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***Code of Conduct Policy***

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**WoodGreen Community Services**  
**Title of the Policy:** Code of Conduct Policy



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**1. PREAMBLE**

At WoodGreen Community Services we are committed to at all times conducting ourselves and delivering all programs and services in accordance with the highest ethical, professional and legal standards, and in a manner which supports WoodGreen’s stated values of Respect, Excellence, Compassion, Integrity and Teamwork. Our impeccable reputation within the community is a priceless asset and reflects the trust and respect WoodGreen has earned over many years of serving the community. WoodGreen’s reputation is founded on the strong belief and confidence that our clients, funders, partners, professional associations and the community at large have in our organizational professionalism and integrity.

In order to retain and safeguard our excellent reputation all WoodGreen staff will, without exception, conduct themselves at all times ethically and professionally. The Code of Conduct is not meant as an inflexible rulebook, but as a guide to assist us in making good decisions and choosing our actions appropriately. While the code of ethics of professional associations guides and governs employees who belong to them, this organizational code binds all employees and further defines the standard for ethics and professionalism and also defines unacceptable conduct for our organization.

Compliance with this Code of Conduct policy is a condition of employment with WoodGreen Community Services. Upon hire, and thereafter every year, all employees will be required to review this policy to ascertain that they understand it and have complied with it. You are encouraged to review the contents of this policy carefully and let it guide you in your day to day work. The Code of Conduct must be followed by all of our employees. No one, regardless of rank or position, must allow personal preferences, inconvenience or work pressures to compromise adherence to these standards, or pressure others to do so.

This Code of Conduct is intended to provide a broad range of guidance and general information on how WoodGreen conducts its work and delivers its services and how employees are expected to conduct themselves. It does not replace other policies, procedures or practices of the unit or program. If a law conflicts with this Code of Conduct policy, you must comply with the law. If another organizational or operational policy, procedure, practice or protocol conflicts with the Code of Conduct, you must comply with the Code of Conduct. No code can address every situation that individuals may encounter. As such, this Code of Conduct does not relieve any employee of the responsibility and accountability to exercise good judgment and, in

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circumstances where they are unsure as to the proper course of action, seek the guidance of their immediate supervisor or People & Culture.

WoodGreen will take all due action to ensure that clients receive services that are appropriate to their needs, ethical, free from conflict of interest and are delivered with sound and unbiased judgment where the integrity of the organization and its role of stewardship of the public trust are preserved. Adherence to this Code of Conduct is part of your employment contract and a condition of employment. Violations of this code or any policies and procedures that govern our services and interaction with our clients or tenants and each other will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

## **2. COMPLIANCE WITH THE LAW**

Employees need to be aware of and comply with both the letter and the spirit of the laws and regulations that affect how they do their jobs. The reputation of the organization depends upon its employees' commitment and ability to fulfill this responsibility. Never enter into any agreement or perform any task that could reasonably be considered legally suspect. WoodGreen is fully committed to complying with all legal requirements applicable to our work and service delivery. Many activities are subject to multiple and changing legal requirements. Whenever an employee is in doubt about the interpretation of the legal requirements they must consult with their supervisor.

## **3. ETHICS**

WoodGreen promotes a culture where ethical dilemmas are identified and where decision-making is guided by ethical principles in areas such as research, resource allocation and service provision. WoodGreen is informed by leading practices in ethics, including ethical principles outlined by the Community Ethics Network in the following areas:

- Advocacy
- Client and Employee Safety
- Commitment to Quality Services
- Confidentiality
- Conflict of Interest
- Dignity
- Fair and Equitable Access

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- Health and Well-Being
- Informed Choice and Empowerment
- Relationships Among Community Agencies

Where ethical dilemmas are identified, WoodGreen maintains the resources to help guide and support ethical decision-making.

#### ***4. CODE OF CONDUCT GUIDELINES***

Where this Code of Conduct references clients, they are defined as any person from the community inquiring about, accessing, referred to, living in, participating in or using any program or service offered by WoodGreen Community Services, whether on WoodGreen premises or externally.

