

PSYCHOLOGY INTERNSHIP HANDBOOK

**Approved by the Executive Director,
Seacoast Mental Health Center, Inc.**

I. INTRODUCTION

Seacoast Mental Health Center, Inc. is a private, not-for-profit, comprehensive mental health facility serving the eastern half of Rockingham County, New Hampshire. The mission of the Center is to provide a wide range of affordable mental health services. Some of these services endeavor to prevent incidents of mental illness and promote positive mental well-being. Other services endeavor to treat the problematic emotional functioning of people affected by mental illness, either their own or that of a family member or friend. Still, other programs endeavor to care for and improve the quality of life for those who have severe or longer-term mental illness.

A. The following Intern Handbook is adapted from the current personnel practices of the Seacoast Mental Health Center. The goal of these policies is to be as specific as possible regarding the details of the internship within the broader context of the Center. Interpretation of the personnel policies pertaining specifically to the internship is the responsibility of the Chief Psychologist in collaboration with the Executive Director. At any time the Center may make changes to these policies. The Center will notify employees/interns of such changes through memos and updated pages.

B. For the purposes of this handbook the term “employee” or “staff” is considered to include the psychology intern. When policies pertain exclusively to interns these will be clearly designated.

C. The Center's Board of Directors and administration is committed to hiring and retaining the most capable individuals and recognizing their academic and professional advancement in their field. Similarly, the Executive Director, Chief Psychologist, and Psychology Training Committee is committed to accepting capable, well qualified individuals into the internship.

D. The Center's Board of Directors and administration endeavor to provide benefits and salaries that are based upon market conditions and budgetary limitations. These policies and procedures will be reviewed periodically by the administration and approved by the Board of Directors. Similarly, the Center administration endeavors to offer internship stipends and benefits that are competitive with other internships in New England. The stipend and benefits are reviewed annually and upgraded periodically.

E. The psychology internship at SMHC is fully accredited by the American Psychological Association. The Executive Director and Board of Directors support the internship through staff contracts that allow time for internship tasks, budgetary provisions, and Center resources. The Chief Psychologist and Psychology Training Committee endeavor to continuously evaluate

and modify the program through an ongoing self-study process. At all times the program will be in compliance with the guidelines and standards of APPIC and APA. The internship program is described in the internship brochure (Appendix A). The performance evaluation instrument utilized to evaluate interns' progress toward meeting program expectations is exhibited in Appendix B.

II. EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES

A. Responsibility for Selection of Interns

The Executive Director is responsible for the selection, employment, evaluation, compensation, and discharge of the Chief Psychologist. The Chief Psychologist, is responsible for the selection, employment, evaluation, compensation, and termination of interns in collaboration with the Psychology Training Committee and the Executive Director in accordance with the due process procedures (See Section VII).

B. Selection of Personnel: Equal Employment Opportunity

The Seacoast Mental Health Center is an equal opportunity employer. All decisions to recruit, hire, promote, transfer, train, lay off, recall or dismiss are made without regard to gender, race, color, age, marital status, religion, national origin, physical or mental disability, or status as a Vietnam-era or special disabled veteran in accordance with applicable federal laws.

In addition to the aforementioned federally protected classes, Seacoast Mental Health Center chooses not to discriminate in the selection of employees based on sexual orientation.

C. Sexual Harassment

POLICY PURPOSE:

Seacoast Mental Health Center seeks to promote a working environment based upon trust, respect and mutual support. Harassment of any type including sexual harassment creates an environment directly opposed to these values. The purpose of this policy is to educate staff about the various forms of sexual harassment and will serve both as education and warning.

DEFINITION:

Acts that constitute sexual harassment include, but are not limited to, sexual advances and suggestions where:

1. Submission to such conduct is either an expressed or implied term or condition of employment.
2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as a basis for an employment decision affecting the harassed person.
3. The conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an affected person's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment.

