



STANDARD & PROCEDURES

Category:	Human Resources	
Approved by:	Executive Director	Review Date: April 2026
Effective Date:	April 4, 2013	
Board Policy Reference:	OMN-040 Human Resources OMN-010 Services to Children & Families in the Community OMN-020 Services to Children & Youth in Care	
Cross – References:	HR-500 Health & Safety Standards and Procedures HR-720 Conflict of Interest HR-725 Confidentiality HR-730 Privacy	
Lead:	Director of Corporate Services	
Code:	HR-715	

PROFESSIONAL ETHICS

PREAMBLE/PURPOSE

BGCFS is committed to provide services in a manner which supports generally accepted ethical practices and those established by the respective professional associations to which employees may belong including, but not limited to:

- Ontario Association of Professional Social Workers;
- Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers;
- Canadian Association of Social Workers (1983);
- Child Care Workers Association of Ontario;
- Human Resource Professionals Association of Ontario;
- Canadian Institute of Chartered Accountants;
- Certified General Accountants Association;
- Certified Management Accountants Association;
- Law Society of Canada.

DEFINITIONS

Professional Ethics are accepted standards of personal and business behaviour, values and guiding principles. Codes of professional ethics are often established by professional organizations to help guide members in performing their job functions according to sound and consistent ethical principles.

STANDARD

Standards are basic rules of practice to support Board Policy and provide context for Procedures. They are also informed by intent of legislation, Ministry Directives, accreditation requirements, best practice research and quality improvement activities. Departures require written approval from the Executive Director or member of the Senior Team and may be considered if reasons are beyond the control of the staff member, e.g. service user is not available for interview. Workload is not a valid reason for not meeting standards.

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BGCFS is committed to the creation and maintenance of workplace conditions and practices that are consistent with ethical and professional standards and practices.

PROCEDURES

Procedures are a practical guide regarding what to do, when to do it and who is responsible. They detail the implementation of Standards and ensure that professional practice is delivered within a consistent framework. They are also informed by requirements of legislation, Ministry Directives, accreditation requirements, best practice research and quality improvement activities. Procedural departures may be approved in writing by a supervisor if circumstances are beyond the control of a staff member, e.g. service user is not available.

1. Services to Children

- 1.1. We recognize the child as our primary service user and the service user to whom we are ultimately accountable. This is so even when one is working with the family members, social groups, organizations, and/or communities in support of that child.
- 1.2. We ensure that their rights are clearly delineated to them at each appropriate stage in the service received.
- 1.3. We remind ourselves of the power inherent in our legislated authority in determining their present and their future lives and endeavor to always use this in a judicious and thoughtful manner.
- 1.4. We accept a broad definition of the concept of family in order to open all possibilities for a caring and nurturing environment for the child.
- 1.5. We do not participate in or condone any form of abuse or neglect of children or inappropriate management or care-giving practice.
- 1.6. We particularly strive to discourage any attitudes that lead to the promotion of corporal punishment of children. We do not use or condone the use of corporal punishment.
- 1.7. We strive to discourage any attitudes that lead to the exploitation and/or promotion of use of children for sexual purpose.
- 1.8. We attempt in all manners possible, especially for our children and youth in care, to provide them with an environment which is sensitive to the impact of exposure to violence.
- 1.9. We advocate for their right to the highest standard of service and care.

2. Administration

- 2.1. We undertake to pursue our goals abiding by all laws, rules, regulations, policies, standards and procedures both derived from our mandate and drawn by BGCFS.
- 2.2. We are responsible to develop and maintain sound and current standards and procedures, responsive to the various constituencies of BGCFS.
- 2.3. Supervisors ensure, to the best of their ability, that duties are clearly outlined; appropriate training is provided; and, fair and equitable performance appraisals are

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completed in a timely manner.

2.4. We are conscious of and maintain the importance of Workplace Health and Safety and employee support in pursuing our daily work.

3. **Responsibility to BGCFS**

3.1. We acquaint ourselves with all relevant laws, rules, regulations, policies, standards and procedures.

3.2. We acknowledge our accountability to BGCFS for the performance of our job responsibilities and use our own abilities and the resources of BGCFS to achieve the optimum level of service to our service users.

3.3. We use scrupulous regard, and only for the purposes for which they are intended, the assets and resources of BGCFS.

3.4. We display openness in our relationships, a willingness to be challenged and to challenge in a manner which furthers the goals of BGCFS.

3.5. We avoid dual relationships or conflicts of interest with service users, students, employees and supervisors that could impair our professional judgment or conflict with the interest of BGCFS and its service users.

4. **Confidentiality**

4.1. We hold in strict confidence and security all information, in whatever form, concerning the business and affairs of BGCFS and its service users.

4.2. We inform service users at the outset of our professional relationship, and at appropriate times, how some information acquired may need to be shared with others, and we share this information only if properly authorized to do so.

4.3. We share information openly with others within the workplace who have a legitimate need to know in order to perform their duties.

4.4. We ensure when legitimate discussions do take place about the business and affairs of BGCFS and its service users; we do so in a manner and a place that respects their privacy.

4.5. We understand that the service user case record and the employee work record are the property of BGCFS but is the responsibility of the person to whom it is assigned.

4.6. We never discuss service users in the presence of the general public in a manner which could in any way lead to the service user being identified or which would bring BGCFS, its employees or service users into disrepute.

4.7. The obligation to maintain confidentiality continues indefinitely after one has ceased to have contact with the service user, or is no longer in the employ of the BGCFS.

5. **Employee/Service User Relationship**

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- 5.1. We distinguish our needs from those of service users to ensure that service users' interests are paramount within professional relationships.
- 5.2. Wherever possible and always with the best interest of the children we serve foremost in our minds, we work with all service users, both voluntary and involuntary, in a manner that seeks to include mutual goal-setting, service user empowerment and conditions which foster change.
- 5.3. We remind ourselves of the power inherent in our legislated authority in intervening in people's lives and those of all family members, and we endeavour to always use this power in a judicious and thoughtful manner.
- 5.4. We continually strive to improve our standards of service through the development of self-awareness, seeking feedback from others and viewing our continued professional development in the context of a commitment to life-long learning.
- 5.5. We endeavour to establish appropriate boundaries in our relationships with those we serve, not burdening them with our own concerns and problems while sharing enough of ourselves to build an effective helping relationship.
- 5.6. We refrain from any sexual conduct towards a service user and any other intimacy which is exploitive of the professional relationship with which we have been entrusted.
- 5.7. We ensure equal access and service for all of our service users, regardless of race, creed, colour, religion, national origin, ethnic origin, ancestry, citizenship, age, gender, and sexual orientation, place of origin, marital status, family status, or disability.
- 5.8. We discuss and deliver services to service users in a timely and reasonable manner.

6. Representation

- 6.1. We convey to each other, our professional collaterals and the public at large a respect for those we represent, including BGCFS, our service users and our colleagues.
- 6.2. We are mindful of our responsibility when expressing opinions, in distinguishing between our own views and our statements as representatives of BGCFS.
- 6.3. We do not represent BGCFS in a formal capacity without prior approval from the appropriate source.

PRACTICE NOTES

Practice Notes are guidelines developed to provide users with recommendations for best practice.

Forms:

Approval History:

New

Reviewed April 2021

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Source References: