency property shall not be used for personal purposes or be removed from clients’ homes without prior approval from the Supervisor.

Compliance Training

The Agency is committed to providing training about compliance policies and procedures, applicable laws, rules and regulations. In addition, Managers and Supervisors shall advise employees that:

- 1. compliance with these policies and procedures is a condition of employment; and,**
- 2. violation of policies and procedures could result in accordance with the Agency's Disciplinary Action Policy, up to and including termination of employment**

Employees shall be given information on the Agency’s Compliance Program during the Orientation process and shall receive regular compliance reviews and/or education at least annually. Subsequent training shall also be provided as new policies and procedures are developed and implemented. Staff are encouraged to seek clarification

and/or information from the Compliance Officer/Designee or Supervisor at any time. The Compliance Officer shall be proactive in presenting new or revised compliance information to staff as soon as such information is received.

Employee participation in compliance training shall be documented and shall include attendance and materials distributed at training. Attendance and participation in training programs shall be a condition of continued employment. Failure to comply with the training requirements may result in disciplinary action, in accordance with the Agency's Disciplinary Action Policy.

Non Compliance Consequences

All Agency staff shall:

1. perform their duties in a manner consistent with the Agency's policies; and,
2. report violations of local, state or federal laws, rules or regulations to the Compliance Officer or Supervisor, as required by law.

If an employee fails to report violations, and is aware that not reporting violates a legal obligation, then that person could be subject to disciplinary action, in accordance with the Agency's Disciplinary Action Policy and/or could be terminated from employment. The Agency may also take disciplinary action if its investigation determines that a misconduct or wrongdoing has taken place, depending on the severity of the misdemeanor.

Disciplinary actions shall be in accordance with the Agency's Disciplinary Action Policy, which could consist of 4 stages:

1. verbal warning;
2. written warning;
3. work suspension; and,
4. termination of employment.

All violations of the Standards of Conduct, compliance policies and federal, state and applicable local laws and regulations may be disciplined in a manner deemed appropriate by Manager and/or Supervisor in an attempt to prevent similar misdemeanors from taking place in the future. Disciplinary actions shall be applied consistently and fairly and shall not be influenced by the individual's position in the Agency, i.e. Employees and management personnel shall all be held accountable to the same extent and to the same degree.

The Compliance Officer/Designee shall not have any authority or responsibility for disciplinary measures. He/she will be responsible for investigating, evaluating and making recommendations consistent with the Agency's policies and procedures to the Supervisor and/or Manager. Any disciplinary action shall be determined and enforced by the Supervisor, Manager and/or governing body, in accordance with the Agency's Disciplinary Action Policy.

Conclusion

The Agency shall constantly take measures to ensure that all its activities and actions, and those of its employees, comply with applicable laws and ethical standards. The purpose of these Standards of Conduct is to provide direction to employees to enable

them to meet their responsibilities. Employees are expected to comply with all applicable laws, even if they are not dealt with in these Standards of Conduct.

Employees are encouraged to contact the Compliance Officer or Superior if they have any questions or concerns about their obligations.

All Agency staff shall sign attesting to the fact that they are responsible for knowing and adhering to these Standards of Conduct. The signed document shall be placed in their personnel file. In addition, each time new or revised Standards of Conduct are issued, employees shall be asked to sign a statement certifying that they have received, read, and understood the Standards of Conduct.

WORK ETHICS

Home Companion Solutions is committed to the highest standards of ethical and professional conduct. All employees shall adhere to the Agency's policies and procedures relative to their job functions and shall comply with legal and regulatory requirements. Any breaches of this policy may be subject to disciplinary action and/or termination, depending on the severity of the incident.

PROCEDURES

Employees shall, at all times, conduct themselves in a professional manner and comply with this policy by:

1. conducting themselves in a manner that does not have a negative impact on the Agency;
2. only relaying/distributing information that is accurate, when representing the Agency;
3. not promising care/services, which the Agency doesn't provide;
4. not borrowing money from clients/families or lending money to them;
5. not trading or purchasing items from clients/families;
6. not accepting gifts from clients/families except in special circumstances wherein a relationship with a client could be damaged if a gift was rejected; (e.g. Employees may accept a gift that is of a token nature such as a box of chocolates but must first obtain authorization from the Supervisor.)
7. not giving gifts to clients/families without first obtaining authorization from the Supervisor;
8. not using the Agency's property for personal benefit without authorization;
9. displaying appropriate dress, grooming, hygiene and etiquette;
10. wearing an approved uniform, when required;
11. being aware of their personal strengths, weaknesses and feelings;
12. having a good and positive attitude;
13. being pleasant on the job site;
14. displaying appropriate verbal and non verbal skills;
15. keeping moodiness, bad temper and unhappiness out of their demeanor;
16. reporting to work on time, beginning delegated duties immediately and working continuously except for scheduled breaks;
17. working the designated hours and seeking additional tasks if their assigned work is completed sooner than predicted;
18. completing tasks in the expected timeframe, combining tasks for greatest effectiveness and avoiding idle time;
19. completing their work assignments as scheduled by the Supervisor;

20. contacting the Supervisor as quickly as possible, if they need to leave the job site in the event of an emergency;
21. keeping in touch with the office to confirm schedules and to receive reports/direction;
22. completing any and all paperwork correctly and in a timely manner;
23. ensuring their quality of work is of a high standard and not expecting anything but the best from themselves;
24. keeping all obligations and promises;
25. being cooperative by displaying leadership skills and maintaining appropriate relationships with other employees;
26. being considerate to clients, families, friends, colleagues and professionals;
27. displaying loyalty, honesty, trustworthiness, dependability, reliability, initiative, self-responsibility and self-discipline;
28. respecting the rights of others;
29. being a cooperative and participative team member;
30. dealing appropriately with diversity and treating everyone with respect;
31. looking at things from another's perspective and being empathetic towards their thoughts and feelings;
32. avoiding criticizing or denouncing others because their beliefs and values may differ;
33. respecting others for their individuality
34. conforming to all safety regulations for their own and other's protection;
35. keeping information confidential and not gossiping about the affairs of others;
36. being polite and courteous to clients, families, friends, colleagues and professionals;
37. following instructions and utilizing all knowledge and skills;
38. giving their best efforts at all times;
39. realizing and admitting to errors and learning from the experience(s) to avoid making the same mistake(s) again.
40. showing good organizational skills in managing themselves, in time management, in prioritizing, in flexibility, in stress management and in the ability to deal with change;
41. being truthful and accurate about care given, clients' progress, and events that occurred or did not occur;
42. avoiding complaining and negativity;
43. working cooperatively to achieve goals and being willing to help and support others;
44. complimenting others work and participating actively in the care team's endeavor;
45. submitting a written statement, outlining the facts of any arrest, indictment or conviction for a felony or misdemeanor (other than a minor traffic offense) to the Supervisor within 5 working days of the incident.
46. immediately reporting to the Supervisor any incidents wherein they observe another employee treating a client in a manner that is:
 - a. not consistent with the Agency's standards of conduct and ethical behavior; and/or,
 - b. physically and/or verbally abusive.
47. when working with clients/families,
 - a. not giving them their home phone numbers;
 - b. not giving personal opinions about them;
 - c. not offering medical advice;
 - d. not smoking in their homes;
 - e. not using their telephone except in cases of emergency or to call the office;
 - f. not taking anyone, including pets, into their homes without first obtaining consent from them and from the Supervisor;

- g. not safeguarding a client's valuables;
 - h. not using a client's vehicle or other property for personal reasons;
 - i. not consuming alcohol or using medication/drugs except for a medical reason(s) in their homes;
 - j. not accepting meals from them;
 - k. not taking advantage of their hospitality;
48. in regards to legal matters,
- a. not taking on assignments of a legal nature;
 - b. not becoming an appointee or having legal involvement with the client/family's property;
 - c. not becoming the beneficiary of a client's will;
 - d. not becoming a witness or an executor of a client's will; and,
 - e. not having Power of Attorney;

JOB DESCRIPTIONS

Home Care Companion

Description:

- ◆ Home Care Companions provide service to individuals in their own homes and communities who need assistance caring for themselves as a result of old age, sickness, disability and/or other infirmities. Home care may include light housecleaning, laundry, meal preparation, transportation, companionship, respite and advice on such things as nutrition, cleanliness and household activities.
- ◆ Home Care Companions are responsible for ensuring that service is delivered in a caring and respectful manner, in accordance with relevant Agency policies and industry standards.

Reporting Relationship

1. Reports to Supervisor

Responsibilities/Activities:

- ◆ Provide companionship, friendship and emotional support.
- ◆ Talk, listen, share experiences, play games/cards, read to client etc.
- ◆ Help keep clients in contact with family, friends and the outside world.
- ◆ Provide transportation to medical appointments, grocery store and errands.
- ◆ Accompany clients to recreational and/or social events.
- ◆ Assist with plans for visits and outings.
- ◆ Write or type letters/correspondence.
- ◆ Organize and read mail.
- ◆ Plan trips and outings and possibly travel with clients.
- ◆ Teach/perform meal planning and preparation.
- ◆ Perform light housekeeping.
- ◆ Participate on the Care Team by providing input and making suggestions.
- ◆ Ensure service is delivered in accordance with Agency policies, procedures and industry standards.
- ◆ Monitor supplies and resources.
- ◆ Evaluate the program and make recommendations, as indicated.
- ◆ Follow the written care plan.
- ◆ Assist in basic client transfers providing the client has been assessed as being capable of ambulating without assistance; and/or, providing another trained caregiver (including family) is involved in the transfer.
- ◆ Carry out duties as assigned by the Supervisor.

- ◆ Observe the client's functioning and report to Supervisor.
- ◆ Complete and maintain records of daily activities, observations, and direct hours of service.
- ◆ Develop and maintain constructive and cooperative working relationships with others.
- ◆ Make decisions and solve problems.
- ◆ Assist with pet care.
- ◆ Communicate with Supervisor and co-workers.
- ◆ Attend orientation, in-service training sessions and staff meetings.

Required Knowledge

- ◆ Knowledge of home management skills.
- ◆ Knowledge of principles and processes for providing client services, including needs determinants, meeting quality standards and evaluation of client satisfaction.
- ◆ Knowledge of the English language.
- ◆ Knowledge of information and techniques needed to diagnose and treat injuries including emergency first aid and CPR.
- ◆ Knowledge of clerical procedures such as maintaining records and completing forms.

Required Skills/Abilities

- ◆ The ability to be aware of other people's reactions and understand why they react as they do.
- ◆ The ability to establishing and maintain relationships.
- ◆ The ability to teach others.
- ◆ The ability to identify problems and determine effective solutions.
- ◆ The ability to apply reason and logic to identify strengths and weaknesses of possible solutions.
- ◆ The ability to understand written and oral instructions.
- ◆ The ability to communicate information orally and in writing.
- ◆ The ability to listen and understand the spoken word.
- ◆ The ability to work independently and in cooperation with others.
- ◆ The ability to determine or recognize when something is likely to go wrong.
- ◆ The ability to suggest a number of ideas on a subject.
- ◆ The ability to provide advice and consultation to others.
- ◆ The ability to observe and recognize changes in clients.
- ◆ The ability to establish and maintain harmonious relations with clients/families/co-workers.

Physical and Mental Demands:

- ◆ Good physical and mental health.
- ◆ Physical ability to stand, walk, use hands and fingers, reach, stoop, kneel, crouch, talk, hear and see.
- ◆ Mental fortitude and stability to handle stress.
- ◆ Physical and mental ability to drive a vehicle.

Qualifications/Education

- ◆ Current driver's license or access to public transportation.
- ◆ Proper Vehicle Insurance Coverage.

Training/Experience:

- ◆ May require related experience.
- ◆ May required similar social and cultural backgrounds with some clients.

Homemaker

Description:

- ◆ Homemakers provide service to individuals in their own homes and communities, who need assistance caring for themselves as a result of old age, sickness, disability and/or other infirmities. Home care may include housecleaning, laundry, meal preparation, transportation, companionship and respite,
- ◆ Homemakers are responsible for ensuring that service is delivered in a caring and respectful manner, in accordance with relevant Agency policies and industry standards.

Reporting Relationship

- ◆ Reports to Supervisor.

Responsibilities/Activities:

- ◆ Teach/perform meal planning and preparation, routine housekeeping activities such as making/changing beds, dusting, vacuuming, washing floors, cleaning kitchen and bathroom, and laundry.
- ◆ Perform/assist with essential shopping/errands, which may include handling the client's money, in accordance with the care plan and under the observation of the Supervisor.
- ◆ Assist with following a written, special diet plan and reinforcement of diet maintenance, which is provided under the direction of a Physician and as identified in the care plan.
- ◆ Escort to medical facilities, errands, shopping and outings as specified in the care plan.
- ◆ Provide companionship, friendship and emotional support.
- ◆ Assist clients with communication by writing or typing correspondence for them or researching information for them.
- ◆ Participate on the Care Team by providing input and making suggestions.
- ◆ Ensure service is delivered in accordance with all relevant policies, procedures and practices.
- ◆ Monitor supplies and resources.
- ◆ Evaluate the program and make recommendations to it, as indicated.
- ◆ Follow the written care plan.
- ◆ Carry out duties as assigned by the Supervisor.
- ◆ Observe the client's functioning and report to Supervisor.
- ◆ Complete and maintain records of daily activities, observations, and direct hours of service.
- ◆ Attend orientation, in-service training sessions and staff meetings.
- ◆ Develop and maintain constructive and cooperative working relationships with others.
- ◆ Make decisions and solve problems.
- ◆ Communicate with Supervisor and co-workers.
- ◆ Observe, receive and obtain information from relevant sources.

