Trinity Alliance of the Capital Region, Inc.
CODE OF ETHICS/CONDUCT

Mission and Vision

MISSION

“To provide services to the community that will support and promote healthy families, adults and children. Our agency is dedicated to improving the neighborhood as a setting for family life, contributing to health and well-being, and promoting education and employment as a means of self-development.”

VISION

"Trinity Alliance of the Capital Region will be recognized for its influential and preeminent role in providing integrated service leadership to the community. In doing so, Trinity Alliance will strive towards responsible growth, sustainability and becoming the community voice for improving quality of life."

Intent

Trinity Alliance of the Capital Region, Inc.’s (sometimes referred to as “Trinity Alliance” or “the Agency”) is committed to conducting its business ethically and in conformance with all Federal and State laws, regulations, interpretations thereof, and the Code of Ethics/Conduct. To support this commitment, Trinity Alliance will maintain and update as appropriate a written Code of Ethics/Conduct to provide guidance on employee and organizational responsibilities related to compliance. The Code of Ethics/Conduct addresses specific issues related to reimbursement, financial relationships, quality of care, and other critical areas. Trinity Alliance’s Code of Ethics/Conduct applies to all employees, independent contractors, volunteers, interns and members of the Board of Directors.

The Code of Ethics/Conduct was approved by Trinity Alliance’s Board of Directors and is a formal statement of the Agency’s commitment to the standards and rules of ethical conduct.

Trinity Alliance is committed to preventing the occurrence of unethical or unlawful behavior, stopping such behavior as soon as possible after discovery, and to discipline employees who violate the Code of Ethics/Conduct, including employees who neglect to report a violation.

All employees must comply with the Code of Ethics/Conduct, immediately report any alleged violations of wrongdoing, and assist management and compliance personnel in investigating allegations of wrongdoing.

While these standards addressed in the Code of Ethics/Conduct are intended to guide employees in the course of their day-to-day responsibilities, they do not replace any Agency or program policies and procedures. There may be instances that are not addressed by the Code of Ethics/Conduct or existing policies and procedures, or activities that may conflict with these standards. Employees must seek direction from the Compliance Officer in these instances.
Ethics

It is the policy of Trinity Alliance to observe all Federal, State and Local laws, and regulations applicable to its business and to conduct business with the highest degree of integrity. To accomplish this, all employees and contractors must obey the laws and regulations and agency policies and procedures that govern their work and always act in the best interest of the people we serve, their families and the Agency.

Guidelines for employees and contractors

- You are expected to keep management staff informed of what you are doing; to document or record all services or transactions accurately; and to be honest and forthcoming with the Agency, regulatory agencies, and internal and external auditors.
- You are expected to comply with the Agency’s policies and procedures, accounting rules, and internal controls.
- You are expected to function with honesty in your work for the Agency and with people we serve, providers, suppliers and all others with whom the Agency does business.

Quality Services

It is the policy of Trinity Alliance to detect and prevent fraud, waste, and abuse in Federal healthcare programs. This Policy explains 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 laws concerning false statements or claims and employee protections against retaliation. This policy also sets forth the procedures that Trinity Alliance has put into place to prevent any violations of Federal or New York State laws regarding fraud or abuse in its health care programs.

This policy applies to all employees, including management, contractors, and agents.

For purpose of this policy, a contractor or agent is defined as:

- Any contractor, subcontractor, agent, or other person who, on behalf of the Agency, furnishes or otherwise authorizes the furnishing of Medicare and/or Medicaid health care items or services, or performs billing or coding functions; or
- Any contractor, subcontractor, agent, or other person who provides administrative or consultative services, goods or services that are significant and material, are directly related to health care provision, and/or are included in or are a necessary component of providing items or services of Medicaid-funded programs; or
- Any contractor, subcontractor, agent, or other person who is involved in the monitoring of health care provided by the Agency.
- The Agency’s role is to provide quality services to our consumers. All employees will use a holistic evidence-based practice when providing services to consumers.


**Conflict of Interest**

Employees and contractors must not allow any outside financial interest, or competing personal interest to influence their decisions or actions taken on behalf of the Agency.

