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MILWAUKEE COUNTY  
**DEPARTMENT OF  
HEALTH & HUMAN  
SERVICES**

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Owner Kathleen Flynn  
Post: Mental Health Board Research Analyst  
Policy Area Mental Health Board

## Mental Health Board Code of Ethics Policy

### 1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to describe the practices and procedures of the Mental Health Board to ensure that members adhere to a Code of Ethics to maintain high moral and ethical standards consistent with the best interests of government and the citizens of Milwaukee County.

### 2. SCOPE

All members of the Mental Health Board and related committees.

### 3. CODE OF ETHICS

The Code of Ethics for the guidance of Mental Health Board members: 1) prevents conflict between personal interests and public responsibilities; 2) maintains standards of public service; 3) promotes and strengthens public confidence in the Mental Health Board as oversight body for Behavioral Health Services (BHS).

The Bylaws of the Mental Health Board notes that board members shall be subject to the Code of Ethics for Public Officials and Employees as stated in Wisconsin Statutes, Chapter 19. Counties and municipalities may enact further ordinances. Mental Health Board members shall adhere to the **Milwaukee County Code of Ethics** as outlined in Chapter 9 of the General Ordinances: [Milwaukee County Code of Ethics](#)

*MHB members are subject to removal for cause and for engaging in any activity that disqualifies an individual from board membership pursuant to Wis Stat §51.41(1d)(i).*

## 4. PROCEDURES

Upon appointment to the MHB, Board Members must attest to receipt of the Code of Ethics by signature and complete an Ethics Training module.

MHB members shall provide a *Statement of Economic Interest* to the Milwaukee County Ethics Board within 30 days of appointment and on an annual basis thereafter.

Board Members may contact the Milwaukee County Ethics Board with questions about potential conflicts of interest.

Board Members are required to report potential violations of the Ethics Code including concerns regarding fraud, waste, and abuse. Any verbal or written ethics complaints of potential violations should be made directly to the Milwaukee County Ethics Board.

## 7. MONITORS

The Milwaukee County Ethics Board maintains annual financial *Statements of Economic Interests* on behalf of the MHB.

The Milwaukee County Ethics Board investigates complaints. Resulting actions may be reported to Mental Health Board Nominating Authorities (County Executive or County Board) as appropriate. (Refer to County Code Chapter 9 for complaints investigation information.)

Board members are subject to removal for cause and for engaging in any activity that disqualifies an individual from board membership pursuant to Wis Stat §51.41(1d)(i).

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## Attachments

[Instructions for Statement of Economic Interests.pdf](#)

## Approval Signatures

Step Description

Approver

Date

## Milwaukee County Mental Health Board Member Orientation Agenda

### 1. Welcome Session / BHS Programs & Services

Presenters: Mental Health Board Chairperson and BHS Administrator

- a) Mental Health Board Overview
- b) Behavioral Health Services Functions and Staff
- c) Current State of Behavioral Health Services Operations

Resources:

- Mental Health Board Orientation Packet

### 2. Mental Health Board Responsibilities & Liabilities

Presenter: Office of Corporation Counsel

- a) Review Mental Health Board Responsibilities per Wis Stat §51.41
- b) Public Meetings and Public Records
- c) Requests for Legal Opinions
- d) Legal Considerations in Service Delivery

Resources:

- Office of Corporation Council Responsibilities & Liabilities Memo

### 3. Financial Oversight

Presenter: DHHS Fiscal Administrator

- a) Quarterly Fiscal Information
- b) Behavioral Health Services Budget and Process
- c) Reserve Accounts and Fund Transfers
- d) Contract Review Process / Types of Contracts

Resources:

- Budget Training Slide Deck

### 4. Ethics Training

Presenter: Milwaukee County Ethics Board

- a) Review of Ethics Code
- b) Procedure for Reporting Potential Violations
- c) Statements of Economic Interest

Resources:

- [Ethics Introductory Training Module](#)
- [Harassment Awareness Module](#)
- [Building a Healthier Milwaukee Ep. 1](#)
- [Building a Healthier Milwaukee Ep. 2](#)
- [Building a Healthier Milwaukee Ep. 3](#)
- [Building a Healthier Milwaukee Ep. 4](#)
- Sample Statement of Economic Interest Form

## **5. Board Officers & Committee Chairs**

Presenter: MHB Vice Chairperson

- a) Overview of Board Officers
- b) Annual Elections Process
- c) Committee Chairs

## **6. Board Member Expectations**

Presenter: MHB Chairperson and Governance Chairperson

- a) Overview of Member Expectations

Resources:

- Member Expectations Policy

## **7. Meeting Procedures**

Presenter: TBD

- a) Review Robert's Rules for Meetings
- b) Agenda Setting and Minutes

## **8. Board Staff**

Presenter: Staff Introductions

- a) Board Staff Responsibilities

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## Mental Health Board Member Expectations

### Purpose:

This purpose of this policy is to set forth expectations for board service for each individual serving on the Mental Health Board.

### Scope:

All Mental Health Board Members.

### Policy:

#### 1. MENTAL HEALTH BOARD RESPONSIBILITIES

MHB members shall understand and encourage the successful implementation of the BHS mission, vision, and values as follows:

##### Mission

Behavioral Health Services, through early assessment and intervention, promotes hope for individuals and their families through innovative recovery programs in behavioral health, wellness, recovery, research and education.

##### Vision

Behavioral Health Services, through fostering strategic community partnerships, will become an integrated behavioral health system providing a dynamic, and comprehensive array of services, including community based, emergency, and acute services, to meet the behavioral health care

needs of individuals and families.