Required Knowledge

- ◆ Knowledge of home management skills.
- ◆ Knowledge of principles and processes for providing client and personal services, including needs determinants, meeting quality standards and evaluation of client satisfaction.
- ◆ Knowledge of the English language.

- ◆ Knowledge of information and techniques needed to diagnose and treat injuries including emergency first aid and CPR.
- ◆ Knowledge of clerical procedures such as maintaining records and completing forms.

Required Skills/Abilities

- ◆ The ability to be aware of other people's reactions and understand why they react as they do.
- ◆ The ability to establishing and maintain relationships.
- ◆ The ability to teach others.
- ◆ The ability to apply reason and logic to identify strengths and weaknesses of possible solutions.
- ◆ The ability to identify problems and determine effective solutions.
- ◆ The ability to understand written and oral instructions.
- ◆ The ability to communicate information orally so others understand.
- ◆ The ability to communicate in writing so others understand.
- ◆ The ability to listen and understand the spoken word.
- ◆ The ability to work independently and in cooperation with others.
- ◆ The ability to determine or recognize when something is likely to go wrong.
- ◆ The ability to suggest a number of ideas on a subject.
- ◆ The ability to perform activities that use the whole body.
- ◆ The ability to handle and move objects and people.
- ◆ The ability to provide advice and consultation to others.
- ◆ The ability to observe and recognize changes in clients.
- ◆ The ability to establish and maintain harmonious relations with clients/families/co-workers.

Physical and Mental Demands:

- ◆ Good physical and mental health.
- ◆ Physical ability to stand, walk, use hands and fingers, reach, stoop, kneel, crouch, talk, hear and see.
- ◆ Mental fortitude and stability to handle stress.
- ◆ Physical and mental ability to drive a vehicle.

Qualifications/Education

- ◆ Current driver's license or access to public transportation.
- ◆ Proper Vehicle Insurance Coverage.

Training/Experience:

- ◆ May require related experience.

Personal Care Attendants

Description

- ◆ Personal Care Attendants provide service to individuals in their own homes and communities, who need assistance caring for themselves as a result of old age, sickness, disability and/or other inflections. Personal Care may include assistance with the activities of daily living, housecleaning, laundry, meal preparation, transportation, companionship and respite,
- ◆ Personal Care Attendants are responsible for ensuring that service is delivered in a caring and respectful manner, in accordance with relevant Agency policies and industry standards.

Reporting Relationship

- ◆ Reports to Supervisor.

Responsibilities/Activities:

- ◆ Assist with the activities of daily living and personal care including:
 - bathing
 - shaving
 - ambulation
 - mouth care
 - dressing
 - exercise
 - hair care
 - feeding
 - toileting
 - nail care
 - positioning
 - medication reminding
 - skin care
 - transferring
 - vital signs and Blood Pressure

- ◆ Ensure client's safety and security by supervising the home environment.
- ◆ Teach/perform meal planning and preparation, routine housekeeping activities such as making/changing beds, dusting, vacuuming, washing floors, cleaning kitchen and bathroom, and laundry.
- ◆ Provide companionship including social interactions, conversations, emotional reassurance and encouragement of activities that stimulate the mind.
- ◆ Provides respite care for families in accordance with care plans.
- ◆ Perform/assist with essential shopping/errands, which may include handling the client's money in accordance with the care plan and under the observation of the Supervisor.
- ◆ Assist clients with following a written, special diet plan and reinforcement of diet maintenance, which is provided under the direction of a Physician and as identified on the care plan.
- ◆ Escort clients to medical facilities, errands, shopping and outings as specified in the care plan.
- ◆ Assist clients with communication by writing or typing correspondence for them or researching information for them.
- ◆ Participate on the Care Team by providing input and making suggestions.
- ◆ Ensure service is delivered in accordance with all relevant policies, procedures and practices.
- ◆ Monitor supplies and resources.
- ◆ Evaluate the program and make recommendations to it, as indicated.
- ◆ Follow the written care plan.
- ◆ Carry out duties as assigned by the Supervisor.
- ◆ Observe clients and their environments and reports unsafe conditions to Supervisor.
- ◆ Observe clients and their environments and reports behavior, physical and/or cognitive changes and/or changes in living arrangements to Supervisor.
- ◆ Complete and maintain records of daily activities, observations, and direct hours of service.
- ◆ Attend orientation, in-service training sessions and staff meetings.
- ◆ Develop and maintain constructive and cooperative working relationships with others.
- ◆ Make decisions and solve problems.
- ◆ Communicate with Supervisor and co-workers.
- ◆ Observe, receive and obtain information from relevant sources.
- ◆ Performs other duties as required.

Required Knowledge

- ◆ Knowledge of personal care and home management skills.
- ◆ Knowledge of principles and processes for providing client and personal care services, including needs determinants, meeting quality standards and evaluation of client satisfaction.

- ◆ Knowledge of the English language.
- ◆ Knowledge of the information and techniques needed to diagnose and treat injuries including emergency first aid and CPR.
- ◆ Knowledge of clerical procedures such as maintaining records and completing forms.

Required Skills/Abilities

- ◆ The ability to competently assist clients with their activities of daily living.
- ◆ The ability to be aware of other people's reactions and understanding why they react as they do.
- ◆ The ability to establish and maintain relationships.
- ◆ The ability to teach others.
- ◆ The ability to listen actively.
- ◆ The ability to identify problems and determine effective solutions.
- ◆ The ability to apply reason and logic to identify strengths and weaknesses of possible solutions.
- ◆ The ability to monitor and assess themselves, clients and effectiveness of service.
- ◆ The ability to understand written and oral instructions.
- ◆ The ability to communicate information orally so others understand.
- ◆ The ability to communicate in writing so others understand.
- ◆ The ability to work independently and in cooperation with others.
- ◆ The ability to determine or recognize when something is likely to go wrong.
- ◆ The ability to suggest a number of ideas on a subject.
- ◆ The ability to perform activities that use the whole body.
- ◆ The ability to handle and move objects and people.
- ◆ The ability to provide advice and consultation to others.
- ◆ The ability to observe and recognize changes in clients.
- ◆ The ability to establish and maintain harmonious relations with clients/families/co-workers.

Physical and Mental Demands:

- ◆ Good physical and mental health.
- ◆ Physical ability to stand, walk, use hands and fingers, reach, stoop, kneel, crouch, talk, hear and see.
- ◆ Mental fortitude and stability to handle stress.
- ◆ Physical and mental ability to drive a vehicle.

