

Disclaimer

This employee handbook has been prepared to give you general information about some of the work rules, work environment, and policies under which we operate. This handbook is not a contract, express or implied, guaranteeing employment for any specific duration, and merely sets forth Sky Lakes Medical Center's expectations for behavior within the organization effective on the date it was issued. This handbook may be amended at any time without prior notification. Both Sky Lakes Medical Center and employees have the right to terminate employment relationships at any time, with or without notice. This at-will relationship remains in full force and effect, notwithstanding any statements to the contrary made by Sky Lakes Medical Center employees or representatives, or set forth in any other document.

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PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY

Sky Lakes Medical Center is in the business of caring for and providing services to patients and their families. As a result, we have information considered personal and private, and often protected by law. We have an obligation to protect our patients' rights to confidentiality. Every employee is expected to honor, protect and maintain patient privacy and confidentiality.

While all departments providing patient care are involved in giving patients and their families information regarding tests and procedures whenever appropriate, such information must never be discussed in public areas such as corridors, lobbies, waiting areas or the cafeteria. Be particularly careful when discussing patients in care areas assuring that no one is present who does not have a need to know. Patients and family members with special needs, e.g., translators, interpreters, amplification devices, etc., will have those needs addressed by the appropriate department. Likewise, hospital business should not be discussed in public areas.

Only designated employees are authorized to release information concerning patients to the media. They will follow strict guidelines on what is released.

As an employee of Sky Lakes Medical Center you are expected to:

- Never discuss patient information in public areas;
- Interview patients and families in privacy;

- Hold all patient information in strictest confidence and on a “need to know” basis;
- Close curtains or keep a distance between patients during examinations, procedures and interviews;
- Close doors if available;
- Always knock before entering;
- Provide a robe or second gown when a patient is ambulating or in a wheelchair.
 - Provide sheets or blankets when transporting a patient;
 - When transporting patients on beds or stretchers, never allow them to be surrounded by other visitors or employees. If on an elevator, ask others to wait for another elevator.

APPEARANCE

Sky Lakes Medical Center’s commitment to excellence requires standards of personal and facility appearance that are consistent with the expectations of our organization. While on the Sky Lakes Medical Center campus or representing the medical center at off-campus functions, your manner and expression will convey your concern for and willingness to serve our patients and families. The way you dress, how you are groomed, and how well you maintain the facility reflects your respect for your customers, your community and each other. Accordingly, all employees need to take pride in their personal appearance, the facility appearance and the campus appearance to show respect for the environment and those we serve.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Your appearance represents the entire organization. While performing duties for Sky Lakes Medical Center, you are expected to dress in attire appropriate to the environment in order to best represent yourself and the organization. Your attire and grooming must be professional, tasteful and neat. Sky Lakes Medical Center policies pertaining to dress code, fragrances and jewelry will be followed. The policies can be found on the intranet.

As an employee of Sky Lakes Medical Center you are expected to:

- Always dress professionally;
- Follow the Sky Lakes dress code;
- Wear your photo identification badge according to Sky Lakes Medical Center rules at all times;
- Practice excellent personal hygiene at all times.

FACILITY APPEARANCE

We want to make the best first impression we can when our patients and families enter the medical center. We also want to ensure it is as safe an environment as possible. Accordingly, facility appearance and safety are the responsibility of every employee.

When you come across litter, make sure it is disposed of promptly and in the proper manner. It is everyone's responsibility to report spills and other hazards so that they can be properly addressed.

As an employee of Sky Lakes Medical Center you are expected to:

- Pick up and dispose of any litter found;
- Clean up and /or report spills and debris immediately;
- Assure all equipment is returned to its proper place.

RESPECTFUL ENVIRONMENT

Sky Lakes Medical Center is committed to the development and maintenance of a respectful environment that promotes personal and team excellence, exceptional patient care and compassion for all we serve.

COMMUNICATION/ INFORMATION SHARING

The goal of communication is understanding. We must be committed to listening attentively to our patients and families in order to fully understand their needs. Pay close attention to both verbal and non-verbal communication. Our messages to patients and families should be delivered with courtesy, clarity and care. We must avoid confusing them with jargon and speak in terms they can easily understand. Remember to use a sincere welcome and greeting to patients, families and coworkers; make eye contact and smile. Introduce yourself to the patient and family members so they can feel more comfortable when they ask you questions.

Calmly explain to your patients and their families what you will be doing regarding their care before you do it. This will help them be more confident in a strange environment. This is particularly true when explaining reasons for delays.

Internal communication is critical. You will be diligent in communicating information that is important to the success of the organization.

As an employee of Sky Lakes Medical Center you are expected to:

- Greet patients, families and co-workers with a warm and friendly “hello”;
- Promptly introduce yourself when engaging in conversation;
- Say “please” and “thank you” and be respectful in all conversations;
- In patient care areas, address patients according to their wishes. The use of “Mr.,” “Mrs.,” or “Ms.” is appropriate until you receive permission to address patients by their first names;
- Listen to the concerns of patients and their families in ways that show them you care;
- Use easily understood and appropriate language when giving patients information about health, special diets, tests, procedures, medication and the like. Avoid technical or professional jargon whenever possible;
- Appropriately pass information on to co-workers and supervisors;
- Collaborate with physicians to reinforce the information provided to patients;
- Always ask customers, “How can I be of further assistance?”

CUSTOMER WAITING

At Sky Lakes Medical Center, we recognize time is valuable. Therefore, we strive to provide prompt service, keep patients and families informed of delays and make them comfortable while they wait.

As an employee of Sky Lakes Medical Center you are expected to:

- Educate patients and family members about the process. Family members may need, for example, to be reminded that procedures may not begin as soon as the patient enters the area;
- Provide a comfortable atmosphere for waiting patients and families, offering refreshments and reading material;
- If it becomes apparent that a scheduled exam or procedure will be delayed inform the patient and family prior to the appointment;
- When delays continue, update the patient and family at least every 15 minutes;
- Apologize if there is a delay longer than 10 minutes, which is considered an acceptable waiting time. If appropriate and the procedure can be rescheduled, offer a new appointment;
- Update family members periodically while the patient is undergoing a procedure;
- Always thank patients and families for waiting.

TELEPHONE ETIQUETTE

When answering the telephone, use a cheerful, courteous and unhurried voice to communicate competence and professionalism. Properly identify your department and yourself. As always, use “please,” “thank you,” and “goodbye”. Your message for your voice mail should be kept short and to the point. Remember to return calls promptly.

As an employee of Sky Lakes Medical Center you are expected to:

- Be able to operate the telephones in your area;
- Answer the telephone in three rings whenever possible;
- Use a friendly, courteous and unhurried tone of voice, as your tone of voice communicates your willingness to help, your professionalism and friendliness;
- Answer calls by identifying your department and yourself;
- Get permission before putting a caller on hold. Remember to thank the caller for holding when you return to the call. Callers on hold should be periodically acknowledged, given the status of their call, and asked if they wish to continue to hold.

E-MAIL ETIQUETTE

Face-to-face is generally considered to be the best way to communicate, but it is not always possible.

As an employee of Sky Lakes Medical Center, when you must use e-mail you are expected to:

- Communicate with your most direct leadership member first;
- Be professional and careful about what you say as e-mail is easily forwarded;
- Be careful about sarcasm and humor in e-mails so your joke is not viewed as criticism;
- Refrain from typing your entire message in all capital letters. Similarly, do not use upper case to prove your point. This may be considered shouting and could offend the reader;
- Read your message before sending it, ensuring that you are communicating what you intended.

COURTESY

We all want to have a good work environment, and that requires us to be courteous and cordial to patients, their families, and co-workers. Patients and families usually indicate they are more satisfied with the care when competent service is delivered with courtesy.

Courtesy also means being encouraging and supportive of patients, families and co-workers. Everyone should be eager to assist and demonstrate a positive attitude. The words “I care,” “I appreciate,” and “thank you” are always appropriate.

As an employee of Sky Lakes Medical Center you are expected to:

- Offer to escort patients and families to their destination rather than just giving directions. If unable to personally serve as an escort locate someone who can;
- Use the elevator as an opportunity to make a favorable impression. Smile at and speak to fellow passengers;
- When transporting patients in wheelchairs, always face them toward the elevator door;
- Make room for others on the elevator;
- Hold the door or “door open” button for patients, families and co-workers;
- Do not monopolize the space in the middle of the elevator;
- Allow patients and families to be near the elevator door;
- If escorting a patient and family, hold the door open and allow them to enter and exit first.

SMOKING

In order to provide a healthy environment for patients, visitors and staff, Sky Lakes Medical Center is a “smoke-free” environment and maintains a tobacco-free campus. Accordingly, smoking is prohibited in or near the hospital.

COMMITMENT TO CO-WORKERS

As Sky Lakes Medical Center employees, we are linked to one another by a common purpose: serving our patients and their families. Our co-workers are our teammates in this endeavor. They deserve our cooperation and respect. Without every employee's contribution, none of us could do our jobs. We want to maintain a professional, respectful and safe working environment.

As an employee of Sky Lakes Medical Center you are expected to:

- Follow the "Golden Rule" by treating others the way you would like to be treated;
- Treat one another with courtesy and respect. Rudeness is never appropriate;
- Treat every co-worker as a professional. Recognize we each have an area of expertise;
- Show consideration and be sensitive to co-workers' inconvenience. Consider another's priorities in addition to your own. Be considerate of other's time. This includes care of your work area and keeping scheduled commitments;
- Be tolerant of fellow employees. Professional courtesy is expected. Set aside differences when working together;
- Treat today's problems in a way that will make dealing with co-workers easier in the future. Treat today's successes as a way to build future successes;
- Be supportive of fellow employees. Constantly look for ways to help others. Cooperation is expected in the workplace;

- Show co-workers genuine human kindness and concern;
- Let each person know that their contributions are valued;
- Look for opportunities to recognize those things a co-worker really does well;
- Do not miss any chance to give thanks for a job well done;
- Express genuine concern for the viewpoints and needs of other co-workers;
- Show support for co-workers with words and actions;
- Be honest during all interactions with co-workers;
- Respect the privacy of co-workers.