Sexual harassment consists of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when the alleged act or an employee's response to

such conduct affects that employee's job status or work environment. Other examples include, but are not limited to, repeated verbal abuse of a sexual nature, repeated offensive sexual flirtations, graphic verbal commentaries about an individual's body, sexually degrading words used to describe an individual, sexually explicit gestures and the display in the workplace of sexually suggestive objects or pictures.

POLICY STATEMENT:

Harassment by any Center personnel, manager, supervisor, or others will not be tolerated. Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken against any employee who violates this policy.

The policy of Seacoast Mental Health Center is that all personnel will work in an environment free from sexual harassment. The Center will actively investigate any allegation of sexual harassment. If it is determined that sexual harassment has occurred, the Center will take appropriate disciplinary action, which may include discharge of the offending employee.

COMPLAINT PROCEDURE:

If an employee believes that s/he has been subjected to sexual harassment in the workplace by a manager, supervisor, co-worker, or other person, s/he should address the situation promptly by either speaking with the offender, and/or reporting the incident to his/her immediate supervisor.

If the employee is not comfortable reporting the incident to the supervisor, the incident(s) should be reported to the Program Director, Human Resources Coordinator, or the Executive Director. It is important for an employee who feels that they have been harassed report the matter to management so that a thorough and impartial investigation can be made and appropriate action taken. All actions taken to resolve such complaints will be treated as confidentially and discretely as possible.

Additionally, retaliation against an employee for reporting harassment is a serious offense of the Center's work policies and will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

OTHER REMEDIES AVAILABLE:

This policy is intended to offer an "in-house" resolution to sexual harassment complaints. It in no way excludes an aggrieved party from exercising his/her rights before an appropriate forum, including filing charges with the U.S. EEO/AA within 180 days of the alleged harm.

D. Non-Discrimination Against and Accommodation of Individuals with Disabilities

The Center complies with the Americans With Disabilities Act and applicable state and local laws providing for non-discrimination in employment of qualified individuals with disabilities. The Center also provides reasonable accommodation for such individuals in accordance with these laws.

E. Employment Eligibility

Seacoast Mental Health Center will comply with federal guidelines regarding employment eligibility status. During orientation, staff will be required to present the Center with

information establishing identity and eligibility to work in the United States in accordance with applicable federal law.

If a prior conviction of a felony exists, a full documented explanation will be required. The Center reserves the right to request further information, and/or rescind the offer of employment, based upon the nature of the job or State rules and regulations.

F. Medical Examinations

Some positions require post-offer, pre-employment physicals. Any offer of employment that an applicant receives from the Center is contingent upon, among other things, satisfactory completion of this examination and a determination by the Center that the applicant is capable of performing the essential functions of the position that has been offered, with or without a reasonable accommodation.

G. Employment Agreement

Formal offer of the internship will be in strict accordance with APPIC guidelines for Uniform Notification Day. This verbal offer will be followed by a letter of agreement outlining the terms of employment. This letter will be composed and signed by the Chief Psychologist, and will be mailed no later than 72 hours following the intern's acceptance of the offer, per APPIC guidelines.

H. Individual Personnel Files

An individual personnel file will be maintained for each intern. Included in this record will be the intern's curriculum vitae, references, transcripts, work sample, and letter of appointment, contract (if applicable), and job description. Subsequent revisions, job performance evaluations, fringe benefit program information, documentation of ongoing education and other pertinent information will also be kept in the personnel file. An employee's personnel record shall be provided for his/her review upon request; a copy will be provided to the employee upon request, but all originals shall remain the property of the Center. Personnel files will be kept for 7 years following termination. Intern personnel files will be located in the Psychology department secretary's office files.

I. Orientation Program

Each employee is required to participate in an orientation program. During the orientation, the employee will receive important information regarding Center policies, compensation, benefits, client rights and confidentiality issues, infection control program, facilities issues, hazardous communication information, plus other important information necessary to acquaint them with their job and the Center. Internship orientation will be held annually beginning the day following Labor Day.

