

## **ETHICS AT PROJECT INDEPENDENCE**

The confidence that the public, consumers, their families, volunteers, and our own employees or representatives of other organizations have in Project Independence is inspired to a large degree by the personal and business conduct of the organization's Board of Directors, management and all employees, as well as the appearance conveyed by that conduct. Good taste, common sense, and high moral standards are the best guide to avoiding any conflict of interest, impropriety or unethical behavior or actions.

Our belief and support of the expectation of ethical behavior and purpose in all that we do, is demonstrated in the comprehensive nature of the various areas wherein we iterate our commitment and hold ourselves accountable to a high standard.

The four primary cornerstones on which we build our organization are our Mission, Vision, Values and Guiding Principles. Following those three items are our specific ethics statements for Board, staff, volunteers and individuals receiving our services.

### **MISSION**

Having a job, friends and a home of your own are all intrinsic to a healthy, happy life.

We believe:

- People with disabilities have a right to participate fully in the community.
- The integration of people with disabilities in the normal flow of community life will serve to enlighten and strengthen the community's understanding of the great value and contribution added by their presence.
- Services are focused on the individual, in context with career and life goals, and presented in a dignified and respectful manner.
- That by listening to the hopes and dreams of people we serve, we can support people to realize those dreams.
- Thorough and continuous evaluation will provide organizational direction.
- Well trained and compensated staff are integral to quality services.

***Our goal is to promote civil rights for people with developmental disabilities through services which expand freedom and choice.***

## VISION

Our Vision is of a society that values each individual and provides the opportunity for all people to lead full and productive lives; Looking beyond disabilities, focusing on capabilities, expanding possibilities.

## VALUES

We are committed to providing the highest quality services to people with disabilities, and to advocate on their behalf, so that they may realize their full potential. Our strength is the result of the team effort of our volunteers, our employees, our donors, our program participants and society in general. We take pride in conducting the business of *Project Independence* with integrity, practicing the highest ethical standards.

### *To our program participants & their families...*

We pledge to provide responsive and innovative services that meet your needs. We are committed to enhancing your quality of life through empowerment, advocacy & support, and we recognize that your satisfaction is the only valid measure of *Project Independence's* services.

### *To our staff...*

We are committed to attracting and retaining outstanding individuals throughout the organization and to providing you with challenging and rewarding work. We will strive to maintain an open work environment that values diversity and the contribution of each individual, fosters teamwork and is characterized by mutual respect and equitable treatment of all.

### *To our volunteers...*

We recognize the value of your contribution of time, talent and financial resources. We will continue to offer you meaningful opportunities to further the mission of *Project Independence*.

### *To our donors...*

We are grateful for your generosity, which enables *Project Independence* to fulfill its mission. Through prudent financial management, we pledge to use your gifts wisely in order to provide more people with needed services.

### *To society...*

We will constantly advocate for a society which recognizes the abilities of individuals with disabilities and their right to the same opportunities as everyone else to be independent, productive, contributing members of society.

# GUIDING PRINCIPLES

**These are the guiding principles for employees of Project Independence.**

## ***Philosophy and Approach***

- We treat those whom we serve with respect and dignity.
- Our mission and vision are clearly communicated and understood.
- Institutional and personal integrity are not compromised.
- Staff, board members and volunteers act as a team working toward the same goals.
- The organization is flexible and adaptable to change.
- Adequate resources and latitude are provided to foster creativity and to encourage people to contribute to their full potential.
- Policies and procedures are communicated clearly and in a timely manner.
- Mistakes are viewed as learning experiences; reasonable risk-taking is encouraged in order to grow and develop.

## ***Work Environment***

- People work in a positive, supportive environment where their dedication and accomplishments are recognized and appreciated.
- Communication is viewed as paramount to the success of our mission; it is continuous, multi-level, two-way and open.
- Individuals are included in the decision making process whenever practical.
- There is mutual trust and respect among individuals in the agency.
- Initiative is encouraged at every level of the agency.

## ***Employee Development***

- Management and the Board of Directors care about and are willing to invest in the professional and personal growth of employees.
- Individuals are given guidance, support and appropriate decision making authority to be successful in their assigned responsibility.

## ***Recognition and Reward***

- Personal accountability is expected and performance is measured and rewarded.
- Systems for reward, encouragement, support and accountability are in place in order to foster cooperation and to ensure fulfillment of the agency's mission.
- Individual talents and interests are recognized and utilized.

**Each day we strive to stay true to these principles, as they are the practical embodiment of our mission, vision and values. We all have the mutual responsibility of following them and communicating concerns and questions about them. It takes each member of the Project Independence team to turn these principles into our reality.**

## Whistleblower Information

EthicsPoint offers an anonymous and confidential way to report actual or suspected activities that may involve violations of our Code of Ethics, especially accounting and financial matters, as well as other suggestions or concerns. Please call our President and CEO, Debra Marsteller at 714-549-3464. You may also submit a report using the website [https://secure.ethicspoint.com/domain/en/default\\_reporter.asp](https://secure.ethicspoint.com/domain/en/default_reporter.asp) or you may speak directly to an Ethics Point operator by dialing toll free 866-341-9916.