

**Compliance Program  
including  
Code of Conduct**

United Regional Health Care System

Reviewed 08/2021

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## MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Dear Colleague:

At United Regional Health Care System (“United Regional”), our passion is to provide excellence in health care for the communities we serve, and our purpose is to make a positive difference in the lives of others. To fulfill our passion and purpose, our daily behaviors and activities must support our pillars of excellence – people, service, quality, finance, and growth.

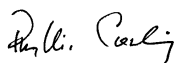
To further support our passion and purpose, we must ensure that we are each consistently acting within ethical and legal standards. As part of our commitment to compliance, we should each strive to build and maintain a culture of compliance and take steps to prevent, detect and respond to compliance concerns of any nature. United Regional is fully committed to compliance with the law and ethical standards. We believe that all members of our team should work collaboratively and respectfully to monitor and address each other’s performance and to provide input into the team’s work and decisions, regardless of tenure or position. The decisions we make and our treatment of patients, families, staff, volunteers and visitors will be in keeping with our passion and purpose. Our standards therefore apply to our interactions with patients, physicians, payers, vendors, consultants and each other.

United Regional has established a Compliance Program, which includes the *Code of Conduct*, to further these principles. The Compliance Program discusses certain laws as well as United Regional’s policies and behavior expectations. However, please remember that no written program or policy can cover all circumstances. We therefore ask that you carefully read this Compliance Program (including the *Code of Conduct*) to understand not only its written words, but its intent and meaning as well.

If you have any questions about United Regional’s Compliance Program, you should contact our Compliance Officer, Salvatore DiGennaro, at 940-764-8235. Alternatively, you can anonymously contact our Compliance Hotline by calling 940-764-2990. You are encouraged to ask questions and to report violations of the Compliance Program.

You can count on United Regional to provide the support and environment necessary to make our Compliance Program a success. Similarly, United Regional is counting on you to lead our organization by demonstrating support of, and commitment to, our Compliance Program.

Sincerely,



Phyllis Cowling  
President and CEO  
United Regional Health Care System

## **COMPLIANCE PROGRAM**

United Regional Health Care System (“United Regional”) is committed to ethical and lawful practices. United Regional includes the hospital, physician group, foundation, and other associated entities. The Compliance Program (“Program”) helps all employees, staff, and vendors carry out daily activities with integrity. The Program, which includes the Code of Conduct, helps us fulfill our Passion and our Purpose. It is important you read and understand the Program and know how it applies to you. The Program does not replace any other policies. Rather, it supplements other policies.

### **WHO MUST FOLLOW THE PROGRAM**

The Program applies to everyone who works for, or at, United Regional. This includes employees, contracted employees, physicians, volunteers, students, vendors, and others who provide services on behalf of United Regional.

### **PROGRAM STRUCTURE**

The Compliance Officer has primary oversight of the Program. The Compliance Officer reports to the President/CEO and the Board of Directors. The Compliance Officer will chair the Operational Compliance Committee. The Compliance Officer will create, maintain, and monitor success of the Program.

#### **Management Duties under the Program**

- Doing what is right and setting an example for others
- Holding themselves and employees liable for their actions
- Ensure all employees are following the Code of Conduct
- Maintain an environment where people can easily ask questions and raise concerns
- Keeping the Compliance department informed of compliance concerns

#### **Employee Duties under the Program**

- Read and review the Code of Conduct to understand your responsibilities
- Attend all training and education
- Follow all requirements set forth in the Code of Conduct
- Ask questions and raise concerns
- Know the Compliance Officer, staff, and how to reach them
- Understand there is no retaliation for reporting a concern
- Report suspected violations of the Program and Code of Conduct

#### **Organization Responsibilities under the Program**

- Develop, revise, and implement policies and procedures
- Having a responsible Compliance Officer

- Continuous education and training programs
- Maintaining a culture that supports the Program
- Identify, investigate, and respond properly to compliance issues
- Ensuring employees, staff, vendors, and business associates are trustworthy
- Protecting people who report compliance issues
- Report results of compliance activities to the governing body and senior leadership team

## HOW TO REPORT A CONCERN

We are committed to taking your concerns seriously. You have the obligation to report potential violations of laws, regulations, policy, or procedure. You are protected from retaliation if you make a report in good faith.

Our policies cannot protect you from penalties if you have broken the law or violated our policies. Some cases may subject you to corrective action. This may lead to possible state and federal actions and penalties.