We must all work to ensure prompt and consistent action against violations of this Code of Conduct. However, some situations may require review to determine the most appropriate course of action. Since we cannot anticipate every situation that will arise, it is important to have a way to approach a new question or problem. These are the steps to keep in mind:

- Make sure you have all the facts. In order to reach the right solution, we must be as fully informed as possible.
- Ask yourself: What specifically am I being asked to do? Does it seem unethical or improper? This will enable you to focus on the specific question you are faced with, and the alternatives you have. Use your judgment and common sense; if something seems unethical and improper, it probably is.
- Discuss the problem with your supervisor: This is the basic guidance for all situations. In many cases, your supervisor will be more knowledgeable about the question, and will appreciate being brought into the decision-making process. Remember that it is your supervisor's responsibility to help solve problems. If you are uncomfortable discussing the problem with your supervisor you can talk to your Unit Director or People & Culture.
- Seek help from organizational resources: In a case where it may not be appropriate to discuss an issue with your unit Supervisor, Director, or Vice President, you may speak directly to the Vice President, People & Culture. The CEO will provide input and make any final decisions where staff do not feel an issue has been adequately addressed.

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- You may report violations in confidence and without fear of retaliation. The agency does not permit retaliation of any kind against employees for good faith reports of suspected violations.

Always ask first, act later: If you are unsure of what to do in a situation, always seek guidance before you act.

## **5. PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY OF INFORMATION**

WoodGreen is committed to controlling the collection, use and disclosure of personal information in accordance with the requirements set out in applicable legislation. Employees, who collect, maintain and/or use personal information, are responsible for complying with the WoodGreen Privacy Policy. During the course of employment, employees are privy to a wide range of confidential and organizational information about clients and WoodGreen. You must carefully protect this information and must not use it for any reasons other than for which it was collected and only for the proper performance of your duties. You may not discuss or disclose it to anyone who does not have a legitimate need to know the information. The obligation to preserve confidential information continues even after your employment ends.

Employees will only be granted access to sensitive personal information of clients, tenants or employees on a strict need-to-know basis. All information must be kept private and confidential. Employees shall not discuss with or disclose to others (unless on a need-to-know basis) anything of a confidential or private nature. In addition, employees are expected to safeguard and securely store paper or electronic information. Such confidential information includes but is not limited to: conversations, messages, emails, investigations, faxes, reports, records, electronically stored data, and archived material marked for destruction.

Clients must provide informed consent for the collection, use and disclosure of all personal information. Express consent shall be required where the information is determined at the unit level to be of a sensitive nature (eg. Personal health information). Furthermore, the release of information must only be done on the basis of the information requested being relevant to the situation for which it is being requested, or on a need to know basis. Prior to the release of any information, staff must ensure they are in legal compliance with specific laws and regulations governing the release of client information to anyone. Client releases and the information provided must meet appropriate legally prescribed form and format.



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There may be limits to confidentiality. When someone may harm himself or herself and/or others, the worker has a legal obligation to act to protect the client or other people. Confidentiality may also be limited by certain legislation or legal requirement.

If you have questions regarding privacy and confidentiality, speak with your Supervisor. WoodGreen’s Privacy Officer is also available to provide guidance on matters related to privacy.

See associated policies:

Privacy Policy

**6. USE OF INTERNET, EMAIL, ELECTRONIC MEDIA AND SOCIAL MEDIA**

Knowingly transmitting, viewing, generating, printing, retrieving, downloading or storing any communication of a discriminatory, defamatory, obscene, damaging (such as viruses), threatening or harassing nature, or any material that is inappropriate for the work environment (such as sexually oriented literature or pictures, or chain letters) or illegal (child pornography), is prohibited.

