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Childhood Autism Therapies LLC  

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DBA "Childhood Autism Treatment Team"  

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**EMPLOYEE POLICIES &  
PROCEDURES  
MANUAL**

An employee reference manual for employees of

CHATT/CHAT

Updated January, 2014

### **Alcohol and Drug Use Policy**

It is our policy that all employees report to work free from the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs. Using, possessing, manufacturing, selling, or buying alcohol or illegal drugs during work time will result in automatic termination. CHATT reserves the right to terminate employment based on evidence of illegal drug use, even if that use occurs outside of work hours.

Families are not allowed to offer alcohol or other drugs to employees of CHAT/CHATT at anytime.

### **At-Will Employment Policy**

Employment in the State of Wisconsin is on an at-will basis which means that the employer/employee relationship may be terminated at any time by either party, with or without notice.

In order to ensure consistency of delivery of services to CHAT/CHATT clients, CHAT/CHATT requests employees provide adequate notice, to the extent possible, if they are terminating their position with CHAT/CHATT.

### **Attendance Policy**

All employees are expected to be at each client's home at the scheduled start time and begin working with the client immediately upon session start time. Employees are expected to stay for the entire length of session unless the Senior Autism Specialist and family have mutually agreed to a revised schedule.

Employees' are expected to work all of their scheduled sessions. If an employee is unable to report for their scheduled shift for any reason, the employee must contact the client to make them aware of the situation, as well as notify their Senior. In the event a session needs to be missed, employees are expected to contact other team members in an effort to find a replacement for the missed session. If an employee fails to properly notify the appropriate

parties regarding the absence, the absence will be considered a no-show and may result in corrective action, up to and including termination. All missed sessions should be documented on a missed session log kept in the binder.

Three missed sessions in one month requires a doctor's note to verify the reason and date for the absences. Failure to provide a doctor's excuse may result in corrective action, up to and including termination.

### **Background Checks**

In agreement with the State of Wisconsin, all employees are required to provide a current (within the past three years) background check upon hire and every four years (as stated in the Wisconsin Administrative Code HFS12) following. If employee doesn't have a current copy of their background check before beginning work, CHAT/CHATT will process a background check at employee expense of \$10 (subtracted from first paycheck). A copy of each background check will be kept in each employee's personnel file.

Failure to provide true and accurate information will result in immediate termination.

### **Boundaries**

Employees are expected to maintain professional boundaries with families at all times, including off work hours. Employees may not socialize with members of the clients' household outside of work hours. Employees may not conduct business transactions with members of the clients' household, nor loan or borrow money from members of the clients' household. Employees may not give gifts to or receive gifts from members of the clients' household. Employees should exercise care in the sharing of personal information with members of the clients' household. To maintain professional boundaries employees are not allowed provide childcare (with or without financial reimbursement) for a family for which they currently provide services.

### **Confidentiality**

CHAT/CHATT employees will consider their work and information obtained during the course of CHAT/CHATT employment confidential. Employees shall not access, review, discuss, alter or destroy client information except as necessary to fulfill CHAT/CHATT job responsibilities. Client information may be acquired verbally, or obtained in written or any other form.

### **Court/Legal Testimony**

CHAT/CHATT employees shall not take sides or participate in families legal battles, including divorce, child custody, school conflicts, or any other legal issue, nor respond as a legal witness or appear in court, *unless required by subpoena*. If subpoenaed, employee testimony provided must be limited to factual information. If asked for representation by a family member, employees should make this policy expressly clear to the family member(s), noting that they as employees can be terminated for voluntary participation in family legal conflicts.

### **Critical Incident Reporting** (See "Reporting").

### **Discipline and Performance Policy**

CHAT/CHATT considers the performance of its employees to be critical to the success of its clients. In the event that an employee's performance does not meet established CHAT/CHATT standards, CHAT/CHATT may put the employee on a performance correction plan, consisting of a verbal warning on first occurrence, followed by a written performance correction notice, and if not corrected, resulting in termination. In the event that an employee's actions place the client, or the client's relationship with CHAT/CHATT, in direct danger, CHAT/CHATT reserves the right to immediately terminate the employee.

