

5.7 MISCELLANEOUS POLICIES

5.7.1 Solicitation and Distribution

Distribution of material not related to program activity: The use of Board facilities, including mailboxes, bulletin boards, walls, and tables for the distribution of literature, hand-outs, cards, notices, newsletters, and memoranda relating to personal and private matters, is prohibited.

Distribution of literature by means of Board facilities, including mailboxes, bulletin boards, walls and tables, shall be limited to official Board program information, material approved by the Board such as information about the United Way, information on other community resources, or information that is agreed to as part of a collective bargaining agreement. Any person who distributes non-Board program material and literature is responsible for its accuracy and content.

At no time may any employee(s) solicit or distribute material or literature of an illegal nature, or that by its distribution or by employees participating, constitutes a form of gambling.

Persons who are not employees may not solicit or distribute literature or material for any purpose on Board owned property, in any working areas, or in any non-working area that is restricted to employees only. There shall be no solicitation or distribution of literature or material of any kind at any time by any person(s) in lobbies, waiting rooms, on bulletin boards, or public parking lots that are a part of Board property, or any other public service areas of Board premises.

This policy is vital to our efficiency and productivity, and is also critical to ongoing working relationships and continuing goodwill with the public we serve.

Any employee(s) who violates any provision of this policy shall be subject to employee counseling and disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

Employees interested in performing fundraising activities during work time must have prior approval from their supervisor and the Superintendent. Fundraising activities include but are not limited to school sales, solicitation for non-profit agencies, and solicitation for individual and family crises.

5.7.2 Bulletin Boards

It is the policy of the Board to maintain all facility bulletin boards as a means of communicating information to employees. Exceptions are those bulletin boards specified for programming purposes. The following procedures apply to bulletin boards and areas of common use.

All material that is to appear on Board bulletin boards shall be posted and removed by the facility department director or designee.

All board, federal and state required notices, and other legally required notices shall be posted in an area visible to all employees.

Information of a general public interest may be posted by the department director or designee if the information does not contain the following:

1. personal attacks upon any employee or public official;
2. scandalous, scurrilous or derogatory attacks on the Board, managing officers, supervisors or other personnel of the agency;
3. comments regarding candidates for public office.

The following procedures shall be followed concerning the posting of any materials on the Board's bulletin boards:

1. All requests to have materials posted shall be in writing to the department director or designee, and shall contain the name of the person or group requesting to post the material, a copy of the material to be posted, and the requested period of time the material is to be posted.
2. The department director or designee shall approve or disapprove the request by the end of the next scheduled work day.
3. No material will be posted for a period of time which is longer than thirty (30) calendar days, except for legally required notices, timely staff training materials, or agency publications/notices that the department director or designee decides should be posted for a longer period.
4. At the end of the thirty (30) day period, or any period specified by the person or group requesting the posting, whichever is less, the department director or designee shall remove the posted material.

Any material posted in violation of this policy shall be removed from the facility bulletin boards.

Violators of this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action as specified in the Board's discipline policy.

5.7.3 Political Activity - Classified Employees

This policy lists the specific activities legally permitted and prohibited to all classified employees, including classified employees on authorized leave of absence from their positions. Employees are encouraged to exercise their constitutional rights to vote.

Activities permitted to classified employees:

1. Registration and voting
2. Expressing opinions, either orally or in writing
3. Voluntary financial contributions to political candidates or organizations
4. Circulating petitions on legislation relating to their employment
5. Attendance at political rallies. Employees may attend political rallies that are open to the general public.
6. Nominating petitions. Employees may sign nominating petitions in support of individuals.
7. Political pictures. Employees may display political signs in/on their homes/yards.
8. Badges, buttons and stickers. Employees may display political stickers on their private automobiles or may wear political badges or buttons as long as it does not interfere with job safety.
9. Serving as a precinct election official under R.C. 3501.22.

Activities prohibited to classified employees:

1. Participating in a partisan election as a candidate for office.
2. Declaring candidacy for an elected office that is filled by partisan election.
3. Circulating official nominating petitions for any candidate.
4. Holding an elected or appointed office in any political organization.
5. Accepting appointment to any office normally filled by partisan election.
6. Campaigning by writing for publications, by distributing political material or by making speeches on behalf of a candidate for elective office.
7. Soliciting, either directly or indirectly, any assessment, contribution, or subscription for any party or candidate.
8. Soliciting the sale of or selling political party tickets, materials or other political matter.
9. Engaging in activities at the political polls, such as soliciting votes.
10. Acting as recorder, checker, watcher, judge, poll worker, or challenger for any party or faction.
11. Engaging in political caucuses.
12. Participation in a political action committee which supports partisan activity.