Employees are provided with access to WoodGreen IT assets for work use and for the purpose of performing job-related activities. When using computer systems you must be identified at all times through your own personal logon ID and password. In addition, access to passwords must be strictly controlled. It is your responsibility to take the necessary steps to protect your logon ID, password, digital signature or other means you use to identify yourself to the computer network.

Employees are strictly prohibited from sharing their network account, personal logon ID and password. This also includes sharing confidential access to any databases, password protected files, documents or spreadsheets.

Communication conducted over the internal network or any external network is generally not considered private. When communicating via internal network you should consider the sensitivity and confidentiality of the information being transmitted. Work records and communication often become public and we should avoid exaggeration, derogatory remarks, guesswork or inappropriate characterizations of people and circumstances.

In addition, you are strictly prohibited from communicating through email or the internet, including through any social media, whether during or outside of working hours, and whether

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using WoodGreen's computer or your personal computer, any disparaging or defamatory images or statements regarding WoodGreen, our funders, our clients or our personnel, or any confidential information regarding WoodGreen, our clients or our personnel.

All computer hardware, software, email, voicemail and internet accounts provided to employees are the property of WoodGreen Community Services and may be monitored and accessed by authorized representatives in accordance with policy and applicable law. In addition, all information stored, processed or transmitted on any organizational system or network, or external system to conduct work, is considered the property of WoodGreen.

All social media interaction should be monitored to ensure that nothing you post and nothing that is posted to your social media, could harm or impact the reputation of WoodGreen, its employees, its clients or its funders in any way. It is best practice to decline client-initiated "friend" requests and to not issue "friend" requests to clients. Always assume that information you post can be accessed or altered.

See associated policies:

- Media Relations Policy
- Network and Internet Use Policy
- Mobile Device Acceptable Use Policy
- Software Installation Policy

## ***7. CONFLICT OF INTEREST***

Employees are expected to adhere to the highest ethical standards described in the Code of Ethics for the Community Health and Support Sector, with respect to conflict of interest, outside activities and in all dealings related to their position with the organization. A conflict of interest may arise where an employee has a reason to act in a manner that is not in the best interest of the organization. This may occur because the employee, a friend, relative or someone closely associated, stands to benefit from the action in some way. Employees must ensure, to the fullest extent possible, that their personal interests do not come into conflict with those of the organization. If a conflict does arise, it must be resolved in favor of the best interest of WoodGreen. No employee may engage in dealings with fellow employees, clients, volunteers, suppliers, or funders that may result in personal profit or personal advantage, whether or not at the expense of the organization.



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Employees must avoid conduct that is not in the best interest of the organization. They must also avoid situations that might create the appearance of a conflict of interest, whether or not it actually exists and whether or not the employee believes he/she would be improperly influenced. The following rules exist to address potential situations involving conflict of interest:

1. Employees are expected to act in a manner that will bear the closest public scrutiny in all dealings related to the organization or their responsibilities as employees.
2. Employees involved in any aspect of the complaints handling process (including involvement in the review, documentation, investigation, resolution and notification or confirmation) who have a vested interest in any part of the complaint or its outcome, are deemed to be in a conflict of interest and must recuse themselves from any part of the complaint handling. Such conflict must be declared at the onset to the immediate supervisor.
3. Employees should not knowingly take advantage of, or benefit from, information that is obtained in the course of their employment and that is not generally available to the public.
4. Employees should not accept employment or maintain work interests outside of WoodGreen which place them in a conflict of interest or prevent them from fulfilling their WoodGreen work responsibilities.
5. It is considered a conflict of interest for employees to conduct their outside work activities during working hours, utilizing WoodGreen equipment and resources for non-WoodGreen related activities and marketing the product or service to WoodGreen employees using organizational resources such as phones, email and mailing lists.
6. Employees are prohibited from having direct or indirect financial interests in the assets, leases, work transactions or professional services of WoodGreen.
7. Employees are prohibited from contacting funders, unless their position requires them to negotiate with the funder directly.
8. Employees are prohibited from discussing their personal employment relationship and seeking to influence funders to gain personal employment benefits or discussing the employment of other staff.
9. Employees must not have a personal interest in suppliers of properties, goods or services to the organization.

