

CHAPTER 5

PERSONNEL POLICIES

5.0 DISCLAIMER

This personnel policy manual is not an employment contract. It is presented as a matter of information only. The Erie County Board of MR/DD County Board of Mental Retardation & Developmental Disabilities reserves the right to modify, revoke, suspend, terminate, or change these policies and procedures with or without prior notice. Any statements in conflict with these policies made by anyone else are unauthorized, expressly disallowed, and should not be relied upon by anyone.

This manual does not supersede the provisions of any current collective bargaining agreement for county board employees between the Erie County Board of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities and an authorized union if the provisions of the contract directly conflict with this manual.

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Policies are defined as the basic rules which guide administrative action for accomplishing an organization's objectives. Comprehensive and clearly defined policies, consistently and fairly administered, are essential to the success of any organization.

The policies set forth and adopted within this manual supersede all previous written and unwritten personnel policies of the Erie County Board of MR/DD County Board of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities.

This policy manual is a guide to be utilized by management and supervisory personnel to ensure uniformity and nondiscriminatory application of the conditions of employment. In the event there is a conflict between the contents of this manual and any applicable laws, those applicable laws shall prevail.

The manual is designed as a tool for staff to enable them to know and to understand what to expect from the environment and the organization and to keep staff informed. Questions regarding the interpretation and application of these policies should be directed to your supervisor who will seek clarification through the chain of command. Every effort must be made to ensure that such decisions are made objectively, with the general intent of the policy in mind.

This manual is not a contract either expressed or implied. And, while the Board reserves the right to change any provision without consultation, the Board and its management do want to develop and maintain a good relationship with employees. Your input about matters addressed in this handbook is welcome and will always be considered.

Employees of the Erie County Board of Mental Retardation shall be notified of policy additions, amendments, and rescissions in a timely manner. It is the responsibility of employees to read posted and distributed notices. Questions regarding this manual or any policy of the Board are encouraged and should be directed to County Board management staff.

Whenever possible, notice of proposed changes will be posted in the staff lounge at the primary program site three (3) days prior to action by the Board. It is the practice of the Board to have two (2) readings prior to the adoption of any personnel policy unless passed as an emergency policy. During the time frame in which the Board conducts its two readings and up to the policies adoption any staff member may comment on the change and request review. Comments or questions are to be directed to the superintendent. After the policy has been adopted by the Board, the policy is in full force. As conditions change within the organization, it may be necessary to add, delete, or revise specific policies affected by such change. Updated policies shall be issued to all manual holders and communicated to all affected employees.

If a union contract is in force for designated employees and contains clauses conflicting with items in this manual, the union contract shall supersede the pertinent clauses in this manual.

These policies apply to all employees of the Erie County Board of Mental retardation and Developmental Disabilities. The superintendent shall regularly review the policies and make recommendations to the Board.

Disagreements or requests for waiver or exception to the provisions of this manual are to follow the procedures outlined in the Grievance Procedure.

5.1.1 PHILOSOPHY

The Erie County Board of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities believes in and is committed to the following principles:

Persons with disabilities have the same rights as other citizens, notably the right to live and participate in the community. Educational, habilitational, vocational, recreational, and residential services shall be available to enhance their ability and opportunity to make life choices.

The principles of self-determination are the guiding principles for the Board and board staff. These principles shall determine the way the Board and its staff conduct business every day with everyone. Services and supports will be provided based upon the needs of the individual and in the least restrictive manner. Every effort will be made to use the same services available to the general community and to assist local services in adapting to meet specialized needs.

Programs of the Board will be developed, monitored, and evaluated by means of a comprehensive service planning process and nationally accepted standards of service delivery. The planning process will regularly assess individual and family service needs and satisfaction as well as general public opinion. Administration will propose and the Board will adopt a plan to improve and modify services. Progress on the Board's plan shall be reviewed periodically and reported annually.

5.1.2 OBJECTIVES

The Board recognizes that a personnel system which recruits and retains competent, dependable personnel is indispensable for the effective delivery of services to individuals of the community who have mental retardation or developmental disabilities.

The policies and procedures set forth in this manual are designed to:

1. Promote high morale and foster good working relationships among employees of the Board by providing uniform personnel policies, equal opportunities for advancement, and consideration of employee needs.

2. Encourage each employee to give his/her best effort to the county and the public.
3. Establish a standard of courteous and dependable service to the public and to the consumers enrolled in the programs.
4. Provide fair and equal opportunity for qualified persons to enter and progress in their employment as determined through objective and practical personnel management methods.
5. Ensure that all operations and programs are conducted in an ethical and legal manner so as to promote the Board's reputation as an efficient, progressive organization in the community and the state.