Reference: O.R.C. 124.57, O.A.C. 123:1-46-02

5.7.4 Political Activity - Unclassified Employees

Unclassified employees are subject to the Hatch Act (prohibits unclassified employees being forced to participate in political activity) and the Ohio Ethics Law.

5.7.5 Safety and Health

Work safety and health is a primary concern of the Board. Employees are to be familiar with the specifics outlined in the Board's Health and Safety policy. The safe and healthful performance of all work assignments is the responsibility of both supervisory and non-supervisory personnel. It is the responsibility of each employee to ensure that all safety procedures/practices are observed.

An employee found to be willfully or wantonly negligent in equipment operation, resulting in either damage to the equipment or an accident, shall be subject to disciplinary action which may include termination. An employee who drives county vehicles will maintain the appropriate speed limits and obey all other vehicular laws. Violators are subject to disciplinary action, including termination. Employees will take safety measures, such as universal precautions, when directed to do so by Board policy and/or Board supervisory staff. Violators are subject to disciplinary action, including termination.

All employees, particularly supervisors, are charged with the responsibility of reporting the existence of any hazardous condition or practice in the workplace. Employees will not be required to work in unsafe conditions and are encouraged to report any unsafe conditions to supervisory staff.

Any accident, whether or not injuries were incurred, occurring during working hours shall be reported to the immediate supervisor at once. Upon notification, the supervisor or department director shall complete and submit to the superintendent an accident form no later than the end of the work shift.

Dress code shall be appropriate to the job and safety concerns.

5.7.6 Dress Code

The Erie County Board of MRDD objective in establishing a business casual dress code, is to allow employees to work comfortably in the workplace.

Employees are to project a professional image for our consumers, potential employees, and community visitors. The following is the acceptable and unacceptable attire for the various positions held by Board staff.

Staff is expected to dress professionally & appropriately for the position for which he or she holds. Because of the need for lifting, carrying, and moving, the following dress code must be followed by direct care service staff:

- A. An employee who is in a class, group, or environment where he/she may be expected to lift or be involved in a behavioral intervention, must wear shoes with a flat, wide based heel.
- B. Jewelry of any type which could be broken, grabbed, or pulled by an enrollee, and/or could inhibit moving clients safely shall not be worn. If any jewelry is broken, it will not be replaced by the Board.
- C. Loose clothing which could be caught in wheel chairs or braces and tight-fitting clothing which could limit movement shall not be worn.

See page 107 for list of employee groups and their required dress code.

Management
Business Offices
Receptionist
Service & Support Administration
Help Me Grow / Early Intervention
Nursing

Allowed

All staff are to be dressed in at least business casual attire.
Capri Pants: Must be of at least business casual material, length mid-calf to ankle.
Sandals: May be worn to compliment your business attire (not beachwear)

***Not Allowed**

Sandals that are considered "flip flop"
Spaghetti or strapless tops
Jeans/No Denim Clothing
Sweat Pants/ Stretch Pant
Jogging Suits
Sport Knit
Shorts
Tennis Shoes

All Direct Care Staff

Other requirements may be implemented to insure Health & safety of client & staff as well as promote the professional image of the organization

Transportation

Allowed

Jeans: No holes or frays
Shirts: Good condition
Bermuda Shorts: No holes or frays
Tennis Shoes in good condition

Not Allowed

Jogging Suits
Sweat Pants

Maintenance-Custodial

Allowed

Jeans: No holes or frays
Shirts: MRDD Logo Only
Hard Toe Work Shoes: Work Boot

Not Allowed

Tennis Shoes
Sandals

Apparel that promotes alcohol, tobacco, drugs, or implies a sexual, vulgar or hate message is prohibited. Clothing shall be conducive to the safe effective performance of required job duties. Appropriate standards of cleanliness and grooming are required.

5.7.7 Employee Property Damage

Replacement of damaged items will be set at comparable worth. If the damage to employee's property is the result of an action of an enrollee which is considered deliberate, the enrollee or the parent/guardian of the enrollee will be billed for damages. The functioning level of the enrollee shall be considered before deliberate intent is attributed to the action.

Replacement of Personal Items: The Board may reimburse employees, volunteers and others serving in a similar capacity, reasonable costs related to the repair or replacement of personal items that are damaged or destroyed in the performance of the employee's duties as the result of an incident with a client or student. Precious metals and gems (jewelry or personal adornments) will not be replaced by the program.

Specific guidelines on replacement of personal items are outlined on the back of the claim form available in all program offices. The superintendent authorizes payment. Claims of over \$200 will require Board approval.

The Board reserves the right to require an employee to use his/her health benefits to replace eye glasses, if eligible.

5.7.8 Volunteers

The use of volunteers to support and supplement the activities of paid staff is encouraged. Volunteers shall be recruited and assigned based upon the needs of the program and the skills of the volunteer. Volunteer services and selection of volunteers shall be in accordance with the Civil Rights Plan of the Board.

All volunteers are to be directed to Human Resources five (5) days prior to first day. Volunteers are required to submit to a BCI Check & Sheriff's Check for county they reside in. In addition both Abuser Registries will be checked. Ability to volunteer will be based on outcome of checks.

A brief overview of the Erie County Board of MRDD and its mission statement will be provided the volunteer. After the successful completion of requirements the volunteer will be permitted to support program activities.

There shall be two classes of volunteers.

Supporters and Friends are individuals or groups (i.e., fraternity, sorority, etc.) who assist with one time projects or other activities where paid staff are present and supervising all client activities.

Certified Volunteers are individuals who have been selected through an application process, received training and are assigned specific responsibilities

which may include direct contact with clients in unsupervised settings or providing direct contact to the public as speakers, receptionists, tour guides, or other such activities.

The program supervisors shall determine volunteer need for their departments, recruit, train and supervise volunteers and keep records of volunteer services.

A volunteer guide shall be provided for all certified volunteers. The guide shall address Board policies and practices for volunteers.

Volunteers shall not be used in place of staff.

5.7.9 Copyright Laws

The Board does not authorize, permit, nor encourage the duplication of printed material, music, video, or computer software that violates the copyright of the author.

5.7.10 Employee Communicable Disease Guidelines

Every employee will be required to have a physical prior to employment. All employees working directly with participants will have a tuberculin test. Record of this physical will be maintained by the Board.

Colds, flu and other viral infections are common and easily transmitted in the work place. It is difficult to effectively contain the spread of these diseases because the individual has spread the disease for several days while in the early stages. Physician's sanction to return to work is usually not necessary for these infections (unless the employee has missed three (3) consecutive days).

If an employee is suspected of having a communicable disease, the department director may request the employee seek medical attention. The employee can return to work when the employee's attending physician states that continued presence at work would not pose a threat to the employee, co-workers, or enrollees. The superintendent reserves the right to require an examination by a medical doctor appointed by the agency at the agency's expense.

An employee who has been diagnosed as having an infectious disease must inform his/her supervisor of the condition. An employee's health condition is personal and confidential. Precautions shall be followed to protect information regarding an employee's health condition.

An employee may have or be a carrier of an infectious disease that is of life-long duration and he/she may or may not be symptom-free. If there is evidence that the disease cannot be transmitted by normal, casual contact in the work

environment and the condition is not a threat to self or others, the employee will continue to work in a regular manner. The Board shall follow any applicable requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act in this regard. The employee is expected to meet acceptable performance standards and will be treated in a manner consistent with other employees.

No special consideration will be given beyond normal transfer requests for employees who feel threatened by a co-worker's disease. Requests for transfer will be decided by the superintendent based on the best interests of the agency.

The superintendent will determine the admissibility to the work place by an individual whose condition is in question. The superintendent will consult with or convene a meeting of the employee, the department director, the employee's physician, and others as the superintendent deems necessary. Based on the information gathered, the superintendent may decide:

1. To return the employee to his/her usual place of employment unconditionally;
2. To place the employee on a work assignment under restrictive conditions;
3. To seek to have the employee utilize sick leave and be placed on a leave of absence.

In making a decision, the superintendent will consider:

1. The nature of the risk and how the disease is transmitted;
2. The duration of the risk and how long the carrier is infectious;
3. The severity of the risk and the potential harm to others;
4. The individual's physical condition.