In specific cases where employees are unclear if a material conflict of interest exists, they must seek guidance from the Director of Finance who will then make a determination.



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**7.1. *Disclosing Interest or Abstaining from Participation***

To avoid any actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest, you must disclose any interest you have in an existing or proposed material contract or transaction involving WoodGreen in which you have some influence or perceived interest. If you are an officer, director, or board member of an entity that is party to any such contract, that must also be disclosed. These disclosures must be made at the earliest opportunity to your supervisor or other appropriate authority. In addition, you must not have or be reasonably perceived to have influenced a decision with respect to a material or proposed material contract in which you have an interest.

See associated policies:

Client Complaint Policy  
Staff Complaint Policy

**7.2. *Accepting Gifts, Discounts and Entertainment***

You may not solicit cash, gifts, hospitality (food/beverage/accommodations), entertainment, discounts or other benefits from existing clients, potential clients, funders, suppliers, or others doing work with, getting service from or seeking to do work with or getting service from WoodGreen for your personal benefit at any time.

Any material gift over \$20 given to individual staff must be disclosed and handed over to the Program Manager who in conjunction with the Unit Director will determine how it will be used within the program or will be given to the WoodGreen foundation to be distributed within the organization. In situations where clients insist on providing gifts to staff, the staff must inform the client of their inability to accept the gift and advise that the client can either rescind the gift or donate it to the organization.

Soliciting funds from colleagues to purchase a group gift to celebrate a special event for an individual team member in the workplace should be approached with caution as it may confer an obligation or place undue hardship on members of the team who are financially unable or choosing not to participate. This can have negative impacts on team dynamics and creates unnecessary discomfort and resentment for individuals.

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Occasionally, a third party might offer WoodGreen employees an opportunity to participate in a sale of merchandise or to the purchase of service or entertainment at reduced prices. Such an offering may be acceptable, where the same opportunity is extended to organizations outside of WoodGreen. If it is not, the offers must be reviewed within the context of whether or not the circumstances may give rise to a perception of a conflict of interest.

From time to time, staff may be required as part of their job duties to solicit funds, gifts-in-kind and other services on behalf of the organization for the benefit of our programs and clients. These activities are permitted under the policy, however, staff cannot personally benefit from these efforts.

### ***7.3. Financial and Service Matters Involving Clients***

Employees are in a relationship of power over their clients, by the very nature of the service that we provide. Great care must be taken to avoid any actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest involving financial matters.

The following rules with respect to financial or in-kind matters and financial or service transactions involving clients or client families must be strictly adhered to:

1. Employees are not permitted to borrow, solicit or take money, gifts or property from clients, under any circumstances.
2. Employees must not personally give/lend money, personal property or gifts of any value to clients or clients' friends/relatives.
3. Social Workers/Case Counsellors may be required, from time to time, to make small purchases (less than \$10) to meet an immediate need of a client when the client does not have resources to make the purchase themselves. When this need arises, staff should consult their Manager and seek approval in advance. If it is not possible to advise their Manager in advance, staff will advise their Manager or designate within 24 hours of incurring the expense. Invoices/receipts will be submitted to the Manager and the expense will be paid by the program and not the individual staff member. The Manager is expected to work with the staff to identify strategies to minimize the need for this to occur.
4. Employees must not buy from or sell property to clients or clients friends/relatives.
5. Employees are not to write out checks for any client; the client should have a Power of Attorney, or alternate arrangement to handle such matters. Where a client due to challenges with dexterity is unable to physically write a cheque in its entirety, staff will

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prepare the cheque for signature and the client will be directed to sign. This will only be permitted in cases where the staff is writing a cheque in response to a bill or invoice received by the client and the client has the ability to read and understand what the staff is completing on their behalf. If the client has low vision or is blind, such that they are unable to read the document that is prepared on their behalf, they should be referred to the Canadian National Institute for the Blind for additional supports. If the client has a cognitive disability where the client is unable to understand what is being written on their behalf, the client should be referred for additional supports.