### **Documentation**

All employees of CHAT/CHATT are required to clearly and specifically document every therapy session with each client. The therapist is responsible for collecting and recording data on all programs completed, writing a detailed session report (including specifics on behaviors, client gains, and client struggles) at the end of each session, and accurately signing in/signing out on timecards. All falsified documentation can be considered a felony.

All Senior Autism Specialists are required to collect and complete monthly timesheets at the end of each month. Senior Therapists are also required to complete a clear and detailed report every three months documenting all successes, challenges, changes for the past three months as well as specific goals for the following three months. Each three month report is due on the first day of the month it is required for submission. Three month reports are required to be signed by each client and the psychologist.

### **Dress Code**

In all situations where the employee is representing CHAT/CHATT, whether a public environment or privately with a client, the employee is expected to adhere to a professional standard of dress. This includes, but is not limited to, maintaining a well-groomed appearance, and avoiding clothing that is in bad condition, contains holes, rips, stains, references to alcohol, tobacco, and/or drugs, is overly revealing, or otherwise provides an unprofessional impression of CHAT/CHATT.

### **Equal Opportunity Employment**

Equal employment opportunity (EEO) is not only the law; it is also a core part of CHAT/CHATT's values. CHAT/CHATT is an equal opportunity employer and bases all employment decisions on an individual's performance, skills, and abilities.

It is our policy not to discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, color, sex, sexual orientation, religion, national origin, age, disability, veteran status, or any status protected by local, state, or federal law. This applies to all areas of employment such as recruitment, hiring, training, promotion, and terminations.

### **Harassment**

CHAT/CHATT is committed to providing equal employment opportunities in a professional work environment. All CHAT/CHATT employees are entitled to work in an environment that is free from discrimination, harassment, hostility, and intimidation. In addition to the CHAT/CHATT

Equal Employment Opportunity policy listed above, CHAT/CHATT takes harassment very seriously.

Harassment is unwelcome conduct that creates a hostile or offensive work environment and is based on characteristics such as gender, race, color, national origin, pregnancy, sexual orientation, age, religion, disability, veteran status, or any other characteristic protected by law.

Sexual harassment is unwelcome conduct of a *sexual nature* that would offend a reasonable person and interferes with an individual's work performance, or where an employee feels compelled to comply with a sexual or harassing request of a supervisor/client as part of continued employment, job betterment, or to avoid an adverse employment action.

Examples of conduct that could be harassing or discriminatory include, but are not limited to:

- Unwelcome physical contact
- Disparaging or derogatory comments
- The display or circulation of disparaging or derogatory pictures or other materials
- Disparaging or derogatory jokes and emails
- Leering, staring, or engaging in other unwelcome nonverbal behavior

### **Illness**

To ensure the health and well-being of CHAT/CHATT employees and clients, CHAT/CHATT may restrict employees for work if they have contagious illnesses. Employees restricted from working can return to work only when they are free from symptoms for 24 hours.

In the event a CHAT/CHATT employee will be missing work sessions due to illness, they must follow the Attendance Policy listed above to ensure there are no gaps in services to clients.

**Incident Reporting** (See "Reporting").

### **Inclement Weather**

It is the policy of CHAT/CHATT that in the event of inclement weather conditions where travel may be hazardous, the therapist is not required to risk their safety to attend the scheduled session. The therapist is required to contact each client and supervisor to report their absence and required to make every effort to make up the missed hours within the same month.

### **Mandated Reporting** (See "Reporting")

### **Mileage/Travel**

CHATT mileage/partials travel reimbursements are as follows:

- Line therapist travel is up to .5 hours/per day or individual session
- Senior therapists are reimbursed actual travel time up to 1 hour per visit.
- Psychologists are reimbursed actual travel time up to 2 hours per visit.

At this time, CHAT is reimbursing for travel in all circumstances (except for rare post-intensive/ongoing child cases where limited budgets make it prohibitive). This is subject to change at any time, especially if the state DHS decides to no longer reimburse travel.