5.7.11 Employee Isolation Due to Communicable Disease

Prior to being sent home an employee shall be isolated due to the suspected communicable disease as follows:

1. Isolation shall include care in a room or portion of a room not being used for other types of programming.
2. The isolation shall be under the supervision of a staff member at all times. No employee shall be left alone or unsupervised.
3. The employee shall be made comfortable and provided a cot if appropriate. All linens and blankets used by the employee shall be laundered before being used by another person. The cot shall be disinfected with an appropriate germicidal agent, or, if soiled with blood, feces, emesis or other body fluids, the cot shall be cleaned with soap and water and then disinfected with an appropriate germicidal agent.
4. The employee shall be closely observed for a worsening condition.

5. The employee shall be released for travel home dependent upon condition or the building authority shall assist the staff member in securing an alternate form of transportation home.

5.7.12 Board Property/Employee Privacy

All Board property and contents thereof including desks, lockers and computers, are subject to Board control and supervision and are not private areas for employees. This includes any information contained in Board computers (such as e-mail, anything in the computer's memory, and software used in Board computers including memory disks). The Board will maintain the privacy of employee records, such as medical records, employee social security numbers, etc., as required and permitted by law.

5.7.13 Delegated Nursing

Pursuant to Ohio Revised Code Section 5126.35(A), and in accordance with the authorization of that statute, the Erie County Board of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities hereby establishes a policy providing that designated county board workers may give or apply prescribed medication to clients in accordance with R. C. section 4723.77 to 4723.79 and policies established by the Erie County Board of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities. O.A.C. 5123:2-1-07 procedures must be followed.

Reference: O.R.C. 5125.35 and O.A.C. 5123:2-1-07

5.7.14 Personal Copying

Copiers owned and operated by the Board are for Board program and administration and are to be used in accordance with applicable laws and restrictions. Unauthorized use of copier is prohibited. Violators are subject to disciplinary action and prosecution under the law.

5.7.15 Board Meetings

The Erie County Board of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities meets on a regularly scheduled basis and there is public notice of the meetings. Citizens and staff are welcome to attend these meetings. Issues of concern to the Board and actions required are presented by the superintendent in advance of the meeting. Citizens and staff who have items they wish to have the Board consider will work with the superintendent to have items placed on the agenda.

Public participation and comment on items before the Board are welcome. In order for the Board to fulfill its obligation to complete the planned agenda in an

effective and efficient fashion, a maximum of 30 minutes of public participation will be permitted at each meeting. If several people wish to speak, each person will be allotted three minutes until the total time of 30 minutes is used. During that period, no person may speak twice until all who desire to speak have had the opportunity to do so. The period of public participation may be extended by a vote of the majority of the Board. Each person addressing the Board will give his/her name and address. The President of the Board shall have the responsibility of deciding to limit the number speaking. If many are present to speak on a particular item on the agenda, the President of the Board should request them to meet in the lobby and select their representatives to speak. Persons desiring more time should follow the procedure of the board to be placed on the regular agenda. Requests to be on the agenda must be submitted one week prior to the meeting and include the subject to be presented.

Concerns regarding the operation of the program or staff issues will be presented to the superintendent before coming before the Board. The President of the Board will make final determination as to items added to the Board's agenda. Agendas will be distributed to all those who attend Board meetings. That section on the agenda for public participation will be noted. This public participation session is not one of dialogue between persons speaking and Board members. The President may allow the Board to ask participants questions for information.

5.7.16 No Code Order (Do Not Resuscitate)

The staff of the Erie County Board of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities does not have adequate training or experience to deal with all of the associated issues of a no-code order (Do Not Resuscitate) while an individual is under the supervision and control of Board staff. Board services are not designed or operated as a medical or hospice service and is not equipped, trained or prepared to deal with the medical or emotional issues associated with allowing a client to die of natural causes as part of our services. Therefore, the Board directs staff to call for emergency medical services when there is a life-threatening situation without regard to any no-code order that may exist. The appropriate medical personnel will determine what treatment is needed. If transport to a medical facility is determined to be needed by the emergency medical personnel, they will determine what is the nearest and most appropriate medical facility.

