

Ethical Standards

All College District personnel engaged in counseling and guidance activities shall adhere to the high ethical and professional standards required by virtue of the relationship between the counselor and counselee. In this regard, the ethical standards adopted and published by the American Personnel and Guidance Association, as revised, shall be the standard of conduct for College District personnel engaged in such activities.

The Board expects all employees to discharge their duties free from the influence of controlled substances and thereby maintain a working environment free of the problems associated with the use and abuse of controlled substances.

All College District employees shall perform their duties in accordance with state and federal law, College District policy, and ethical standards.

All College District personnel shall recognize and respect the rights of students, other employees, and members of the community and shall work cooperatively with others to serve the best interests of the College District.

Employees wishing to express concern, complaints, or criticism shall do so through appropriate channels. [See DGBA]

An employee shall not:

1. Solicit, accept, or agree to accept any benefit, gift, favor, or service that might reasonably tend to influence the employee in the discharge of official duties or that the employee knows or should know is being offered with the intent to influence official conduct;
2. Intentionally or knowingly solicit, accept, or agree to accept any benefit for having exercised the employee's official powers or performed official duties in favor of another;
3. Disclose confidential information, information that is excluded from public disclosure under the Texas Public Information Act, or information that has been ordered sealed by a court that was acquired by reason of the employee's official position, or accept other employment, including self-employment, or engage in a business, charity, nonprofit organization, or professional activity that the employee might reasonably expect would require or induce the employee to disclose confidential information, information that is excluded from public disclosure under the Texas Public Information Act, or information that has been ordered sealed by a court that was acquired by reason of the employee's official position;

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4. Accept employment, including self-employment, or compensation or engage in a business, charity, nonprofit organization, or professional activity that could reasonably be expected to impair the employee's independence of judgment in the performance of official duties;
5. Make personal investments, or have a personal or financial interest, that could reasonably be expected to create a substantial conflict between the employee's private interest and the public interest;
6. Utilize College District time, property, facilities, or equipment for any purpose other than official College District business, unless such use is reasonable and incidental and does not result in any direct cost to the College District, interfere with official duties, or interfere with College District functions;
7. Utilize the employee's official position, or College District-issued items, such as a badge, to obtain financial gain or privileges, or to avoid consequences of illegal acts;
8. Knowingly make misleading statements, either oral or written, or provide false information in the course of official College District business;
9. Engage in any political activity while on College District time or utilize College District resources for any political activity; or
10. Use the employee's own public office for private gain.

An employee shall:

1. Perform the employee's official duties in a lawful, professional, and ethical manner benefiting the College District;
2. Report any conduct or activity that the employee believes to be in violation of this ethics policy to College District human resources and/or College District legal counsel; and
3. Endeavor to avoid any actions that would create the appearance that the employee is violating the law or the ethical standards of the College District.

In addition, the College District holds all employees to the ethical standards expressed in the [Texas Community College Teachers Association Code of Professional Ethics \(PDF\)](#).¹

Violations

Employees shall comply with the standards of conduct set out in this policy and with any other policies, regulations, and guidelines that impose duties, requirements, or standards attendant to their status as College District employees. Violation of any policies, regulations, or guidelines may result in disciplinary action, including termination of employment. [See DCC and DM series]

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Electronic Media	Electronic media includes all forms of social media, such as text messaging, instant messaging, electronic mail (e-mail), web logs (blogs), electronic forums (chat rooms), video-sharing websites, editorial comments posted on the Internet, and social network sites. Electronic media also includes all forms of telecommunication, such as landlines, cell phones, and web-based applications.
Record Retention	An employee shall comply with the College District's requirements for records retention and destruction to the extent those requirements apply to electronic media. [See CIA]
Personal Use	Employees shall be held to the same professional standards in their public use of electronic media as they are for any other public conduct. If an employee's use of electronic media violates state or federal law or College District policy, or interferes with the employee's ability to effectively perform his or her job duties, the employee is subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.
Safety Requirements	All employees shall adhere to College District safety rules and regulations and shall report unsafe conditions or practices to the appropriate supervisor.
Tobacco and E-cigarettes	An employee shall not smoke or use tobacco products or e-cigarettes on College District property, in College District vehicles, or at College District-related activities. [See also GDA]
Alcohol and Drugs	<p>A copy of this policy, the purpose of which is to eliminate drug abuse from the workplace, shall be provided each employee at the beginning of each year or upon employment.</p> <p>Employees shall not manufacture, distribute, dispense, possess, use, or be under the influence of any of the following substances during working hours while on College District property or at College District-related activities during or outside of usual working hours:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Any controlled substance or dangerous drug as defined by law, including but not limited to marijuana, any narcotic drug, hallucinogen, stimulant, depressant, amphetamine, or barbiturate.2. Alcohol or any alcoholic beverage.3. Any abusable glue, aerosol paint, or any other chemical substance for inhalation.4. Any other intoxicant, or mood-changing, mind-altering, or behavior-altering drugs.

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An employee need not be legally intoxicated to be considered “under the influence” of a controlled substance.

Exceptions

It shall not be considered a violation of this policy if the employee:

1. Manufactures, possesses, or dispenses a substance listed above as part of the employee’s job responsibilities;
2. Uses or possesses a controlled substance or drug authorized by a licensed physician prescribed for the employee’s personal use; or
3. Possesses a controlled substance or drug that a licensed physician has prescribed for the employee’s child or other individual for whom the employee is a legal guardian.

The Chancellor is authorized by the Board to permit the serving and consumption of alcohol at appropriate College District functions.

Notice

Each employee shall be given a copy of the College District’s notice regarding a drug-free workplace. [See DI(EXHIBIT)]

Biennial Review

The Chancellor or designee shall conduct a biennial review of the program to determine its effectiveness and implement changes if necessary and to ensure sanctions are consistently enforced.

Arrests, Indictments, Convictions, and Other Adjudications

An employee shall notify the employee’s immediate supervisor within three calendar days of any arrest, indictment, conviction, no contest or guilty plea, or other adjudication of the employee for any felony or offense involving moral turpitude.

Moral Turpitude

Moral turpitude includes but is not limited to:

1. Dishonesty, fraud, deceit, theft, or misrepresentation;
2. Deliberate violence;
3. Base, vile, or depraved acts that are intended to arouse or gratify the sexual desire of the actor;
4. Felony possession, transfer, sale, distribution, or conspiracy to possess, transfer, sell, or distribute any controlled substance defined in Chapter 481 of the Health and Safety Code;
5. Acts constituting public intoxication, operating a motor vehicle while under the influence of alcohol, or disorderly conduct, if any two or more acts are committed within any 12-month period; or
6. Acts constituting abuse under the Texas Family Code.

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**Unauthorized
Recording**

No employee may record, by any means, a conversation of an employee or student unless all the following criteria are met:

1. A legitimate purpose for the recording;
2. A recording device in plain view; and
3. Written authorization from the supervisor of the employee who wishes to record the conversation.

Secret recordings are strictly prohibited unless authorized in writing by College District legal counsel.

A violation of this provision may result in disciplinary action, including termination.

¹ Texas Community College Teachers Association Code of Professional Ethics (PDF): <http://www.tccta.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/TCCTA-Ethics.pdf>