Qualifications/Education

- ◆ Current driver's license or access to public transportation.
- ◆ Proper Vehicle Insurance Coverage.

Training/Experience:

- ◆ May require related experience.
- ◆ On the job training for new activities.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Home Companion Solutions is committed to ensuring its employees avoid possible conflict of interest situations by performing their duties in a professional and moral manner. The goals are to prevent clients from being taken advantage of, to reduce management risks, to manage human resources, to deliver services effectively and efficiently and to prevent actual or perceived conflict of interest.

Persons employed by Home Companion Solutions are responsible to their clients and co-workers to perform their duties at all times in a professional and ethical manner, without the intention of obtaining direct or indirect conflict of interest. .

DEFINITIONS

1. Conflict of Interest

A person has a conflict of interest when he/she:

- a. is in a position of trust which requires him/her to exercise judgment on behalf of others (people, institutions, etc.); and/or,
- b. has interests or obligations of the sort that might interfere with the exercise of his/her judgment; and/or,
- c. is morally required to either avoid or openly acknowledge.

PROCEDURES

1. Clients shall be advised of their rights to be free from conflict of interest behaviors and conducts which take advantage of them and/or their situations.
2. Employees shall not do anything that could result in a conflict of interest for the Agency such as buying and selling.
3. Employees shall be advised that the following are some of the situations that may be considered as conflict of interest:
 - a. taking advantage of the professional relationship with a client, which results in personal gain for the employee and/or their family/friends;
 - b. entering into an employment relationship with another service provider which infringes on the employment relationship with this agency unless that relationship has been sanctioned by the Agency.
 - c. agreeing to provide service to any client where there is a personal/familial relationship, unless such a relationship has been disclosed to the Agency and has been reviewed and authorized.
4. Employees are to be provided with information on how to report potential/actual conflicts of interest.
5. Employees may not accept gifts, money, discounts or favors including a benefit to family members, friends or business associates for doing work that the company pays them to do.
6. Employees may not use, or permit the use of the Company's property, facilities, equipment, supplies or other resources for activities not associated with their work without authorization first from the Company.
7. Employees may not disclose confidential or privileged information for any purpose about the Company, co-workers, clients/families, or use confidential information to advance personal or others' interests.
8. Employees shall advise the Manager/Administrator or Supervisor, in writing, of all other employment and possible conflict of interest situations.

ACCEPTANCE OF GIFTS

Home Companion Solutions discourages the Agency and its employees from accepting gifts from clients but will, in some cases, permit the occasional acceptance if:

1. rejecting the gift will negatively affect the client; and,
2. providing the gift:
 - a. is not made in cash;
 - b. does not exceed \$20 in value;
 - c. is not given on a regular or frequent basis;

- d. is not given in an attempt to influence conduct or decision making; and,
- e. does not compromise, or appear to compromise, in any way the integrity of the Agency or the employee.

PROCEDURES

1. All gifts shall be considered on a case-by-case basis.
2. The *Acceptance of Gift Policy* shall be consistently applied.
3. Employees shall report any gift received to the Manager/Administrator or Supervisor, who will:
 - a. assess the circumstances in which it was made; and,
 - b. determine whether it shall be accepted or whether it shall be politely refused.
4. Manager/Administrator or Supervisor shall record receipt of the gift in:
 - a. a log, if the gift is made to the Agency; or,
 - b. the employee's personnel file, if the gift is made to an individual employee.
5. Documentation of gifts received shall include, but not be limited to, the following:
 - a. name, address and phone number of client giving the gift;
 - b. name of employee, if gift is given to an individual employee;
 - c. statement advising gift was given to the Agency, if gift is made to the Agency;
 - d. date the gift is given;
 - e. description of the gift;
 - f. value of the gift, if known; otherwise, assign an approximate value to the gift;
 - g. circumstances in which gift was made; and,
 - h. whether gift was accepted or returned to client.

BENEFITS AND COMPENSATION

PROCEDURES

1. The Agency shall provide the following federal, mandatory benefits to its employees:
 - a. Social Security and Medicare;
 - b. Unemployment Insurance; and,
 - c. Worker's Compensation.
2. The Agency shall provide additional mandated benefits:
 - a. statutory holidays;
3. The Agency provides discretionary benefits including direct deposit.
4. Mandatory contributions for Social Security, Medicare and Unemployment Insurance, shall be deducted from employees' pay checks, in accordance with regulations.
5. The Agency shall contribute the regulated employer payments for Social Security, Medicare, Unemployment Insurance, and Worker's Compensation for each and every employee.
6. The Agency shall research and maintain currency for minimum wage regulations established by the State.
7. Wages shall be based on, but not limited to, one or more of the following:
 - a. industry wage standards;
 - b. regulated pay rates;
 - c. shift differentials
 - d. days of week; and,
 - e. statutory holidays

Compensation Policies

1. Employees shall be paid on a weekly basis according to the pay rate sheet provided in the hiring packet.
2. Employees' wages shall be in accordance with their job descriptions.
3. Mandatory payroll deductions include:
 - a. Federal and State Income Taxes (based on an individual's W-4 filing status);
 - b. Social Security taxes; and,
 - c. Medicare taxes.
4. Personnel files shall be maintained at the Agency office for all employees.
5. All personnel salaries/wage rates shall be authorized by the Manager/Administrator.
6. Changes in employment shall be authorized by the Manager/Administrator.
7. Employees shall accurately record all hours worked using the Agency's *Employee Time Sheet*.
8. All hours worked by employees, in a specific time period, shall be documented on the Agency's *Employee Time Sheets*, which shall be verified and signed by clients, who received their services, before the *Employee Time Sheet* is submitted to the Supervisor.
9. **Time sheets are due every Monday by 12:00 p.m.**

Employee Breaks

Home Companion Solutions provides break periods for employees subject to the following conditions:

1. Each employee is authorized one break period for each four-hour work period. Each break period may be up to fifteen minutes in length.
2. Supervisor and individual employee shall work out suitable break schedules, depending on job assignments.
3. Breaks shall be scheduled in a manner, which does not interrupt services to the client.
4. Breaks may not be combined with lunch times.
5. No breaks may be taken at the end of the day.
6. Employees shall not accumulate or save paid break time.
7. Employees shall be assigned a one hour or one-half hour unpaid meal break about mid-point during their shift.
8. Employees shall take a meal break, regardless of shift worked.

Overtime Policy

Home Companion Solutions provides overtime pay according to labor law and legislation.

Supervisor shall develop working schedules, which keeps the number of weekly hours worked by individual employees within the limits wherein overtime is not applicable.

Employee Dress Code

Home Companion Solutions requires that its employees present a professional appearance at all times and that they wear the photo identification badge provided to them.

PROCEDURES

1. Employees shall use good judgment in choosing appropriate attire when on duty. Attire, which is deemed to be inappropriate includes, but is not limited to the following:
 - a. clothing in disrepair;
 - b. leggings/tights;
 - c. jogging suits;
 - d. clothing with inappropriate language;
 - e. shorts;
 - f. fishnet stockings;
 - g. tank tops;
 - h. revealing or tight clothing;
 - i. open-toed footwear; and,
 - j. artificial or long fingernails.
2. Clothing shall be kept in good repair, be of an acceptable length and fit properly.
3. Employees shall be well groomed and have good personal hygiene and cleanliness.
4. Supervisor shall ensure employees wear proper attire and maintain good personal hygiene and cleanliness.

Employee ID Badges

PROCEDURES

1. The Agency shall issue Identification Badges to all employees.
2. Employees shall wear the Identification Badges, which are provided to them by the Agency, whenever they are delivering services on behalf of the Agency.
3. Identification Badges shall display the following information:
 - a. employee's picture
 - b. employee first and last Name
 - c. Agency's name
4. Identification Badges shall be worn in a manner that enables their information to be conspicuously displayed to others.
5. Identification Badges shall be clipped to clothing in the front of the person, at least six inches above the waist or worn on a lanyard.
6. Identification Badges shall not be worn on belts, sleeves, pockets, footwear, etc.
7. Identification Badges shall not be deliberately worn in a manner that prevents a person's name or job title from being visible.
8. Identification Badges shall be updated to reflect current information, such as name or position changes.

PRIVATELY OWNED VEHICLES

Home Companion Solutions requires that its employees:

1. possess driver's licenses, which are valid, current and permit client transportation;
2. have privately-owned vehicles for their on-the-job usage; and
3. carry adequate insurance for transporting clients and public liability

PROCEDURES

Privately Owned Vehicles

1. Supervisor shall ensure that each employee has a valid driver's license and the appropriate automobile liability insurance prior to starting work. This will be verified on an annual basis.

2. Supervisor shall advise employees what rate per mile they will be paid for use of their privately-owned vehicles, prior to commencing work.
3. Employees, who use their own automobiles in the delivery of services, shall inform their insurance company that they will be using their vehicle for work /business purposes, and that their insurance coverage (at the current minimum recognized amount) must be adequate to meet any claims, including those concerning passengers.
4. Employees shall provide the Supervisor with copies of their driver's licenses and insurance coverage for privately-owned vehicles used for conducting job duties. This documentation shall be kept in the employee's personnel file.
5. Employees shall provide the Supervisor with copies of renewals for expired driver's licenses and expired insurance coverage for privately-owned vehicles used for conducting job duties.
6. Employees, whose driver's licenses are suspended or restricted and may affect their job duties, shall advise the Supervisor immediately.
7. Employees, who are driving privately-owned vehicles shall:
 - a. wear their seat belts at all times;
 - b. ensure all passengers wear seat belts at all times;
 - c. adhere to all traffic and safety regulations;
 - d. exercise caution and responsibility;
 - e. not consume alcohol and/or drugs;
 - f. not drive recklessly.
 - g. report any accidents or related injuries to the proper authorities, as regulated by law, with a written report of the incident being given to the Supervisor within 24 hours; and,
 - h. report any citations or charges against their drivers' records to the Supervisor.Employees who violate any of the above may be subject to discipline and/or termination.
8. Employees, who require medication that might impair their ability to drive, shall obtain written confirmation from their Physician that they can safely operate a motor vehicle.
9. Employees who receive parking tickets, speeding tickets and other traffic violations or who are arrested for driving-related offences shall assume total responsibility for any resulting fines.
10. Employees, who use private vehicles for delivering service to clients shall also complete and submit the Agency's *Personal/Private Vehicle Mileage Sheet*, for mileage accrued. These sheets shall be verified and signed by clients.

PROBATIONARY PERIOD

Home Companion Solutions requires that all its employees be on probation starting as soon as employment begins for a period of six months for purposes of retention or dismissal, as warranted.

PROCEDURES

1. Supervisor responsibilities during the probationary period include:
 - a. informing new employees, verbally and in writing, at the beginning of the probationary period, about the performance expectations and standards that are being evaluated during the probationary period;
 - b. setting up a review schedule to discuss performance with the employees;
 - c. orientating and training new employees to their job duties;

- d. providing full guidance and support to employees;
 - e. meeting more frequently with employees if they are having difficulty and/or if they are not meeting expectations;
 - f. identifying any performance issues to employees both verbally and in writing;
 - g. communicating continuously with employees throughout the probationary period;
 - h. providing feedback to employees and giving them the opportunity to improve any borderline or weaker aspects of their performance;
 - i. seeking assistance from other resources to help employees meet acceptable performance levels;
 - j. where extending probation or rejecting on probation may be necessary;
 - k. advising employees as early as possible if an extension to the probationary period is required;
 - l. documenting a rationale for any request to extend the probationary period;
 - m. consulting with manager/administrator, as early as possible on situations
 - n. notifying employees, verbally and in writing, of any approved extension to the probationary period;
 - o. initiating termination of employment at any time during the probationary period if employees fail to demonstrate the ability and/or willingness to perform the duties of the assigned position.
 - p. formally evaluating employees' performance at the end of the probationary period;
 - q. providing employees with a letter confirming conclusion of the probationary period, once they have successfully completed it;
 - r. rejecting employees for continued employment if they fail to meet performance standards.
2. Employee responsibilities during the probationary period include:
- a. demonstrating acceptable performance standards for the position;
 - b. meeting the Agency's standards for conduct, attendance and policies;
 - c. demonstrating suitability for the position and compatibility with co-workers and clients; and,
 - d. communicating continuously with the Supervisor throughout the probationary period.

COMPETENCY EVALUATIONS

Home Companion Solutions requires that all its employees undergo competency evaluations at designated times – upon completion of probation, annually and on an as-needed basis.

PROCEDURES

1. Supervisor shall obtain or prepare a checklist of the job functions for each job classification, which will be evaluated.
2. During probation, Supervisor shall observe all new employees performing the job functions listed on the checklist.
3. Supervisor shall conduct annual evaluations to determine employees' competency in performing and rendering services according to Agency policies and standards of practice.
4. Supervisor shall conduct as-needed evaluations whenever there appears to be a performance problem.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION

Home Companion Solutions is committed to establishing and maintaining a formal system of employee discipline, which ensures that the rules of the workplace and the standards of conduct are adhered to by all employees; and, that discipline is equitably and uniformly administered.