Compliance is everyone's responsibility. Speak up when something isn't right. It is always the right thing to do even if you are not sure that a violation has occurred.

Contact HR for workplace concerns. Examples of workplace concerns include:

- Difficulties between you and a co-worker
- Scheduling or wage and hour disagreements
- Performance issues
- Discrimination
- Harassment

Contact Compliance for Compliance and Ethics concerns. Examples of Compliance and Ethics concerns include:

- Improperly billed or coded accounts
- Breach of privacy
- Falsified medical records
- Accepted travel lodging or gifts from a vendor

Human Resources may be reached at 940-764-7800.

The Compliance Officer may be reached at 940-764-8235.

The Compliance Hotline is 940-764-2990. This hotline is confidential and anonymous.

## CODE OF CONDUCT

The Code of Conduct sets forth how each of us is to act with the highest level of integrity. Compliance is everyone's responsibility. We are to act in accordance with ethical and legal standards.

The Code of Conduct is a vital part of the Compliance Program. We have created the Code of Conduct to ensure we provide quality patient care while also meeting ethical and legal standards.

The Code applies to everyone who works for, or at, United Regional Health Care System. This includes employees, contracted employees, physicians, volunteers, students, vendors, and others who provide services on behalf of United Regional. This also includes the Board of Directors.

If you ever have questions about your obligations under the Code of Conduct or Compliance Program, feel free to contact your supervisor, the Compliance Officer, or the Compliance Hotline.

We are committed to conducting business in accordance with all laws and regulations. Following the Code of Conduct will allow us to sustain a culture of honesty and integrity.

Resources are available to you if you need more information to understand your responsibilities:

1. Policies and Procedures can be found on the intranet
2. Compliance Program is managed by the Compliance Officer

The Compliance Hotline number is 940-764-2990. You may call this number any time to report compliance concerns. This hotline is anonymous and confidential.

## DOCUMENTATION, CODING, BILLING, & FINANCES

Maintaining accurate records helps us safely care for our patients and is vital for good business practice. We ensure billings to all payers are precise and comply with all laws and regulations. We routinely audit documentation, coding and billing practices to ensure proper practices. We will take necessary corrective actions if errors are found. Please ask for help if you have any questions about billing or coding matters.

## FALSE CLAIMS

We will not file false or fraudulent claims to any payers. We will not use false records or statements or keep reimbursement we are not entitled. The False Claims laws provide protection against retaliation for whistleblowers who file a False Claims Act action.

## CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

We require employees and health providers to report any financial relationships they may have. This disclosure may help avoid situations where a conflict of interest may exist. All employees and health care providers are required to report any conflicts of interest that may come up. A conflict of interest may include outside employment, personal investments, financial relationships, or business opportunities. We are committed to conducting business free of undue outside influence.

## GIFTS

We do not accept, offer, or provide gifts or favors to influence relationships or business outcomes.

## MARKETING AND ADVERTISING

Our marketing and advertising campaigns will reflect truth in advertising and align with our ethical standards. All communications will be truthful and will obey all federal and state patient privacy laws. These campaigns should be reviewed by the Compliance Officer.

## EXCLUDED PARTIES

We do not hire or conduct business with people or organizations that have been sanctioned by the Officer of Inspector General or appear on these lists:

- OIG's List of Excluded Individuals/Entities (LEIE)
- List of Excluded Individuals/Entities by the Texas Office of Inspector General
- General Services Administration

We conduct initial and routine screenings to ensure continued eligibility to participate in federal and state healthcare programs.

If an employee or provider is notified of, or becomes excluded from, participation in federal or state healthcare programs at any time, they must notify the Compliance Officer immediately.

## LICENSE AND CERTIFICATION RENEWALS

Everyone who requires a professional license must maintain active status and provide proof of their credentials. We will not allow anybody to work without a valid license if required for their position.

## CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

Employees and healthcare providers will come across confidential information that is privileged. We do not share confidential information unless it is needed to do our jobs or we are required by law. We do not share trade secrets with competitors. Please contact a member of the Senior

Leadership Team or the Compliance Officer when these situations occur. It is everyone's duty to maintain confidentiality.

#### COPYRIGHTS

We only use copyrighted materials in accordance with applicable laws. Everyone should be mindful of copyright and infringement laws.

#### ANTITRUST LAWS

Antitrust laws are designed to create a level playing field in the marketplace to promote fair competition. Talking about United Regional business with competitors may be a violation of these laws. Violations may lead to civil liability, imprisonment, monetary fines, and personal liability.