Employees and contractors must avoid any situation where a conflict of interest exists or might appear between their personal interests and those of the Agency. The appearance of a conflict of interest may be as serious as an actual conflict of interest.

Any employee who terminates their employment with the Agency, must wait a minimum of three months before they can receive a referral from the Agency.

**Guidelines for Employees and Contractors**

It is a conflict of interest for you to personally take for yourself opportunities that are discovered through the use of Agency property, information or position with the Agency; to use Agency property or information for personal gain; or to compete with the Agency.

There are many types of situations where potential conflicts may arise. You must promptly report any actual or potential conflicts of interest directly to the Compliance Officer.

For at least two years from the date of separation, the employee will not attempt to approach our customers, clients and/or residents for the purpose of personally gaining from competing with Trinity Alliance for their business.

**Outside Activities and Employment**

- You may not conduct outside activities during work time. Such activities interfere with your regular duties and negatively impact the quality of your work.

- You are a representative of the Agency in your everyday life and must represent the Agency positively in the community.

- Outside employment must not conflict in any way with your responsibilities to the Agency or its consumers. You may not compete against Trinity Alliance, work for its competitors, or have any ownership interest in a competitor.

**Use of Agency Funds and Resources**

- The Agency’s assets are to only be used for the benefit of the Agency and the people we serve. Assets include funds, equipment, inventory, and office supplies, but also concepts, business plans and strategies, information about people served, financial information, computer property rights, and other business information about the Agency.

- You may not use Agency assets for personal gain or give them to any other persons or entities, except in the ordinary course of business as part of an approved transaction.
Confidentiality

- During your employment, you may acquire confidential information about Trinity Alliance, its staff and people we serve that must be handled in strict confidence and not discussed with outsiders. The protection of confidential business, staff and consumer information is very important.

Business Dealings Between the Agency and Employees

- Trinity Alliance will not be inappropriately influenced with goods or services from any business in which you or your immediate family members have a substantial interest.

- Property and resources of the Agency should only be used for the benefit of the Agency or the people we serve.

Maintenance of Records

Employees and contractors must record and report all agency, consumer and financial information fully, accurately, and honestly. Records include, but are not limited to, records of the people we serve, documentation of services, accounting books or records, financial statements, timesheets or records, expense reports, vouchers, bills, payroll, claims payment records, correspondence, and any other method of communication. Employees or contractors must not omit or conceal any relevant information. All records will be retained for seven years.

Guidelines for Employees and Contractors

Many of the Agency forms are legal documents used to prove that a service was provided, to bill for a service to a consumer, to record a job task, or to record specific happenings. You must document accurately and honestly, and only for those services that you provided or those events you were involved in.

Falsification of Records

- You must not make any false entries in any of the Agency’s records or in any public record for any reason.

- You may not alter any permanent entries in the Agency’s records.

- You may only approve payments or receipts on behalf of the Agency that are described in documents supporting the transaction. “Slush funds” or similar off-book accounts, where there is no accounting for receipts or expenditures on the agency books, are strictly prohibited.

- You may not create or participate in the creation of any records that are intended to mislead or to conceal anything that is improper.
Expense Records

- You must always charge expenses accurately and to the appropriate cost center or account, regardless of the financial status of the program, project, or contract, or the budget status of a particular account or line item.

Retention of Records

- The retention, disposal, or destruction of records of or pertaining to the Agency must always comply with legal and regulatory requirements and Agency policy.
- You may not destroy records pertaining to litigation or government investigations or audit without express written approval of the Compliance Officer.

Protection of Confidential Information

The Agency has developed policies and procedures to assure that the confidentiality of Agency information and information about the people we serve is protected and released only with the appropriate authorization or for lawful reasons, in addition to purposes of treatment, payment, and operations. All employees and contractors are required to comply with Trinity Alliance’s Privacy Policy. If you have any questions concerning confidential information or the Privacy Policy, contact the Compliance Officer.

Guidelines for Employees and Contractors

You must treat all Agency records and information as confidential.