PROCEDURES

1. Disciplinary action shall be taken in the following situations:
 - a. practicing unethical behavior;
 - b. displaying professional misconduct;
 - c. being negligent;
 - d. being incompetent;
 - e. being dishonest;
 - f. showing insubordination;
 - g. conducting illegal activity;
 - h. being absent from work without reason;
 - i. breaching confidentiality;
 - j. being willfully disobedient;
 - k. causing willful damage to property;
 - l. having poor job performance;
 - m. violating the Human Rights Code;
 - n. creating a disturbance in the Agency's office or in a client's home;
 - o. being idle;
 - p. being in possession of intoxicants or non-prescription narcotics;
 - q. being under the influence of intoxicants when reporting for duty or when on duty;
 - r. falsifying employment records;
 - s. falsifying job-related documentation such as payroll cards, billing records and/or client records;
 - t. stealing;
 - u. misusing the Agency's or client's property deliberately or negligently;
 - v. not following the Agency's policies and procedures;
 - w. altering the Agency's policies and procedures;
 - x. displaying obscene or indecent conduct;
 - y. smoking in the Agency's office or in the client's home;
 - z. soliciting;
 - aa. possessing weapons or explosives;
 - bb. threatening or interfering with the work of others;
 - cc. being excessively absent from work or late for work;
 - dd. endangering the welfare of others;
 - ee. divulging confidential information concerning clients/families/other employees/the Agency;
 - ff. leaving work without authorization;
2. Where appropriate, disciplinary action shall be implemented until the investigation is completed.
3. Manager/Administrator and/or Supervisor shall determine if disciplinary action is required.
4. Professional standards of practice guidelines shall be used for disciplinary action, where appropriate.
5. Legal authorities shall be contacted if there is any suspicion of illegal activities.

6. The Agency shall cooperate fully with the legal authorities in any investigation relating to illegal activities.
7. In determining the appropriate disciplinary action to take, the following factors shall be considered:
 - a. the employee's length of service;
 - b. the employee's past discipline record;
 - c. the seriousness of the misconduct;
 - d. the employee's explanation; and,
 - e. any other pertinent facts.
8. Disciplinary actions shall consist of the following stages:
 - a. Verbal Warning
Manager/Administrator and/or Supervisor shall:
 - i. clearly explain the reasons for the verbal warning;
 - ii. outline expectations and behavior standards;
 - iii. describe the disciplinary process for infractions; and,
 - iv. record the date and reason for the verbal warning in the employee's personnel file.
 - b. Written Warning
 - i. Manager/Administrator and/or Supervisor shall issue a written warning after the second offense, if the infraction is a minor one. If the infraction is a major one, the written warning shall be issued after the first offense.
 - ii. The written warning shall be dated and shall clearly outline the reasons for the warning and the disciplinary action for the next infraction.
 - iii. If the written warning is for reasons of incompetence or lack of performance, it shall also include the terms and conditions which must be met to continue employment.
 - iv. A probationary period may be imposed to give employee time to improve.
 - v. The written warning shall be hand delivered to the employee and reviewed with the employee.
 - vi. Employee shall sign the written warning verifying that the warning was discussed with him/her and that he/she received a copy.
 - vii. A copy of the written warning shall be placed in the employee's personnel file.
 - c. Suspension from Work
The employee may be suspended from work until the investigation of the incident is completed or after the investigation is completed.
 - d. Termination
 - i. The employee shall be terminated:
 - if, after receiving verbal and written warnings, further infractions occur, or,
 - after a very serious offence has occurred and at the Agency's discretion.
 - ii. Dated, written notification, which outlines the reason(s) for termination, shall be hand delivered to the employee or sent to him/her via registered mail. A copy shall be placed in the employee's personnel file.

TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT

Home Companion Solutions utilizes a formal and just process for terminations, both voluntary and involuntary, which is comprehended by all personnel and is adhered to by supervisors/management.

DEFINITIONS

1. *Involuntary Termination (Dismissal)*

Involuntary termination means that an employee has been fired (dismissed) for any number of reasons.

2. *Voluntary Termination (Resignation)*

An employee quits his/her job for a variety of reasons.

3. *Dismissal Process*

The dismissal process consists of steps to take when an employee is not following standard/policies/procedures and/or is exhibiting behavior, which is inappropriate. The purpose of the dismissal process is to provide an opportunity and timetable to correct misunderstood directions, eliminate incorrect assumptions and resolve conflicts.

4. *Gross Negligence*

Gross Negligence is the failure to use even the slightest amount of care in a way that shows recklessness or willfully disregards the safety of others. It is a way of violating others rights.

5. *“At Will Employment”*

“At-will employment” is a creation of American law, applicable in Illinois, that enables either party to terminate the relationship with no liability if there was no express contract for a definite term.

Under this legal principle:

- a. any hiring is presumed to be "at will"; i.e. the employer is free to discharge individuals “for good cause, or bad cause, or no cause at all” and,
- b. the employee is equally free to quit, strike, or otherwise cease work.

Note: Although “at-will employment” allows an employee to quit for no reason, the general rule is that either party can terminate the relationship when an employer wants to fire an employee at any time. There are limitations upon the employer's ability to terminate without reason. As a means of downsizing, a company may fire large numbers of employees in one sweep.

GRIEVANCES AND COMPLAINTS

Home Companion Solutions has a process in place for dealing with discrepancies in understanding, importance, direction and breach of practice in order that prompt and equitable resolution of complaints can be promoted.

DEFINITIONS

1. Complaint

A complaint is a concern which an employee wants to discuss with his/her Supervisor in an effort to resolve the matter. Complaints do not include personnel actions such as performance evaluations, rates of pay, position re-classifications, or position terminations due to reduction in work force.

2. Grievance

A grievance is an employee's formal complaint resulting from, but not limited to, working conditions, disciplinary action, dismissal and/or actions taken against the employee which violate:

- a. policy or involves an inconsistent application of that policy;
- b. state or federal discrimination statutes; and,
- c. constitutional rights.

PROCEDURES

1. All employees shall have access to grievance/complaint procedures.
2. Supervisor shall inform employees about their right to file a grievance/complaint and their right to be protected from retaliation.
3. Employees, who intend to file or who file grievances/complaints, shall not:
 - a. be retaliated against or be discriminated against by other employees; and/or,
 - b. be coerced or have their actions interfered with by other employees.
4. Supervisors shall ensure that employees, who intend to file or who file a grievance/complaint, are free from fear of retaliation, coercion and/or discrimination.
5. The Agency shall utilize the following procedure for grievances/complaints:
 - a. Employees shall prepare a written submission of the grievance/complaint within one week of the incident/issue. The submission shall contain the following information:
 - i. name and job position of employee
 - ii. reason for and details of the grievance/complaint;
 - iii. corrective action desired;
 - iv. date grievance/complaint is submitted;
 - v. name of Supervisor to whom the grievance/complaint is first submitted; and,
 - vi. signature of employee.
 - b. Supervisor discusses the grievance/complaint with the employee within one week of receiving it.
 - c. Resolution of grievance/complaint shall include:
 - i. presentation of the facts and/or materials by employees;
 - ii. investigation of the dispute; and,
 - iii. an attempt to find a solution.
 - d. If Supervisor and employee have unresolved issues, after discussion, a written report of the unresolved issues and the original grievance/complaint shall be submitted to the Manager/Administrator.
 - e. Manager/Administrator reviews the grievance/complaint and unresolved issues and responds to the employee within one week.
 - f. If the Manager/Administrator's involvement fails to bring a resolution to the grievance/complaint, the employee has the right to consult with an external body; for instance, a court or a federal/state administrative body such as Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, Office of Civil Rights, or Human Right Commission.
 - g. Employees may withdraw a grievance/complaint, in writing, at any stage of the process.
6. Supervisor shall prepare a semi-annual report, which includes a summary of the grievances/complaints received during the previous six months, including their numbers and types.
7. Manager/Administrator shall review the semi-annual report and, with input from Supervisor and employee (where appropriate) make corrective changes to offset future complaints/grievances from being files.
8. Copies of grievances/complaints and accompanying responses and documentation shall be kept in the Agency office for at least three years.

DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE POLICY

The use of drugs undermines the quality and safety of job performance, endangers co-workers and patients, and brings discredit to Home Companion Solutions and the care giver community. Home Companion Solutions will not tolerate the use of drugs by its

employees in any job-related context and is committed to the eradication of drugs from the workplace.

To this end, it is the policy of Home companion solutions that the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession or use of a controlled substance on the job is strictly prohibited. Anyone in violation of this policy is subject to severe disciplinary action, including discharge.

If you are suspected of drug use while working for Home Companion Solutions you may be asked to submit to a drug test in our office. Failure to submit to the drug test will result in immediate termination of employment.

POLICY REGARDING SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN EMPLOYMENT

Statement of Company Policy

Home Companion Solutions is committed to providing a workplace that is free from all forms of discrimination, including sexual harassment. Any employee's behavior that fits the definition of sexual harassment is a form of misconduct which may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. Sexual harassment could also subject this company and, in some cases, an individual to substantial civil penalties.

The company's policy on sexual harassment is part of its overall affirmative action efforts pursuant to state and federal laws prohibiting discrimination based on age, race, color, religion, national origin, citizenship status, unfavorable discharge from the military, marital status, disability, and gender. Specifically, sexual harassment is prohibited by the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended in 1991, and the Illinois Human Rights Act.

Each employee of this company bears the responsibility to refrain from sexual harassment in the workplace. No employee -male or female- should be subjected to unsolicited or unwelcome sexual overtures or conduct in the workplace. Furthermore, it is the responsibility of all supervisors to make sure that the work environment is free from sexual harassment. All forms of discrimination and conduct which can be considered harassing, coercive or disruptive, or which create a hostile or offensive environment must be eliminated. Instances of sexual harassment must be investigated in a prompt and effective manner.

All employees of this company, particularly those in a supervisory or management capacity, are expected to become familiar with the contents of this Policy and to abide by the requirements it establishes.

Definition of Sexual Harassment

According to the Illinois Human Rights Act, sexual harassment is defined as: Any unwelcome sexual advances or requests for sexual favors or any conduct of a sexual nature when;

(1) submission to such conduct is made, either explicitly or implicitly, a term or condition of an individual's employment.

(2) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual, or

(3) such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

The courts have determined that sexual harassment is a form of discrimination under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended in 1991.

One example of sexual harassment is where a qualified individual is denied employment opportunities and benefits that are, instead, awarded to an individual who submits (voluntarily or under coercion) to sexual advances or sexual favors. Another example is where an individual must submit to unwelcome sexual conduct in order to receive an employment opportunity.

Other conduct commonly considered to be sexual harassment includes:

- Verbal: sexual innuendos, suggestive comments, insults, humor and jokes about sex, anatomy or gender-specific traits, sexual propositions, threats, repeated requests for dates, or statements about other employees, even outside their presence, of a sexual nature.
- Non-verbal: Suggestive or insulting sounds (whistling), leering, obscene gestures, sexually suggestive bodily gestures, "catcalls", "smacking", or "kissing" noises
- Visual: posters, signs, pin-ups or slogans of a sexual nature.
- Physical: Touching, unwelcome hugging or kissing, pinching, brushing the body, coerced sexual intercourse, or actual assault.

Sexual harassment most frequently involves a man harassing a woman. However, it can also involve a woman harassing a man or harassment between members of the same gender.

The most severe and overt forms of sexual harassment are easier to determine. On the other end of the spectrum, some sexual harassment is more subtle and depends to some extent on individual perception and interpretation. The trend in the courts is to assess sexual harassment by a standard of what would offend a "reasonable woman" or "reasonable man", depending on the gender of the alleged victim.

An example of the most subtle form of sexual harassment is the use of endearments. The use of terms such as "honey", "darling", and "sweetheart" is objectionable to many women who believe that these terms undermine their authority and their ability to deal with men on an equal and professional level.

Another example is the use of a compliment that could potentially be interpreted as sexual in nature. Below are three statements that might be made about the appearance of a woman in the workplace:

- "That's an attractive dress you have on."
- "That's an attractive dress. It really looks good on you."
- "That's an attractive dress. You really fill it out well."

The first statement appears to be simply a compliment. The last is the most likely to be perceived as sexual harassment depending on the perceptions and values of the person to whom it is directed. To avoid the possibility of offending an employee, it is best to follow a course of conduct above reproach, or to err on the side of caution.

Responsibility of Individual Employees

Each individual employee has the responsibility to refrain from sexual harassment in the workplace.

An individual employee who sexually harasses a fellow worker is, of course, liable for his or her individual conduct.

The harassing employee will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including discharge in accord with the company's disciplinary policy and the terms of any applicable collective bargaining agreement.

The company has designated Ann Weist, Director of Staffing to coordinate the company's sexual harassment policy compliance. Ann can be reached at (773) 779-8200. She is available to consult with employees regarding their obligations under this policy.

Responsibility of Supervisory Employees

Each supervisor is responsible for maintaining the workplace free from sexual harassment. This is accomplished by promoting a professional environment and by dealing with sexual harassment as with all other forms of employee misconduct.

The courts have found that organizations as well as supervisors can be held liable for damages related to sexual harassment by a manager, supervisor, employee, or third party (an individual who is not an employee but does business with an organization, such as a customer, contractor, sales representative, or repair person).

Liability is either based on an organization's responsibility to maintain a certain level of order and discipline, or on the supervisor acting as an agent of the organization. As such, supervisors must act quickly and responsibly not only to minimize their own liability but also that of the company.

Specifically, a supervisor must address an observed incident of sexual harassment or a complaint, with seriousness, take prompt action to investigate it, report it, and end it, implement appropriate disciplinary action, and observe strict confidentiality. This also applies to cases where an employee tells the supervisor about behavior that constitutes sexual harassment but does not want to make a formal complaint.