J. Periodic Review & Employee Evaluations

Each intern shall receive a performance evaluation by his/her primary clinical supervisor at the end of the first six months and at the end of the year. However, if major concerns become evident in the first month or two of the internship, a three-month evaluation will be held to

specifically identify the areas of concern, and the corrective action/remediation plan. Specific standards to be applied to the rating scale are described in Appendix B, at the end of the evaluation instrument. Evaluations will include input from other relevant supervisors. The primary clinical supervisor will review the evaluation with the intern. The intern will be asked to sign the evaluation and will be given the option to respond in writing. All intern performance appraisals will be reviewed by the Chief Psychologist, sent to the intern's schools, and kept in the intern's personnel file.

Performance evaluations will also be completed at the time of any change of supervisors due to termination or transfer of the supervisor or employee.

Unresolvable conflicts that arise may be reviewed through the grievance due process procedures at the intern's initiative (See Section VII).

K. Personal Appearance:

All staff will wear appropriate attire during hours of job activity. Attire will be appropriate to the environment and situation, will show respect for clients, and will be neat and professional. Each program may further define dress code requirements.

L. Property Policy

Some staff may be issued building keys, dictaphones, beepers, petty cash funds or other property that belongs to the Center. At the time of termination, all property must be returned or the staff member will be required to pay the replacement cost of the property. If property of the Center is lost, stolen, damaged, etc., an incident report must be completed within three days of the discovered incident. For property that is damaged, lost, stolen, etc. due to negligence, the employee will be required to complete an incident report and will also be required to pay the replacement cost of the property. Payment of the lost property will need to be made before a replacement can be issued.

III. REMUNERATION POLICY

A. The current annual stipend for the 12-month, full-time internship is set each year and published in the program description, APA Monitor, and the APPIC Directory. The terms of the internship are confirmed in the acceptance letter to the intern.

B. Pay Periods

Employees are paid twice monthly, on the 15th (or the last business day before the 15th) and on the 30th (or the last business day before the 30th).

Salary/stipended employees are paid on the 15th for work performed from the 1st through the 15th of the month, and on the 30th for work performed from the 16th through the last day of the month. Payroll checks will be ready for distribution no later than noon on payday. All payroll checks can be picked up in the Business Office and employees are required to sign for those paychecks they pick-up. Checks will be mailed only if specifically requested.

Seacoast Mental Health Center offers direct deposit. More information concerning this benefit can be obtained from the Human Resources Coordinator.

C. Expenses

Reasonable expenses incidental to the performance of Center duties will be reimbursed upon receipt of an Expense Voucher. Expenses submitted more than sixty (60) days from the date of occurrence may not be reimbursed.

Acceptable items include:

1. Mileage will be paid if an employee's car is used for Center business.
2. Expenses related to professional development which have prior approval of the supervisor.
3. Out-of-pocket expenses which have prior approval of the supervisor will be paid.

Transportation, dues, or meal costs incurred in connection with business meetings of a professional organization in which a staff member participates by his/her choice are not chargeable to the Center.

IV. CLASSIFICATIONS OF EMPLOYMENT

A. Working Hours

Full-time interns are required to work a minimum of 41 hours/week (exclusive of lunch and dinner breaks). Schedules will be set at the beginning of the internship year, and may include the option of arranging a 4-day work week. Twenty direct service hours per week and schedules written to include therapy availability two evenings a week are required. This internship is designed to accrue an annual total of 2000 hours.

B. Compensatory Time

There is no cumulative compensatory time.

C. Holidays

The Center observes the following 7 holidays: New Year's Day; Memorial Day; Independence Day; Labor Day; Thanksgiving Day; the day after Thanksgiving; Christmas Day. The Center will follow federal government dates for these holidays.