You may not release confidential information without the proper authorization. Confidential information includes not only information about the people that we serve and their families, but also non-public information about the Agency that may be of use to the Agency’s competitors or harmful to the Agency or its customers if released.

You must protect Agency information and avoid discussing or disclosing Agency information, purposefully or inadvertently (through casual conversation), to any unauthorized person inside or outside the Agency. Furthermore, staff may not share confidential Agency information with anyone, except where required for a legitimate business purpose.

Agency information may not be removed from Agency property without permission from a supervisor or administrator with proper authority over the information. Ask your supervisor if you are not sure whether certain information is confidential.

Termination of Employment

- You may not use any confidential information gained from your employment with the Agency for your or another company’s benefit. You may not take copies of any reports, documents, or any other property belonging to the Agency.
- Upon termination of employment with the Agency, you must return all Agency property including, but not limited to, copies of documents, notes, and other records containing confidential information; computer disks; Agency ID; keys and credit cards.
**Information Security**

- You are responsible for properly using information stored and produced by all of the Agency’s computer systems.

- Computers, internet access, email, or other office communications systems are intended for business-related purposes only and not for uses that may be disruptive, offensive, harassing, or harmful to others.

- Do not share your system user name or password with another person or allow another to access the computer with your password.

- All employees and contractors are required to comply with Trinity Alliance’s information technology and security policies and procedures. If you have any questions concerning information security, contact the Compliance Officer.

- In the best interest of Trinity Alliance, if it is known that a breach has occurred, you must report this to the Compliance Officer immediately.

- In the case of a HIPAA breach, immediate notification will be sent out to all parties involved.

**Fair Dealing**

Conducting business with providers, contractors, suppliers, people we serve, and competitors may pose ethical problems. Employees and contractors are expected to deal fairly with providers, contractors, people we serve, and competitors.

The Code of Ethics/Conduct and the following guidelines are intended to help you make appropriate, responsible and correct decisions in these and all matters:

**Kickbacks and Rebate**

- Kickbacks and rebates in cash, credit, or other forms are prohibited. They are not only unethical, but in many cases, illegal.

**Gifts and Gratuities and Entertainment**

- You may not solicit money, gifts, gratitude, or any other personal benefits or favors of any kind from providers, contractors, producers, accounts, or people we serve and their families.

- You must not offer or accept entertainment that is not a reasonable addition to a business relationship but is primarily intended to gain favor or to influence a business decision.

**Agreements With Contractors and Vendors**

The Agency must assure that any agreements with contractors and vendors clearly and accurately describe the services to be performed or items to be purchased. Performance standards, and the applicable compensation, if any, must be reasonable in amount, not be excessive in terms of industry practice and must equal the value of the services rendered.
Improper Use of Funds or Assets

Use of the Agency’s funds or assets for any improper purpose is strictly prohibited. If you are aware of or have reason to believe that funds or assets are being improperly used, you must report this immediately to the Compliance Officer.

Federal and State Programs

Trinity Alliance is committed to complying with the laws and regulations that govern the federal and state programs that it administers. Policies and procedures, the Compliance Program, and this Code of Ethics/Conduct are developed to provide guidance in your day-to-day work. You must abide by the policies and procedures and the standards set by the Agency.

Governmental Investigations

There may be times that the Agency is asked to cooperate with an investigation by a federal or state governmental agency, or to respond to a request for information. A request may be formally addressed to the Agency or an individual within the Agency. Employees and contractors must report any requests for information or cooperation with an investigation to the Compliance Officer immediately.

Political Activities and Contributions

Because the Agency is a non-profit organization, it is prohibited from engaging in any political campaign activities and a “substantial” amount of lobbying.

Guidelines for Employees and Contractors

Agency funds and resources, including your work time, may not be used for political contributions or activities.

You may not act as a representative of the Agency in any political campaign activity. In expressing your personal political views or support or opposition of a candidate for public office, it must be very clear that you are expressing your personal view, support, or opposition as an individual and not a representative of the Agency.