Board staff does not have the decision-making authority to honor a no-code order or to honor preference for a particular medical facility. If Board staff becomes aware of a no-code order (Do Not Resuscitate) on a client, they will advise the appropriate Service and Support Administrator (SSA) of the order. The SSA will contact the client/guardian to determine if the client is aware of the no-code (Do Not Resuscitate) and if they have given their consent. If not, the SSA will attempt to intervene to have the wishes of the client honored.

5.7.17 Automation System Policy

The Automation System includes computers, cellular phones, PDA's, printers, telephones, fax machines, networks, software, and copy machines, owned by Erie County and provided to the Erie County Board of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities to assist the staff or other related agencies, as approved, in the support of the agency. All users of the system are responsible for seeing that these information systems contained within the automation system are used in an effective, efficient, ethical and lawful manner. The use of the automation system is a privilege, not a right, which may be revoked at any time for misuse.

Automation system use:

It is the intent of the Erie County Board of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities to provide access to specific portions of the Automated System to staff or any associated agencies for the purpose of creating and/or accessing electronic data or information as long as it conforms to the Board's mission statement. This policy applies to all individuals accessing the Board's automation system. The following statements relate to the use of the automation system and are to be strictly followed: All information and client records of the Board are confidential and may not be released or shared except as permitted under the Board's Confidentiality Policy.

1. All access to the Intranet and Internet must be approved, installed, and implemented by the Information Systems Department.
2. The automation system is to be used for the purpose for which they are assigned and are not to be used for commercial or private purposes.
3. Computer programs, electronic mail, voice mail, and electronic files are the property of the Board and employees have no expressed privacy rights when using these systems.
4. Fraudulent, harassing or obscene messages and/or materials are not to be sent, printed, requested, displayed, or stored. Any Board owned automation resource will not be used in a manner that would bring discredit to any individual or the agency.
5. A computer, electronic mail account, or voice mail account is solely for the use of the individual for which the system has been set-up unless permission has been granted from the original individual. The original individual is responsible for the proper use of the resource, including proper password protection.
6. Any software additions/deletions or system modification to workstations or the Intranet is strictly prohibited.
7. No one should deliberately attempt to degrade the performance of the automation system or deprive authorized personnel of resources.
8. Copyright, patent, trade secret or other legal forms, protect software that is licensed to or owned by the Board shall not to be copied or altered by using Board

- owned systems, except as permitted by law and by contract or license agreement with the owner of the copyright.
9. The use of loopholes or specific tools to circumvent program security or Intranet security, the knowledge of special passwords, or the covert acquisition of passwords to damage automated systems, obtain extra resources, take resources from another user, or gain access or control of any system for which proper authorization has not been granted is strictly prohibited. The use of such may result in discipline action up to and including termination.

Use of Automation system for Non-Board Use:

All components of the Board's Automation System are for board-related programs and administration. As a convenience to staff, individuals, and associated agencies, the automation system may be used for *non-board business with prior consent of the Information Systems Department*. However, such use will be performed on the individual's own time and will be in accordance with all policies, restrictions, and applicable laws so long as the use does not conflict with the mission of the Board or its related agencies. Specific reference will be made to the Board's policy for "Use of Copiers for Non-Board business" for any copying or reproduction of any nature.

5.7.18 Smoke-Free Workplace (revised 12/06)

The Erie County Board of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities is a smoke-free worksite. The intent of this policy is to adhere to the Ohio smoking ban approved by voters in November 2006 and to provide employees with a healthy workplace. It is not the intent of this policy that employees quit smoking.

This policy applies to all employees, clients, contractors, and visitors.

Smoking is prohibited within all Erie County Board of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities owned or leased spaces including offices, reception areas, meeting rooms, restrooms, lunchrooms, and grounds. The picnic shelter on the Southwest end of the parking lot is a designated area for clients of Double S Industries. The shelter will not be designated as a smoking area when it is being used for a public event; during use as a public gathering space, the shelter will be a non-smoking area.

Smoking is prohibited in all vehicles owned or leased by the Erie County Board of Developmental Disabilities.

Smoking is prohibited in outside areas used by children regardless of whether or not they are served in programs of the Erie County Board of Developmental Disabilities.

All employees share in the responsibility for adhering to this policy. Extraordinary breaks, will not be provided for smoking. Employees who violate this policy will be subject to the same disciplinary actions that accompany infractions of other Board rules/policies as well as be subject to violation of Ohio law.