6. Employees are not permitted to “hold” money for clients. Where a unit has an approved practice of holding money in a secure location on behalf of a client, staff must follow the approved practise and ensure that all forms are completed. In these circumstances, funds are held by the program/unit and not by individual staff members. Staff may be required as part of their job function to receive money on behalf of the organization from the client for payment of service. In these circumstance, staff will not be considered to have breached the policy.
7. Employees are not permitted to use a client’s bank card or PIN numbers.
8. Employees must not use a client’s bank account or credit card for their own purposes, or cash a client’s check in the employee’s personal bank account.
9. Employees are not permitted to enter into a private arrangement to work with a client or a client’s family outside of their assigned work hours; i.e. “work privately for a client” for which they may or may not receive money for services rendered.
10. Employees must never reside in a client’s home (whether rent is paid for the accommodation or not) and must never have clients residing with them while in the employment of WoodGreen.
11. Employees are not permitted to solicit clients or client families for the purpose of promoting their non-WoodGreen related work activities or business, fundraisers, or other donation/money requests.
12. Employees are not permitted to act in the capacity of executor, agent, trustee, or any fiduciary capacity for any WoodGreen client. In circumstances when the client has no family, the employee must consult with their manager regarding handling of financial affairs.
13. Employees may not be a beneficiary under a will or trust of a WoodGreen client.
14. Employees who learn that a WoodGreen client (other than a client who is a relative of the employee) has named or is considering naming the employee in any of these capacities, must immediately inform their Unit Director for a determination on the appropriate course of action.

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See associate policies:

Collecting Client Fees  
Petty Cash Accounts

#### ***7.4. Protection and Proper Use of Agency Assets***

All employees have an obligation to protect WoodGreen’s assets and ensure their efficient use. Carelessness and waste have a direct financial impact on the organization expenses. All assets are to be used for legitimate agency purposes; occasional use of company resources (phones/email) for personal reasons is permitted provided that it meets the criteria outlined in the Information Systems Policies. With proper approval, agency policies and resources may be shared with other community agencies or partnership organizations.

The obligation to protect the organization’s assets extends to all intellectual proprietary information including but not limited to: program development and provision, marketing, service plans, strategic and operational plans, funding applications, databases, records, donor files, client files, salary information, policies, and any unpublished financial data and reports. Unauthorized use or distribution of such information constitutes a violation of this code and could result in civil or criminal penalties.

See associated policies:

Cell Phone and Handheld Devices Policy  
Telephone and Voice Mail Acceptable Use Policy

#### ***7.5. Improper Influence on Conduct of Auditors***

Employees are prohibited from directly or indirectly taking any actions to coerce, manipulate, mislead or fraudulently influence WoodGreen’s independent auditors for the purpose of rendering the financial statements materially misleading. Prohibited actions include but are not limited to those actions taken to coerce, manipulate, mislead or fraudulently influence an auditor:

1. To issue or reissue a report on the company’s financial statements that is not warranted in the circumstances (due to violation of generally accepted accounting principles, generally accepted audit standards, or other professional or regulatory standards);

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2. Not to perform audit, review other procedures required by generally accepted auditing standards or other professional standards;
3. Not to withdraw an issued report;
4. Not to communicate matters to the corporate Audit Committee

See associated policies:

Financial Auditing

### ***7.6. Professional Hiring Practices***

Decisions to hire or other considerations related to employment must strictly be made on the basis of ethical People & Culture practices and sound management decisions and not be influenced by personal concern. No special consideration may be given or received (or select dispensations made) for someone involved in a close personal relationship with the person in a position of power and influence concerning employment matters.