### **Observation of Therapy**

CHATT strongly encourages families to monitor therapy at all times. If they so desire, families are encouraged at any time to install visual cameras or monitors in rooms in which therapy takes place, or to install visual-and-audio monitoring with the consent of at least one of the CHATT employees engaged in therapy. (Wisconsin state law prohibits the audio recording of conversations without consent of at least one party). Employees should understand that they may be visually monitored at any time during work hours, and can be visual-and-audio-monitored as described above.

### **Personnel Records**

CHAT/CHATT shall maintain personnel records of all employees. Personnel files shall consist of all employment documents, including, but not limited to, employment applications, resume,

background checks, performance evaluations, performance correction notices, and incident reports.

CHAT/CHATT will treat the information contained in an employee's personnel records as highly confidential, and will not share the information without prior consent to release the information from the employee.

With exception of reference check and confidential company documents, the employee shall have access to their personnel file by providing a request to CHAT/CHATT in advance, and paying a requires .25/page processing cost.

### **Reporting**

CHATT employees are subject to three types of reporting requirements: Incident Reporting (aka Critical Incident Reporting), Mandated Reporting, and Hospitalization/Arrest Reporting.

### **Incident Reporting**

CHAT/CHATT has established an incident reporting policy to outline the procedures and responsibilities related to reporting an accident, illness or incident which occurs during the course of a CHAT/CHATT employment session. It is everyone's responsibility to immediately report any accident, illness or incident.

If an incident occurs, (including but not limited to, injury to child, child escape, legal involvement, or parent drug/alcohol abuse) while working directly with the child, whether to a client or a CHAT/CHATT employee, immediately report the situation to your direct supervisor. If it is impossible for an employee to report the situation for any reason, the reporting of that situation should be done in an acceptable time frame, within 48 hours, and where possible witnesses should assist in reporting.

If the incident is of a serious nature, or requires medical attention, immediately take measures to secure medical treatment before reporting the incident. In emergency situations, do not allow the injured party to transport themselves.

If the incident directly involves a CHAT/CHATT worker, it is the responsibility of the employee's direct supervisor to maintain contact with the injured worker and to ensure that the contact is recorded in the employee's file. CHATT Incident Report forms are available on the CHATT website [Chattautism.com](http://Chattautism.com), from senior staff, or by contacting the business manager/admin.

### **Mandated Reporting**

All CHAT/CHATT employees are mandated reporters (under code s. 48.981(2)) and are required by law to report any suspected or threatened abuse or neglect. Employees are encouraged to discuss any incidents with Senior Staff, but reports must be made directly to the county child protective services hotline by the person who observes or suspects the abuse.

### **Hospitalization/Arrest Reporting**

CHAT/CHATT must report to the appropriate county service coordinator or waiver contact when a child is hospitalized or otherwise medically treated, whether the treatment occurs inside or outside of therapy time. Likewise, CHAT/CHATT must report to the appropriate county service coordinator or waiver contact when a child is arrested or otherwise undergoes legal action, whether the event occurs inside or outside of therapy time. CHATT line staff should contact their immediate supervisor, who will alert the Director.

### **Restraint Policy**

Employees are not permitted to seclude or restrain children, with the policy of seclusion and restraint being defined by the most recent Wisconsin DHS Guidelines and Requirements for the use of Restrictive Measures.

### **Sign-In**

Employees must sign the daily-log and/or timesheet for every work session. Sign-in is to the nearest 15 minutes. Improper sign-in or improper recording of hours can constitute medicaid fraud, and may be grounds for termination and prosecution.

**Training**

All CHAT/CHATT employees are required to have a minimum of 180 hours in direct experience working with persons with developmental disabilities. If the potential employee does not have direct experience upon hire they are required to complete 30 hours of training provided by CHAT/CHATT.

**\*\*All policies and procedures are subject to change at any time with or without written documentation\*\***

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The latest Policies & Procedures document will be available at [www.chattautism.com/Documents](http://www.chattautism.com/Documents)

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