In addition, supervisors must ensure that no retaliation will result against an employee making a sexual harassment complaint.

Supervisors in need of information regarding their obligations under this policy or procedures to follow upon receipt of a complaint of sexual harassment should contact Ann Weist, Director of Staffing at (773) 779-8200.

Procedures for filing a complaint of Sexual Harassment

Internal

An employee who either observes or believes herself/himself to be the object of sexual harassment should deal with the incident(s) as directly and firmly as possible by clearly communicating her/his position to the supervisor, Ann Weist, and to the offending employee. It is not necessary for the sexual harassment to be directed at the person making the complaint.

Each incident of sexual harassment should be documented or recorded. A note should be made of the date, time, place, what was said or done, and by whom. The documentation may be augmented by written records such as letters, notes, memos, and telephone messages.

No one making a complaint of sexual harassment will be retaliated against even if a complaint made in good faith is not substantiated. Any witness to an incident of sexual harassment is also protected from retaliation.

The process for making a complaint about sexual harassment falls into several stages.

1. **Direct Communication.** If there is sexually harassing behavior in the workplace, the harassed employee should directly and clearly express her\his objection that the conduct is unwelcome and request that the offending behavior stop. The initial message may be verbal. If subsequent messages are needed, they should be put in writing in a note or a memo.
2. **Contact Supervisory Personnel.** At the same time direct communication is undertaken, or in the event the employee feels threatened or intimidated by the situation, the problem must be promptly reported to the immediate supervisor or the EEO Officer. If the harasser is the immediate supervisor, the problem should be reported to the next level of supervision of the EEO Officer.
3. **Formal Written Complaint.** An employee may also report incidents of sexual harassment directly to the EEO Officer. The EEO Officer will counsel the reporting employee and be available to assist with filing a formal complaint. The Company will fully investigate the complaint, and will advise the complainant and the alleged harasser of the results of the investigation.

External

The Company hopes that any incident of sexual harassment can be resolved through the internal process outlined above. All employees, however, have the right to file formal charges with the Illinois Department of Human Rights (IDHR) and/or the United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC). A charge with IDHR must be filed within 180 days of the incident of sexual harassment. A charge with EEOC must be filed within 300 days of the incident.

Guidelines for Companions Interacting with Clients with Differing Culture or Ethnicity

As a companion you will be caring for many people who have a different culture or ethnicity than you. It is important that all clients be treated with respect and compassion. The following guidelines should help you accomplish this. Make sure when working through Home Companion Solutions that you:

Convey respect for the individual and respect for his/her values, beliefs, and cultural and ethnic practices.

Learn about the major ethnic or cultural groups with whom you are likely to have contact.

Be aware of your own communication, e.g. facial expressions and body language, and how it may be interpreted.

Be aware of your own biases, prejudices, and stereotypes

When a client describes a belief that differs from your own, e.g. the cause of her swollen feet, try to relate the client's belief to your own, thus conveying interest and respect for the client's belief.

Recognize the cultural symbols and practices that can often bring a client comfort.

Support the client's practices and incorporate them into nursing practice whenever it is possible and they are not contraindicated for health reasons.

Do not impose a cultural practice on a client without knowing whether it is acceptable.

Be aware the color of a client's skin does not always determine his/her culture.

Take time to learn how a client views health, illness, grieving, and the health care system.

Be aware of your own attitudes and beliefs about health and objectively examine the logic of those attitudes and beliefs and their origins.

Be open to learning about different beliefs and values and learn not to be threatened when they differ from your own.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

Home Companion Solutions is an Equal Opportunity Employer and prohibits discrimination of any kind because of color, creed, national origin, sex, religion, handicap, marital status, communicable diseases, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, age (unless age is a factor necessary for the normal operation or achievement objectives), pregnancy (unless the performance of duties puts the client and/or employee at risk) and/or other characteristics protected by law.

DEFINITIONS

1. Equal Opportunity

Equal Opportunity is the right of all persons to be accorded full and equal consideration on the basis of merit or other relevant, meaningful criteria, regardless of protected group status.

2. Affirmative Action

Affirmative actions are good faith efforts to ensure equal employment opportunity and correct the effects of past discrimination against affected groups. Where appropriate, affirmative action includes goals to correct underutilization and development of results-oriented programs to address problem areas.

PROCEDURES

1. Diversity, fairness and justice in the workplace shall be promoted.
2. Discrimination, prejudice and victimization in the workplace shall not be tolerated.
3. State and federal, non-discrimination rules and regulations shall be complied with.
4. Equal opportunity and respect shall be provided to all individuals in matters of service and employment.
5. Any conditions, procedures and/or behavior, which can lead to discrimination, shall be eliminated.
6. All Agency policies, procedures and guidelines shall be established/maintained to reflect and reinforce its commitment to equality.
7. The Manager/Administrator shall assume responsibility for affirmative actions plans and may seek outside consultation from the Equal Employment Opportunity Office when necessary.
8. When selecting new employees, members of the selection committee shall:
 - a. agree on selection criteria to be used for the job position;
 - b. provide information about the job position in the same manner to all applicants;
 - c. ask all applicants the same questions; and,
 - d. choose the successful candidate, based on the selection criteria.
9. All employees shall be recruited and promoted on the basis of ability and other objective relevant criteria.
10. Contractors, supplying services on behalf the Agency, shall be expected to conform to the same non discrimination policies.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Home Companion Solutions shall develop and maintain policies, procedures and standards which comply with all legislation that pertains to human rights and shall provide an environment that is free of harassment and discrimination.

Human rights are those basic standards without which people cannot live in dignity. To violate someone's human rights is to treat that person as though he or she were not a human being. To advocate human rights is to demand that the human dignity of all people be respected.

1. Employees/clients/families shall be monitored for illegal practices pertaining to:
 - a. race or religion;
 - b. gender or age;
 - c. color or ethnic origin;
 - d. ancestry, place or origin or citizenship;
 - e. sexual orientation;

- f. record of offenses;
 - g. marital or family status;
 - h. physical, mental or social challenges; and/or,
 - i. medical history or condition(s).
2. There shall be no harassment of employees/clients/families based on:
- a. race or religion;
 - b. gender or age;
 - c. color or ethnic origin;
 - d. ancestry, place or origin or citizenship;
 - e. sexual orientation;
 - f. record of offenses;
 - g. marital or family status;
 - h. physical, mental or social challenges; and/or,
 - i. medical history or condition(s).
3. Everything possible shall be done to provide an environment free of harassment and discrimination.
4. Quick and appropriate reaction to complaints will be initiated in order to enhance the chances of a quick resolution.
5. Harassments, which are sexual in nature, shall follow the company's policy on sexual harassment.