It is considered to be a conflict of interest for anyone in a supervisory or management capacity, to hire a person (relative or friend) with whom you have a close personal relationship, either in a direct or indirect reporting capacity. It is further considered to be a conflict of interest to influence another to hire someone with whom you have a close personal relationship.

It is acceptable to refer an individual for hiring consideration, provided they follow the same application process and are considered equally along with all other candidates applying for the position. If you have a supervisory/subordinate (subordinate includes anyone with a direct or indirect reporting relationship) relationship with a relative or close friend, you must immediately report that relationship to People & Culture. If the potential for actual or perceived conflict of interest exists, one of the parties may have to be relocated.

See associated policies:

Employment Reference Check Policy

Job Posting Policy

Staff Criminal Record and Vulnerable Sector Screening Policy

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## ***8. PROFESSIONAL EXPECTATIONS***

Employees are required to uphold sound standards of professional practice and work within their scope of practice and according to their training and/or certification. You may not perform duties outside of your job description without consent from your supervisor.

### ***8.1. Respect in the Workplace***

Respect in the workplace means that:

1. Every employee must behave in a respectful, courteous and professional manner at all times in all dealings related to their employment, whether dealing with other employees, volunteers, students, clients, tenants, funders, suppliers, or members of the public. Behavior that is disrespectful, offensive, intimidating or humiliating, intentional or otherwise, will not be tolerated under any circumstances. Behavior of this nature not only demeans others, but also threatens WoodGreen’s ability to build a workplace where everyone can feel safe, comfortable and able to produce their best work.
2. Discrimination, harassment and bullying will not be tolerated in any form against or from any group or individual, including discrimination on the grounds prohibited by the Ontario Human Rights Code.
3. Employees are required to promote and support an inclusive work environment, one in which individuals are accorded equity in employment processes, procedures and practices.
4. Any employee who engages in, or threatens, discrimination, harassment, violence, bullying or intimidation will be subject to serious discipline.

See associated policies:

Anti-Racism Equity Policy  
Worker Safety Policy  
Workplace Harassment Policy  
Workplace Violence Prevention Policy

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## **8.2. Communication**

Communication is an integral part of the work that we do at WoodGreen. It is important at all times to communicate in a manner that is supportive and respectful of individual personal and cultural beliefs, ideals and contributions.

The following are some tips to help guide your communication:

- All communication should be conducted in a courteous and professional manner.
- Maintain focus and listen carefully when speaking with colleagues, clients and collaborators and provide feedback clearly and concisely keeping in mind who we are speaking with and the best method of communication for each individual circumstance.
- Use eye contact and body language that displays respect.
- Focus on speakers and allow them to finish. When speaking, we will allow the listeners to clear their thoughts and focus on us.
- Use a tone of voice that is warm, calm, patient and clear.
- Use appropriate language.
- Communicate by using terms and language our clients and their families can understand.
- Listen carefully to the needs of others, responding to their needs with patience and tolerance.
- Be flexible when faced with changes to our work environments or work schedules.
- Refrain from participating in rumors and gossip or making inappropriate comments that could tarnish someone's reputation.

## **8.3. Pride in Appearance and Ownership**

As employees of WoodGreen it is important to take pride in our appearance as well as our workplace. Dress to reflect respect and professionalism toward the organization and our clients, being mindful of what our appearances communicate and the community we serve. By maintaining clothes and work spaces that are clean, neat and tidy we are showing the community that we have respect for them as well as ourselves.

The following are some tips to help guide our appearance standards:

- Wear clothes that are clean, neat and tidy.
- Maintain litter and clutter-free workplaces.
- Maintain a green environment where possible.
- Return equipment and documentation to their proper places.
- Report any faulty equipment to the appropriate party.
- Do not damage, deface, or misuse materials or property belonging to the organization or



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others.

#### **8.4. Service Excellence**

Service excellence is at the core of our values at WoodGreen. We strive for excellence in all that we do in order to promote a Toronto where everyone has the opportunity to thrive as well as a work environment where all employees have an opportunity to thrive.