## Values

BHS services shall embrace the following values-based practices:

- Person-Centered
- Culturally Intelligent
- Trauma-Informed
- Stage Matched Recovery Planning
- Systems and Services Integration
- Recovery-Oriented
- Accessible
- Welcoming
- Co-occurring Capable

Mental Health Board responsibilities are outlined within *Wis Stat §51.41(1s)* as follows:

The Milwaukee County mental health board shall do all of the following:

(a) Oversee the provision of mental health programs and services in Milwaukee County.

(b) Allocate moneys for mental health functions, programs, and services in Milwaukee County within the mental health budget as defined in sub. [\(4\) \(a\) 2.](#)

(c) Make the final determination on mental health policy in Milwaukee County.

(d) Replace the Milwaukee County board of supervisors in all mental health functions that are typically performed by a county board of supervisors.

(e) Facilitate delivery of mental health services in an efficient and effective manner by making a commitment to all of the following:

1. Community-based, person-centered, recovery-oriented, mental health systems.
2. Maximizing comprehensive community-based services.
3. Prioritizing access to community-based services and reducing reliance on institutional and inpatient care.
4. Protecting the personal liberty of individuals experiencing mental illness so that they may be treated in the least restrictive environment to the greatest extent possible.
5. Providing early intervention to minimize the length and depth of psychotic and other mental health episodes.
6. Diverting people experiencing mental illness from the corrections system when appropriate.
7. Maximizing use of mobile crisis units and crisis intervention training.

(f) Attempt to achieve costs savings in the provision of mental health programs and services in Milwaukee County.

(g) Cooperate and consult with the department on recommendations for and establishing policy for inpatient mental health treatment facilities and related programs in Milwaukee County.

## 2. BOARD MEMBER SERVICE EXPECTATIONS

MHB members shall strive to meet the following expectations for board service:

### Meetings and Events

- Make attendance at all meetings of the board a high priority. The expectation is for board members to attend every MHB meeting unless excused by the Chair.
- Be prepared to participate in board strategic discussions and action votes by reviewing meeting agenda and supporting materials in advance.
- Actively raise issues and make recommendations during discussions of agenda items.
- Have a basic understanding of meeting format and procedures to participate effectively (Robert's Rules, etc.)

### Communication

- Communicate honestly.
- Act with compassion and respect in all interactions.
- Observe established lines of communication by directing requests for information, assistance, and board action to the Board Chairperson. The Board Chairperson sets the agenda for meetings.

### Committee Service

- Each board member is expected to serve on one or more committees to contribute to the work of the board.

### Informed Approach

- Be cognizant of the unique stewardship function of the Mental Health Board (and its corresponding responsibilities as outlined in *Wis Stat §51.41(1s) above*) on behalf of Milwaukee County residents.
- Understand BHS programs and services and their value to the community.
- Be familiar with the strategic priorities of Milwaukee County government and DHHS.
- Understand the legal issues which impact the delivery of services (Chapter 51, etc.).
- Perform board work with competence and maintain competency through continuing education to address knowledge gaps.
- Monitor behavioral health industry trends/issues and bring salient items forward for board consideration.

## Financial Oversight

- Have a basic ability to read and understand financial statements including quarterly reports, contracts, annual budget.
- Review financial statements and contract proposals prior to meeting discussion to be prepared for board action.
- Pro-actively request an explanation of terms that are not understood or believed to be unusual, incorrect, or outside of unacceptable ranges.

## Legal and Ethical Standards

- Uphold County, State and Federal laws as well as discipline-specific ethical codes of conduct.
- Respect the rights of all persons seeking mental health services.
- Make a commitment to understanding the link between race, government, and health in order to foster racial and health equity.
- Maintain confidentiality within the limits of the law.
- Provide the same quality level of service for all.
- Report fraud, waste, abuse, or neglect.
- Never allow personal interests to impact conduct, judgment, or decisions.
- Never allow the interests of third-parties or family, friends, or other personal relationships to influence conduct, judgment, or decisions.

## Policies and Procedures

- Be familiar with MHB and BHS policies and procedures to support active governance of Behavioral Health Services.
- Understand and support the leadership role of BHS Medical Staff.
- Recognize MHB role in high level oversight of employee-related matters.
- Understand the role of the MHB in executive performance review.

## Regulatory

- Understand at a high level the federal and state requirements which govern the delivery of services.
- Be aware of any current compliance issues.

## Cohesive Governance

- Cooperate with and respect the opinions of fellow board members. Avoid bringing personal agendas, biases, or prejudices into board discussions.
- Support the actions of the board even when holding a differing viewpoint.
- Represent the MHB and BHS in a positive and supportive manner at all times and in all places.
- Refrain from involvement in administrative issues except to set policies and monitor results. Understand the difference between governance and management.



## References:

*Wisconsin State Statutes Chapter 51.41*

*Mental Health Board Bylaws*

*Milwaukee County Code of Ordinances Chapter 9*

## Monitors:

Board meeting attendance will be monitored by Board Chairperson.

General complaints pertaining to a lack of fulfillment of board member responsibilities may be made to the Board Chairperson and/or Governance Committee.

Complaints pertaining to potential ethics violations should follow the Mental Health Board Code of Ethics Policy on file (Policystat #11644136).

Board members are subject to removal for cause and for engaging in any activity that disqualifies an individual from board membership pursuant to Wis Stat §51.41(1d)(i).

Approval Signatures

Step Description

Approver

Date

DRAFT