All full-time interns receive 8 hours time for each observed holiday. Additional times taken off on holidays which fall on a day normally scheduled for more than 8 work hours must be made up during the same week, or may be taken as vacation time. (E.g. if you normally work a 10-hour day on a Monday, you will need to work an additional 2 hours during the week or take the 2 hours as vacation time.)

Time for holidays which fall on a day not normally worked, should be taken some other day during the same week, or on the following Monday

D. Critical Weather Conditions

It is the policy of the Center to remain open if at all possible. The decision to close the Center will be made by the Executive Director as early as possible and notification of closure will be announced on WHEB (100.3FM), WOKQ (97.5FM), and WERZ (107FM) radio stations. The answering service will be notified as well. If an intern is unable to work due to the weather, it is his/her responsibility to reschedule his/her clients and notify the relevant supervisors and seminar leaders.

V. LEAVE

A. Vacation Time

Full-time psychology interns receive 15 days (120 hours) vacation leave during the internship year. In order to maintain good continuity of care for client's transferring to the following year's interns, there will be no vacations approved during the month of August, with the possible exception of a couple of days to attend the APA convention, with prior approval.

A maximum of two consecutive weeks of vacation may be taken in one time period.

Vacation leave must be requested in advance using the Leave Request Form and must be approved by the primary department director. It is the intern's responsibility to notify seminar leaders, supervisors, and admissions staff of the planned absence with as much advanced notice as possible.

Prior to leaving for vacation the intern will submit a schedule for the week following the vacation and notify the front desk of their vacation time.

B. Other Categories of Leave

An additional 5 days of leave time are allowed for absences from the internship for the following specific purposes: sick leave, Jury Duty, compassionate leave, and critical weather conditions. Should circumstances arise during the year which require more than 5 additional days of leave time, vacation will be used.

In each of these instances it is the interns' responsibility to notify the department director and supervisor prior to 9:00am on the day of absence, or with as much advanced notice as possible if circumstances permit, and to reschedule clients.

C. Religious Holidays

Interns may use vacation leave for religious holidays with prior approval of the primary department director.

D. Conference Leave

Interns may use vacation leave to attend conferences or outside training events with prior approval of their primary department director.

VI. FRINGE BENEFITS

A. FICA (Federal Insurance Compensation Act (i.e. Social Security))

All employees are subject to FICA tax which is withheld from their total earnings. Previous FICA tax that has been withheld from an employee's paycheck through another employer will not be applicable in meeting the annual FICA max. The Center must also pay FICA tax on each employee's total earnings

B. Worker's Compensation Insurance

The Center will provide Worker's Compensation Insurance for job related illness or injury. A job related illness or injury must be reported to the Human Resources Coordinator within 24 hours of the illness/injury in order to file the necessary paperwork.

Employees are paid in full for the day of their illness/injury. Employees are required to contact the Human Resources Coordinator to discuss the length of disability for compensation purposes.

C. Liability Insurance

The Center will provide professional liability insurance to cover all Center employees providing services for the Center.

D. Employee Paid Benefits

The Center, from time to time, will review and recommend various employee funded benefit opportunities. The Human Resources Coordinator will keep employees apprised of such opportunities.

E. Health Insurance

Full-time interns are eligible to buy into the Center's health insurance plan. Interns are informed of this in the program brochure, as well as in the letter of acceptance. Interns interested in this benefit are invited to contact the Human Resources Coordinator during the summer.

VII. PROFESSIONAL PERFORMANCE STANDARDS, EVALUATION, AND DUE PROCESS PROCEDURES

These due process procedures were developed in accordance with the APPIC guidelines (APPIC Newsletter, Winter 1996).

A. Definitions:

1. Academic Decisions: related to the evaluation of professional performance in the domains of: Intake, Treatment, Testing, Supervision, Interpersonal Behavior, and Professional Identification/Ethics.
2. Disciplinary Decisions: related to non-academic matters regarding a violation of Agency or Internship conduct rules, such as dress, parking, damage to property, or attendance.