The following are some tips to guide our service standards:

- Go out of our way to provide exceptional service and exceed expectations of clients, and coworkers.
- Treat everyone with respect, fairness, honesty and compassion.
- Follow through with our promises and commitments.
- Keep colleagues and clients informed of time delays, offer an apology and provide an opportunity to reschedule.
- Offer assistance to people in need.
- Convey our concern for clients and our willingness to serve through our manners and expressions.
- Address an abusive behaviour as unacceptable in accordance with the Worker Safety Policy.
- Listen, reflect, assist and be willing to accept fault and responsibility.
- Look beyond our assigned tasks, assist coworkers when possible or find resources when necessary.

#### **8.5. Relationship Boundaries with Staff**

Employees who have close personal relationships should not have a direct reporting relationship or be in the same line management chain without the relationship being known to an appropriate manager. Alternative management arrangements should be put in place to ensure that one party is not involved with any management activity or processes involving the other party, for example appraisals, promotions, recruitment or selection.

Employees engaged in personal relationships with other colleagues must maintain a professional relationship at all times while on duty.

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### **8.6. Relationship Boundaries with Clients**

There is an inherent power inequality whenever you take on a role or provide care that gives you authority over another, or creates a perception that you have that authority. It is important to understand that this power imbalance exists and to act accordingly and always maintain a strictly professional relationship with current and previous clients.

The following are some tips to help guide you through your relationships with your clients:

- Do not engage in a relationship with clients outside of a professional relationship; this includes not dating or engaging in sexual relations with current or former clients.
- Be accessible to clients only via the program's address and phone number.
- Do not bring clients to your home, reside with clients or have clients reside with you.
- Do not mobilize clients directly or indirectly to advance your own interests or agenda.
- Do not favor clients by giving gifts, rule bending or special privileges.
- Apply all rules, policies and practices equally and universally for all clients.
- Do not criticize program policies or procedures in front of staff or clients.
- Recognize the limitation of your training or professional expertise, thereby refraining from entering or continuing in a helping relationship for which you are not qualified.
- Make appropriate referrals.
- Do not discuss your personal problems or intimate issues with clients.
- Do not discuss the personal problems or intimate issues of other workers or clients with clients.
- Do not engage in intimate or flirtatious conversation or touching (kissing, caressing and embracing) with any client and only hug a client at their request and with their consent and at your discretion and in a professional manner.
- Only touch a client where the touching is necessary to administer care, after appropriate consent has been obtained.
- Do not make any sexual, derogatory, bigoted, discriminatory or otherwise inappropriate comments to each other or clients regarding appearance, lifestyle, and the prohibited grounds of discrimination.
- Never withhold care or service from a client as punishment.
- Never cause or threaten to cause pain, suffering or discomfort to coerce compliance.
- Never physically restrain clients.

Report any violations of these guidelines to your supervisor immediately.

### **8.7. Child Care Boundaries**

A primary goal of the Child Care Services Unit is to meet the individual needs of children in a safe,

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respectful and sensitive manner. As part of their development, children need social contact and touch, and may seek this from adults through both verbal and non-verbal means. While it is important for adults to be responsive to children, it is also important to establish physical boundaries, as long as these are tempered by common sense and allow sufficient room for variation and flexibility to meet the circumstances. Child-driven needs must always be at the forefront, and touch should be child-driven. If touch is child-initiated, and the teacher maintains a professional role, touch is healthy. That said, a “no mouth” rule should be applied to teacher/child interactions, and teachers should refrain from kissing children in any way. This will help maintain professional boundaries and demonstrate respect for individual, family and cultural norms. Caring for children is always about the children’s needs. In meeting these needs, teachers should keep professional boundaries intact, while promoting warm heartfelt care giving.

Teachers will also need to use physical touch to attend to children’s basic needs, including feeding, diaper changing, toileting, dressing, and helping children transition to sleep. Existing policies and procedures are to be followed in meeting these needs.

### ***8.8. Cooperating with Investigations***

All employees are required to cooperate with situations or incidents, which may, from time to time, give rise to the requirement for an audit or an investigation by the organization. This includes attending all necessary meetings, accurately and fully answering all questions and maintaining the confidentiality of the investigation. Further you may not in any way obstruct, hinder or delay any internal investigation. The obligation to cooperate may extend to providing truthful information pursuant to, or in defense or prosecution of legal proceedings and investigations involving WoodGreen, its clients or employees.

### ***8.9. Health and Safety***

WoodGreen is committed to the health, safety and wellbeing of its employees. Managers must take reasonable precautions to provide and maintain a healthy and safe workplace. Employees must contribute to the safety of their work environment by taking all reasonable and necessary precautions to ensure their own safety and that of the other persons affected by their work.

See associated policies:

- AODA – Customer Service for Persons with Disabilities Policy
- Corporate Health and Safety Policy
- Corporate Workplace Inspection Policy

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Early and Safe Return to Work Policy  
First Aid Policy  
Footwear Policy  
Office Ergonomic Policy  
Work Refusal Policy  
Worker Accident – Incident Reporting and Investigation  
Worker Safety Policy  
Workplace Harassment Policy

### **8.10. Off Duty Conduct**

In general, how employees decide to lead their lives when they are off duty is a private matter. However, the way in which employees conduct and present themselves off-duty can also have significant impact on WoodGreen, its business, reputation, programs and services, customer relations and workplace environment. Accordingly, while WoodGreen respects your personal freedoms, it also has a legitimate interest in establishing standards of off-duty conduct and holding employees accountable for following those standards, including through the use of discipline where necessary.

Off-duty conduct will be considered a work-related matter subject to discipline if it:

- Harms WoodGreen’s reputation or programs;
- Harms the funder’s reputation and potentially harms WoodGreen’s relationship with the funder;
- Has consequences that render you unable to perform your job or any part of your job effectively;
- Leads other employees to refuse, be reluctant to or unable to work with you;
- Makes you guilty of a serious breach of the Criminal Code of Canada; and/or
- Makes it difficult for WoodGreen to manage its operation and/or direct its workforce efficiently.

Violations of WoodGreen’s off-duty standards of conduct that meet the above criteria will be treated like a disciplinary infraction committed on-duty and subject to discipline up to and including termination of employment.

**WoodGreen Community Services**  
**Title of the Policy:** Code of Conduct Policy



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You must report to your supervisor or WoodGreen’s People & Culture department as soon as possible if you are arrested, detained or charged with a violation under the Criminal Code of Canada or other Canadian laws as related to your official duties.

**9. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

All employees are required to sign initial acknowledgement of receipt of this Code of Conduct at the time of hire. Employees already employed by WoodGreen at the time of the introduction of this policy, are required to sign at the time the Code of Conduct comes into effect. To help ensure compliance with this Code of Conduct, WoodGreen requires that all employees review the code of conduct on a yearly basis.

**Application:**

This policy applies to all WoodGreen Community Services employees (and partnership employees working on WoodGreen premises) present on any WoodGreen occupied place of work, whether owned, leased or shared. It also applies to any work-related context, including work functions or events that do not take place on WoodGreen sites, such as conferences, events, workshops or work trips, or any work performed at work locations other than WoodGreen premises.

**Training Plan:**

Staff receive a copy at the time of job offer and are expected to review and accept it as a condition of employment and review it annually thereafter to ensure compliance. Concerns/questions should be raised to P&C before employment or with their supervisor upon starting employment.

**WoodGreen Community Services**  
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WoodGreen Community Services

Code of Conduct

Acknowledgement Form

I acknowledge that I have received and read a copy of the Code of Conduct revised November 2022 and I understand that I am expected to comply with the code.

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Name of Employee (please print)

Signature of Employee

Date