Laws and regulations prohibit a “substantial” amount of lobbying. There are allowances for the Agency to advocate its position on public issues. To assure that the Agency does not violate any laws or regulations, or risk losing its tax-exempt status, you must seek prior approval from the Compliance Officer before engaging in any lobbying activities. The Compliance Officer may need to consult with legal counsel on the matter and will need to record the amount of time spent in lobbying activities.

Employment Environment

Trinity Alliance is committed to creating a safe and professional workplace where employees and others are treated with respect and without regard to their race, sex, age, religion, national origin, color, marital status, disability, or other protected characteristics. Business integrity, teamwork, trust, and respect are the Agency’s most important values.
Unlawful discrimination or harassment of any sort violates these values. All Agency employees must exhibit and promote respect, integrity, trust, and teamwork in the workplace and must comply with this policy prohibiting discrimination and harassment in all facets of the Agency’s work.

**Guidelines for Employees and Contractors**

All employees are required to support the Agency’s commitment to a safe and professional work environment and to demonstrate appropriate behavior in the workplace.

All employees are prohibited from joking about another employee’s race, sex, age, religion, national origin, color, marital status, disability, or other protected characteristics.

All employees are prohibited from considering someone’s race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, or other protected characteristic in making decisions about hiring, placement, assignment of duties, training, promotion, termination, compensation, benefits and other work terms.

Sexual harassment is prohibited. Sexual harassment includes any form of unwelcome sexual advance, request for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual or sex-based nature.

You are responsible for understanding the Agency’s policy prohibiting discrimination and sexual harassment. You should consult with an appropriate administrator if you have questions about your right to a workplace free from unlawful harassment or discrimination or if you have questions about your duty to avoid discrimination.

**Seeking Guidance and Reporting Violations**

Employees and contractors must report any actual or suspected fraudulent dealings, waste and abuse of services, or any violations of this Code of Ethics/Conduct, any applicable law or regulation, or any Agency policy and procedure to the Compliance Officer. A Compliance Hotline is also available for confidential or anonymous reporting of such issues. The Compliance Hotline number is (518) 449-5155 ext. 100.

When an actual or suspected violation of this Code of Ethics/Conduct, any applicable law or regulation, or any Agency policy and procedure is reported to any Agency employee, it must be promptly referred to the Compliance Officer. Steps will be taken to protect confidentiality and anonymity, when appropriate and warranted. The Agency will not tolerate any form of retaliation against a person who makes a good-faith report in accordance with this Code of Ethics/Conduct.

All employees and contractors must cooperate fully and honestly in any investigation into a reported violation of this Code of Ethics/Conduct, any applicable law or regulation, or Agency policy, procedure, or practice.
Corrective Action and/or Discipline

Any employee or contractor who violates or knowingly fails to report any violation of this Code of Ethics/Conduct, any applicable law or regulation, or Agency policy, procedure, or practice is subject to appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Disciplinary action may range from a warning to suspension or discharge, depending upon the nature of the incident and the relevant surrounding circumstances.

Your Responsibilities

✓ Attend required training, and read and understand Trinity Alliance’s Corporate Compliance Plan, Corporate Compliance Policies and Procedures, and Code of Ethics/Conduct.

✓ Follow the Agency’s Code of Ethics/Conduct and abide by all policies and procedures, guidelines, and Federal and State laws and regulations.

✓ Be alert to any situation that could violate the Agency’s Code of Ethics/Conduct, policies and procedures, guidelines, and/or federal and state laws and regulations.

✓ Promptly report any issues, concerns, violations or suspected violations the Compliance Officer, or the Chief Executive Officer.
Trinity Alliance of the Capital Region, Inc.
Code of Ethics/Conduct

I acknowledge having read Trinity Alliance of the Capital Region, Inc.’s Code of Ethics/Conduct and fully understand the expectations written within this document. It is understood that any employee or contractor who violates or knowingly fails to report any violation of this Code of Ethics/Conduct, any applicable law or regulation, or Agency policy, procedure, or practice is subject to appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

________________________________________  _________________________
Name (Printed or typed)                       Title

________________________________________  _________________________
Signature                                    Date