B. Due Process Procedures in the case of Academic Decisions

1. At the beginning of the internship year each intern is given a copy of the “Description of the Internship”, the “Psychology Interns Handbook” and the Performance Evaluation instrument. These materials delineate the nature of the training program, the expectations of the quantity and quality of the intern’s work in the six core domains, and the administrative expectations regarding vacation, leave time, and work hours. In addition, the Performance Evaluation instrument describes the criteria for Satisfactory, Probation, and Unsatisfactory performance.

2. Professional Performance Standards

- a. If major concerns become evident in any of the six core domains (Intake, Treatment, Testing, Supervision, Interpersonal Behavior, Professional Identification/Ethics) in the first month or two of the internship, a three-month discussion and written evaluation will be held to specifically identify the areas of concern, any extenuating circumstances, and the corrective action/remediation plan.

- b. If at mid-year any one domain area is rated “Probation”, the overall rating for the semester will be considered “Probationary Status”. The Executive Director, Advisory Board, and the intern’s school will be informed of the areas of concern, any extenuating circumstances, and the corrective action plan. Significant improvement, as defined in the corrective action plan, will need to occur in order to receive credit for the internship year.

- c. If at mid-year any one area is rated “Unsatisfactory”, the overall rating for the semester will be considered “Unsatisfactory”, thus no credit will be given for the semester. The Executive Director, Advisory Board, and intern’s school will be informed of the intern’s status, areas of concern and the corrective action plan. Significant improvement, as defined in the corrective action plan, will need to occur in order to receive credit for the second semester of the internship. In addition, the intern will be required to meet with the Director of Training and the Advisory Board to discuss the possibilities for additional training which might allow the intern to receive credit for the entire internship year. In addition, this meeting allows the intern to discuss any extenuating circumstances which may have contributed to their deficient performance.

- d. In order to receive credit for the Internship year, the overall performance rating for the year in **all domains** must be, at a minimum, “Satisfactory”.

C. Due Process Procedures in the case of Disciplinary Decisions

1. Intern disciplinary determinations concerning inappropriate or unprofessional conduct will require both notice and a hearing. The intern will be notified verbally by their supervisor of the concern that has been raised about their conduct.
2. If concerns about the intern's conduct continue to be an issue, the intern will be notified in writing by the Chief Psychologist. A copy of this notice will be given to the Executive Director and placed in the intern's personnel file.
3. If the matter remains unresolved, the intern is entitled to a hearing before a committee composed of one person chosen by the intern, the Chief Psychologist, and one Advisory Group member chosen by the Chief Psychologist.
4. The committee will make a reasonable attempt to convene within two weeks of the hearing request.
5. The committee will make its decision within two weeks of convening.
6. The committee's decisions are binding.

D. Due Process Procedures in the Case of an Intern Grievance

1. The complaint will be discussed initially with the intern's primary supervisor.
2. If this channel fails to resolve the issue, the grievance will be submitted in writing to the Chief Psychologist. It must detail the specific matter precipitating the grievance and efforts made to resolve the conflict. In the event of grievance against the Chief Psychologist, the grievance will be submitted to the Executive Director.
3. The grievance will be discussed by the Psychology Training Committee in an effort to resolve the conflict.
4. If the matter remains unresolved, the intern is entitled to a grievance hearing before a committee composed of one person chosen by the intern who submitted the grievance, one person chosen by the individual against whom the grievance is written, and one Advisory Group member chosen by the Chief Psychologist or Executive Director.
5. The grievance committee will make a reasonable attempt to convene within two weeks of the date of submission of the grievance.
6. The grievance committee will make its decision within two weeks of convening.
7. The committee's decisions are binding.

VIII. DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE

A. Seacoast Mental Health Center prohibits the manufacture, distribution, possession, or use of a controlled substance in the workplace. Penalties for violating this policy may include immediate dismissal.

