



### INTRODUCTION

The Division of Senior and Disability Services (DSDS) is charged with the responsibility of providing aid and assistance to the elderly and adults with disabilities living in the state. One component of DSDS' operational responsibilities is the administration of Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) which align with the ethical and culturally competent standards of the Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS).

In coordination with the Department Director, the Division Director, and Deputy Division Director, DSDS staff have the opportunity to serve vulnerable individuals and have a positive impact on their quality of life. Understanding and adhering to ethical and culturally competent standards helps to ensure quality services are delivered.

It is the responsibility of DSDS staff to understand and follow the policies outlined in the HCBS Manual and the DHSS Administrative Policies. The [National Association of Social Workers \(NASW\) Code of Ethics](#) is an additional resource for DSDS staff.

### CODE OF ETHICS

DSDS staff shall implement the following ethical principles while interacting with participants, stakeholders and coworkers. DSDS staff shall:

1. Work to serve in the best interest of the participant;
2. Ensure a participant's rights of privacy, dignity, respect, and freedom from coercion and restraint;
3. Ensure a participant's HCBS optimizes individual initiative, autonomy, and independence in making life choices;
4. Ensure a participant is able to facilitate individual choice regarding services and supports, and who provides them;
5. Maintain professional interactions with participants and recognize potential placement of personal bias and values upon participant, stakeholders or coworkers;
6. Attain informed consent from the participant prior to assessing for HCBS;
7. Respect, verbalize, and explain the participant's right to confidentiality by utilizing the [DHSS Notice of Privacy Practices](#);
8. Endeavor to understand the vast cultural and linguistic diversity among participants and ensure proper cultural considerations are implemented;
9. Interact and communicate with participants in a clear, concise and easy to understand manner;

10. Encourage the inclusion of family or other informal support systems in the development of the Person Centered Care Plan (PCCP) or other decisions regarding HCBS;
11. Maintain professional boundaries by refraining from personal relationships, business arrangements or other possible conflicts with participants, stakeholders and coworkers;
12. Do no harm. Communication and interaction with participants, stakeholders and coworkers shall be conducted in a way that promotes the professional relationship and builds upon a strengths-based perspective.

DSDS staff shall understand, acknowledge and adhere to the DSDS Code of Ethics in conducting all state business. Any deviation from the Code of Ethics shall be subject to supervisory approval, up and including to the Division Director.