

NOTICE TO ALL VENDORS, CONTRACTORS AND CONSULTANTS

Lewis County Corporate Compliance Policy

As required by law, Lewis County (the "County") is advising you of its Corporate Compliance Policy. All Lewis County contracts require all vendors, contractors and consultants to comply with all local, state and federal laws, rules and regulations. This notice is intended to draw your attention to recent changes in federal and state law as well as the implementation of Lewis County's Corporate Compliance Plan, which may have an impact on you. Congress recently passed the Deficit Reduction Act Section 6032, which requires certain entities to educate their employees, contractors, and agents about the details of the federal and state false claims statutes and whistleblower protections. Additionally, in 2006, the NYS Legislature enacted Section 363-d of the Social Security Law, requiring all entities participating in Medicaid to establish a program to address the prevention of Medicaid fraud, abuse, and waste.

Lewis County's Corporate Compliance Program

BE ADVISED that the County has established a Corporate Compliance Plan to assure that each of its departments who directly provide medical services and receive federal and state payments for such services, including the Mental Hygiene Department, the Public Health Department, and the Lewis County General Hospital and Residential Health Care Facility, are in compliance with all relevant state and federal laws, rules and regulations. It is the policy of Lewis County to obey all federal and state laws, to implement and enforce procedures to detect and prevent fraud, waste, and abuse with respect to payments to Lewis County from federal or state healthcare programs, and to provide protections for those who report actual or suspected wrongdoing. All employees within each of the affected departments, including management and any contractors or agents, are educated in accordance with the law regarding the federal and state false claims statutes and their role in preventing and detecting fraud, waste, and abuse in federal health care programs.

A complete copy of the Lewis County Corporate Compliance Plan is available on the County's website: <http://lewiscountyny.org>

False Claims

BE FURTHER ADVISED that the Federal False Claims Act (31 U.S.C. §§ 3729 – 3733), the Administrative Remedies For False Claims (31 USC Chapter 38 §§ 3801-3812), the New York State False Claims Act (State Finance Law §§187-194), and other New York State statutes concerning false statements or claims make it unlawful for any person, corporation, partnership or other entity to knowingly submit a false claim for payment to a government agency. Persons found responsible for submitting a false claim may be fined and may be liable for up to three times the amount of damages. Additionally, criminal penalties may apply in certain cases.

Employees who report false claims activity are entitled to protection from retaliation in any form.

Exclusion Policy

BE FURTHER ADVISED that individuals who have been convicted of a criminal offense related to health care or who are listed by a Federal agency as debarred, excluded or otherwise ineligible

for participation in any federally funded health care program will not be employed or have another relationship (including contractual) with the County. In addition, individuals who are excluded from participation in the New York State Medicaid program will not be employed or have another relationship (including contractual) with the County.

It is the County's policy to inquire into the background of all job applicants, independent contractors, and consultants with respect to matters relating to any current or prior disciplinary action, investigation, audit or review relating to the provision of health care goods or services, or any claim for reimbursement. The County will query state and federal data bases with respect to potential employees, independent contractors, and consultants and shall review the same at least quarterly for all existing employees, independent contractors and consultants.

BE FURTHER ADVISED, it is also the County's policy to assure that all professional services rendered by or on behalf of Lewis County shall be performed only by persons who have the necessary and appropriate licensing and credentials for such services. Accordingly, all employees, contractors and consultants are expected to maintain all necessary requirements for licensing in their respective professional disciplines to enable them to perform the requested services. Appropriate and thorough licensing checks and credentialing will take place upon initial hire and on an ongoing basis.

Conclusion

Lewis County takes issues regarding false claims and fraud and abuse seriously. We are committed to providing an environment of honesty, integrity, and trust. Employees, management, and contractors or agents of Lewis County are made aware of the laws regarding fraud and abuse and false claims and are encouraged to identify and report concerns.

Any individual with a concern is encouraged to discuss the situation with:

Jean Dryja, Compliance Officer, Lewis County General Hospital (315) 376-5463;
pcr@lcgh.net

Sheri Schulz, Compliance Officer, Lewis County Community Mental Health Center,
(315) 376-5183; sschulz@lewiscountyny.org

Michael Wicks, Compliance Officer, Lewis County Public Health Agency, (315) 376-5426; mike@health.co.lewis.ny.us

Richard J. Graham, Lewis County Attorney (315) 376-5282; rgraham@lewiscountyny.org

David Pendergast, Lewis County Manager (315) 376-5355;
dpendergast@lewiscountyny.org

Failure to report known violations, failure to detect violations due to negligence or reckless conduct is a punishable offense. All employees, managers, and contractors are encouraged to report Fraud, Abuse, and False Claims to the Lewis County Attorney's Office. In addition, the Office of Medicaid Inspector General (OMIG) has a website with a toll free hotline that makes it easy for whistleblowers to file a complaint.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.