No staff member should perform the duties of his/her job while under the influence of a controlled substance. In addition, the Center realizes that prescription and non-prescription drugs may impair a person's ability to perform their job. Therefore, a staff member's supervisor, at his/her discretion, maintains the right to decide if an employee is capable of performing his/her duties.

B. Smoking Policy

Seacoast Mental Health Center promotes a smoke-free work environment.

IX. WORKPLACE VIOLENCE

Seacoast Mental Health Center's intent is to promote a safe, secure environment for employee's, interns, students, or volunteers. Threats of violence and weapons of any kind are not allowed/permitted in Center buildings or vehicles, on Center property, or at any Center-sponsored activity.

A weapon is any device or instrument that constitutes a real or perceived threat of causing injury or damage to persons or property. This includes but is not limited to clubs, chains, firearms, explosives, or any other device used to defend oneself from attack, or inflict damage to persons or property, including information systems.

PROCEDURES TO PREVENT AND MANAGE WORKPLACE VIOLENCE

1. The Center shall inform all employees, interns, students, or volunteers of its values, including the provision of a safe and secure environment. The initial orientation to this policy shall occur during the Safety Training for all new employees and a subsequent reorientation will occur annually.

2. Any employee having knowledge of, or suspicion of, another person threatening violent behavior or possessing any weapon **except a firearm** on Center property shall:

a. Assess the immediate threat to safety and security of surrounding persons and property, and attempt to assure a safe and secure environment.

b. Inform the person of the Center's policy banning/forbidding violent behavior and weapons, and request of that person to immediately surrender the weapon or removal of weapon and self from Center property.

OR

c. Call "Dr. Strong" for Quick Response Team member response, inform the person of the Center's policy banning violent behavior and weapons, and of weapon and self from Center property.

AND/OR

d. Call the local police department (911) and await assistance.

3. Any employee having knowledge of, or suspicion of, another person possessing a firearm, shall:
 - a. Assess the immediate threat to safety and security of surrounding persons and property, and attempt to assure a safe environment.
 - b. Call the local police department (911), and shall not attempt to obtain surrender of the firearm.
4. Any weapon (except a firearm) surrendered becomes the property of the Center. The Center shall promptly and appropriately discard of the weapon, and inform the previous holder of the weapon of its disposition. Any weapon surrendered to, or confiscated by, the police shall be dealt with by the police and the owner of the firearm.
5. If the person refuses to cooperate with the security measures outlined in this policy, the employee shall call "Dr. Strong" and notify the local police. The Center shall then evaluate the appropriateness of continuing employment with this person. Employees directly involved in the situation, director(s) of the program(s) in which the person provides services, and Associate Directors, and Executive Director, if necessary, shall immediately assess and determine whether employment shall be continued, and if so, specify the conditions of continuation.
 - a. If employment is to continue, a meeting shall be held with the person and those involved in the decision making to clarify and document behavioral expectations as outlined in the Center's policies and inform the person of the conditions for continuation. Guidance in decision making may be sought from the Human Resources Coordinator.
 - b. If employment is terminated, documentation of the circumstances leading to this decision will be kept in the employee's personnel file.

X. INFECTION CONTROL

A. Exposure Control Plan

The Center has an Exposure Control Plan that meets the letter and intent of the OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Administration) Bloodborne Pathogens Standard. The objective of the plan is to protect employees from the health hazards associated with bloodborne pathogens and to provide appropriate treatment and counseling should an employee be exposed to bloodborne pathogens.

Further information concerning SMHC's Exposure Control Plan can be obtained via the Center's Exposure Control Officer or through the Human Resources Office.

B. Tuberculosis Skin Testing

Every employee is required to have an annual Tuberculosis skin test unless they: (1) Have previously had a positive skin test or; (2) Have a medical condition that would prevent them from showing an accurate response. Waivers are available for these conditions. All newly hired staff are required to have a two step skin test unless they can show results from annual

skin tests for all five years prior to the date of hire. If an employee tests positive, he/she will be referred to the local public health nurse and their primary health care provider. Further information on this can be obtained from the Contagious Illness policy and procedure.

C. AIDS Policy

Philosophy on Continuing Employment

AIDS will be treated like any other life-threatening disease in that the employee, if medically capable and able to perform job duties, will be permitted to continue his/her position. When it is possible, we are committed to accommodate the employee in modifying his/her job duties in the event that person can no longer maintain in the original job responsibilities.

Testing

Testing results for AIDS antibodies will not be used in employment decisions at Seacoast Mental Health Center. Employees will not be required to be tested for HIV. At this time anonymous HIV antibody testing is provided at six designated counseling and testing sites in New Hampshire. Persons who feel they may be at risk for the AIDS virus can find information about these sites in the employee health manual under AIDS. Clients at SMHC are not required to have an HIV test for any reason. Information about testing sites is available to all clients through their case manager, therapist, or the nursing department.

Further information concerning SMHC's AIDS Policy can be obtained in the Employee Infection Control Packet that is provided during orientation.

XI. CONFIDENTIALITY & RELEASE OF INFORMATION

It is understood that SMHC operates under a strict confidentiality policy both in terms of clients, as well as certain organizational matters. Breach of such confidentiality is sufficient cause for dismissal.

A. No information concerning a client of SMHC may be released to any relative of the client or to any agency or individual without the written consent of the client or legal guardian unless covered by law or court order, as per SMHC's Release of Information policy.

B. There is a legal obligation to make reports to proper authorities under the following circumstances:

1. Abuse, neglect, or exploitation of children, elders, and adults who are unable to take care of themselves (RSA 161-D and RSA 169-C);
2. Duty to warn or otherwise manage threats to harm others or substantial damage to real property (RSA 330-A:22);
3. Involuntary hospitalization proceedings and information to Designated Receiving Facilities (RSA 135-C);
4. Court orders (RSA 330-A:19);

5. Information on diagnosis and treatment of medication to family care providers who live with a client (RSA 135-C:19).

At any time when confidentiality must or will be violated, the clinical supervisor is to be consulted.

C. Staff are not to act as representatives of the Center in personnel, fiscal, or organizational matters without prior approval of the Executive Director.

D. All employees will be bound by the guidelines set forth in the Clients Rights Statement of SMHC.

E. All documentation/material containing information about clients of Seacoast Mental Health Center, including clinician's notes, insurance forms, computer reports, etc., shall be shredded and disposed of by SMHC's contracted recycling company. Any material bearing clients names must be shredded to provide for complete confidentiality.

F. Confidential patient information should be faxed only when the time constraints of the postal service will interfere with patient care services. A signed release of information should accompany the fax. All transmittal forms must be labeled as confidential and contain the following note:

“The comments on and attachment to this cover sheet are intended only for the use of the individual or entity to which it is addressed, and may contain information that is privileged, confidential, and exempt from disclosure under applicable law. If the reader of this message is not the intended recipient, or the employee or agent responsible for delivering the message to the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that any dissemination, distribution or copying of this communication is strictly prohibited.”

G. All Quality Assurance activities, reports, findings, complaint investigations, etc. are confidential and non-discoverable per RSA 135-C:63-A.

XII. ETHICS

Psychology interns are expected to adhere to the ethical principles outlined by the American Psychological Association. In accordance with these principles, if at any time, a situation arises at the Center in which there is a conflict between job expectations and the ethical principles, the intern will consult with his/her supervisor or the Chief Psychologist to adequately resolve the situation without compromising the ethical guidelines. The APA ethical code is found in Appendix C.

XIII. CHANGES IN PERSONNEL POLICIES

Personnel Policies regarding the psychology internship may be changed by the Chief Psychologist and will be approved by the Executive Director. Recommendations regarding personnel policies will be made to the Chief Psychologist by the Psychology Training

Committee, psychology staff, or psychology interns. The Executive Director has the authority to approve/disapprove the proposed policies.

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