



## ETHICAL STANDARDS FOR LIFEWAYS

### Board of Directors, Staff, Network Providers, and Contractors

Members of LifeWays staff, network providers, and contractors (referred to as “members” throughout) are expected to adhere to ethical standards as defined and approved by the LifeWays Board of Directors and held in common by each discipline.

Per LifeWays Operating Procedure #9-04.02 Ethical Standards, minimally, members must abide by the following basic principles:

1. Members must respect the dignity and worth of each individual, striving for the protection and preservations of fundamental human rights and rights to mental health treatment per Public Act 258 of 1974, as amended.
2. Members shall not engage in activities that seek to meet the member’s need at the expense of the consumer. Dual/exploitative relationships with consumers must be avoided, such as providing service to relatives and/or friends, engaging in sexual intimacy, or borrowing money. The vulnerability of a consumer shall not be exploited. Members shall not befriend, lend money, provide gifts or engage in personal social activities with current LifeWays consumers. Such relationships with former consumers are prohibited prior to one-year post-discharge and are discouraged thereafter.
3. Members shall protect the integrity of the clinical decisions made in consumers’ treatment, by ensuring that decisions are made independent of any financial compensation/risk.
4. Members shall accurately represent their competence, education, training, and experience. Members shall reflect the commitment of their profession’s values and act ethically.
5. Members shall not misrepresent their services, qualifications or position to consumers. They shall fully inform consumers as to the purpose, nature, scope, and progress of treatment seeking the consumer’s full participation in the process.
6. Members shall make a continuous effort to improve professional skills by:
  - a) submitting to supervision;
  - b) review and evaluation;
  - c) being guided by the findings;
  - d) participating in in-service/continuing education;
  - e) seeking consultation/supervision when their skill level or personal objectivity is questionable, or the scope of practice is exceeded.
7. Members shall maintain cultural competency in the area of diverse ethnic groups and cultural groups.
8. Members shall not compromise or reduce the public trust in mental health professionals. Practices that are inhumane, illegal, or discriminatory are not permissible

9. Members shall abide by LifeWays' Treatment Protocols. Therapy techniques, which are not approved by LifeWays or are considered experimental, are not permitted. Research is not permitted outside the parameters of LifeWays' Board policy and Standards and Best Practice Guidelines.
10. Members shall be of good moral character.
11. Members shall respect the confidentiality of information as defined in Michigan Law and LifeWays' Board policies, taking special care to protect the "best interest" of the consumer.
  - a) Members shall not access confidential information of relatives, friends, acquaintances, etc.
  - b) When a consumer's condition indicates a clear and imminent danger to the consumer or others, the member must take reasonable action by notifying authorities.
12. Members shall not give or accept monetary gifts in any circumstances and non-monetary gifts in excess of \$25.00 in value to/from consumers or agencies connected with the performance of the member's job function. Employees do not accept gifts from vendors, suppliers, customers, potential employees, potential vendors or suppliers, or any other individual or organization, under any circumstances.
13. Members may discreetly and non-invasively solicit support of individual fundraising opportunities. Members shall not send LifeWays e-mails, make phone calls or otherwise distribute information soliciting contributions from LifeWays employees, consumers or visitors during work hours.
14. All legal documents shall be signed in the presence of a witness. Members shall be physically present when signing as a witness on any documentation.
15. Members shall demonstrate a regard for their colleagues through understanding areas of competence of other professionals, making use of all professional and technical resources that serve the best interests of the consumer, assigning proper credit to the professionals involved in an action, and by reporting known ethical violations of other staff/colleagues to the LifeWays' Office of Recipient Rights.
16. Members shall not commit fraud, abuse, waste, or other wrongdoing.
17. Members shall not use the LifeWays' affiliation to recruit consumers for a private practice, for church, or political party membership. Members shall not use the LifeWays' affiliation for personal fund raising.
18. Members must inform LifeWays of conditions that may be potentially disruptive or damaging or limiting clinical effectiveness.
19. Members shall be responsible for their personal property and recognize that LifeWays is not responsible for any lost or stolen personal property.
20. Members shall strive to assist LifeWays in the provision of quality services.
21. Members who accept a contract or employment imply agreement with the general policies, Standards and Best Practice Guidelines and ethical standards of the LifeWays' Board.

22. Members in a supervisory position may not enter into personal relationships with employees for whom they have any supervisory authority. Personal relationships include but are not limited to dating.
23. Members in a supervisory position are required to inform LifeWays of staff activity that could be considered potentially damaging to the agency or in violation of LifeWays policies and procedures, even if it is done by staff member whom they do not supervise. Members must inform the employees direct supervisor, and/or Human Resources.
24. Members in supervisory positions are prohibited from participating in the following with staff they oversee:
  - a. lending money,
  - b. sharing housing,
  - c. engaging in sexual activity.
25. Members in supervisory positions must be aware of the limitations of staff they are supervising helping them to acquire knowledge and skills for their professional development. Supervisory staff shall not ask staff to carry out responsibilities outside those they are privileged, trained, or licensed to perform.