#### RECORDS RETENTION AND DESTRUCTION

We are required to create and maintain complete records. Falsifying records is illegal. Permanent entries should never be deleted. The law requires us to retain certain records for certain periods of time and we will comply with all applicable laws.

#### NOT-FOR-PROFIT TAX EXEMPTION

We are considered a not-for-profit tax exempt organization under the Internal Revenue Code. We will not operate for the benefit of private interests and no earnings will benefit a private individual. Our resources and assets should not be used for any purpose other than to meet our not-for-profit mission. Resources and assets may include time, staff, and materials. If somebody wishes to use resources for a non-United Regional purpose, then the CFO, CEO, and Compliance Officer must review and approve the use. This type of use will only be granted in certain settings on a restricted basis.

#### FUNDRAISING

Fundraising efforts allow us to provide needed services. Our fundraising efforts will be ethical. We will disclose relevant information to donors. We will always be truthful in our fundraising materials. We will comply with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act ("HIPAA") in regards to use of Protected Health Information ("PHI") for fundraising purposes.

#### QUALITY OF CARE AND PATIENT SAFETY

We will always treat patients and families with dignity, respect, and courtesy. We should not treat patients any differently based on race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or marital status. All patients are provided with service that is medically necessary and appropriate. All clinical decisions are based on healthcare needs.



Patients, families, and representatives will be given information to allow them to give informed consent before any procedure or treatment. The healthcare provider must inform patients about the plan of care, risks, benefits, and other options. We respect patients' rights to make informed decisions about treatment and to create advanced directives.

We strive to improve the quality and life of our patients and the community. Customer service to our patients is a system-wide effort.

If you ever have any concerns about providing high levels of quality care and safety, please raise this concern through your chain of command.

#### PATIENT INFORMATION

Protected Health Information ("PHI") must be treated with the highest degree of privacy. We take all precautions reasonably necessary to protect all sensitive information. We are committed to maintaining privacy set forth by HIPAA and Texas Medical Privacy laws. PHI will only be shared under permissible disclosures or with an authorization as described in the HIPAA Privacy Rule.

All discussions related to patients should be done privately and on a need-to-know basis. Patient privacy laws apply to past, present, and future health information. These privacy laws still apply when an individual leaves United Regional.

#### CHARITY CARE DONATIONS

We may provide services that are medically necessary regardless of ability to pay. We will not grant any routine discounts or waivers to patients based on their relationship with United Regional physicians, officers, or directors.

#### HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS

Stark laws prevent physicians from offering or receiving payments for the referral of patients to healthcare providers where they have a financial interest. There may be civil and criminal penalties for violating these regulations. We accept and make patient referrals based on patients' clinical needs and our ability to provide those services. We do not pay, solicit, or receive anything of value for the referral of patients or business.

The federal Anti-Kickback statute forbids individuals and organizations from giving anything to induce others to make referrals or receive business. We cannot accept anything of value such as gifts, bribes, kickbacks, or rebates.

A member of the Senior Leadership Team will review all relationships involving patient referral sources.

## **EMPLOYEE RELATIONS**

We are committed to providing equal opportunities in employment. We will not tolerate workplace harassment or violence. We strive to provide a safe workplace that promotes health and well-being. It is important that all employees and healthcare providers review all HR policies and ask questions if they have concerns.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

Each workforce member must annually acknowledge receipt of a copy of the Compliance Program (including the Code of Conduct) and understanding of their compliance responsibilities (e.g., sign a form).

**COMPLIANCE PROGRAM AND CODE OF CONDUCT**

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM**

I hereby acknowledge that I have read and reviewed the *Code of Conduct* of United Regional Health Care System (“United Regional”), and that I will abide by the *Code of Conduct* and all policies and procedures included in United Regional’s Compliance Program.

I understand the content of the *Code of Conduct* and how it applies to me, and I am fully aware that I must adhere to, and comply with, the letter and spirit of the Code of Conduct and United Regional’s Compliance Program or face disciplinary measures.

I also understand that neither the *Code of Conduct*, nor the Compliance Program, nor this document constitutes an employment contract between United Regional and me.

I will cooperate fully with United Regional and its Compliance Officer to the extent necessary or helpful in connection with efforts to comply with the *Code of Conduct* and Compliance Program policies and procedures.

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

TITLE: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date