SENSE OF OWNERSHIP

All Sky Lakes Medical Center employees must feel a sense of ownership toward their jobs and take pride in what they do. Everyone should feel responsible for the outcome of their efforts, and recognize their work as a reflection of themselves, their co-workers and the organization.

As an employee of Sky Lakes Medical Center you are expected to:

- Know and understand the responsibility of your job. Take charge of and accept your responsibilities, and be accountable;
- Focus on the needs of patients and families, meet their needs as soon as possible;
- Keep your work areas and surrounding environment clean and safe;
- Look beyond your assigned tasks;
- Strive to do your job correctly and complete tasks in a timely manner;
- Pay attention to detail;
- Conduct yourself in a professional manner;
- Live the values of the organization.

HARASSMENT

Sky Lakes Medical Center has a zero-tolerance for harassment. Excellent service is best delivered in an environment that is professional, respectful and safe. See Sky Lakes Medical Center Policy for details.

SERVICE RECOVERY

Complaints are an opportunity to make things right and for service recovery, Sky Lakes Medical Center employees are expected work to follow the **L.A.S.T.** process: Listen to the concern, Apologize for the event, Solve/ or acknowledge the issue, Thank the person for bringing the issue to your attention. Inform the patient or family of your plan to solve the issue. To support this process each department has a *“Star Service-Recovery Kit”* with more information and the tools to help you be successful. Our challenge is: *“If our customers could choose us, would they choose us?”* Providing excellent service, and offering service recovery when appropriate, is paramount in making our customers want to choose Sky Lakes Medical Center for their healthcare needs.

As an employee of Sky Lakes Medical Center you are expected to:

- Listen without becoming defensive, blaming others or making excuses;
- Express empathy and understanding to the patient and family;
- Apologize to the patient and family;

- Take action by fixing the problem if possible. If not, forward the complaint or concern to the person who can address it;
- Communicate to the patient and family what steps are being taken and when to expect a response.

WHAT IT MEANS

We treasure our role as health-care providers, however we see our duty to our community as more. We believe Sky Lakes Medical Center and employees are partners with the community in social and economic issues as well as healthcare issues.

We consider ourselves a vital asset that continually strives to make the communities we serve better places to live and raise families. Our goal is to provide top quality in every aspect of patient care and support, and emphasize friendly, personalized service. We encourage patients to become active participants in their own care and pursue constant improvement in that care.

Sky Lakes Medical Center VISION

We aspire to create healthier communities through our efforts and by engaging others in building new visions and models of care.

Sky Lakes Medical Center

MISSION

Sky Lakes Medical Center will continually strive to reduce the burden of illness, injury and disability, and to improve the health, self-reliance and well-being of the people we serve. We will demonstrate that we are competent and caring in all we do. We shall endeavor to be so successful in this effort that we will become a pre-eminent healthcare center.

Sky Lakes Medical Center

VALUES

Our Patients

We work to consistently offer competent care sensitively delivered to all who enter our doors. We are genuinely interested in making it better for those we serve, and we work to earn our patients' trust by satisfying needs and respecting confidentiality.

Our Professionals

We believe that the "family" of staff is our strongest asset. Therefore, we regard all our people as professionals. We believe that our total service is based on a collection of experiences with many professionals. We also recognize that this means making sure our professionals are part of the information stream of the organization, both in receiving and disseminating current and valid information.

Excellence

We care about what we do and take pride in excellence. We expect individual commitment and a demonstration of competency in all that we do. We also expect Sky Lakes Medical Center's values to be upheld and promoted positively within our community.

Our Future

We are challenged and excited by the positive changing health care marketplace. We recognize this is a unique time when innovative and effective new services will change our neighbors' lives. It's an adventure and we're in it together. Therefore, we encourage creativity and acceptance of change among our professionals.

Leadership

We recognize that the best leadership is built on listening, trust and respect for the dignity and creative potential of each professional. It is the responsibility of our leadership to create a productive environment where our shared values flourish.

Team Spirit

Teamwork is essential to our success, for the need is too great to be met by any one person. Individuals are encouraged to interact with all levels of the operation, sharing ideas and suggestions to improve our effectiveness and efficiency toward maintaining a financially strong and viable organization.

Our Community

Beyond our contribution in health care, we also recognize our role as a good corporate citizen of our service area, our state and nation. We strive to be an economic, intellectual and social asset in the communities we serve.

Good Health

As health care professionals, the appropriateness of being fit and well, neat and clean is clearly important. As health-motivated individuals, we strive to set a positive example for our patients and our community.

Name: _____

Director: _____

Initials: _____

Initials: _____

Date: _____

*I hereby acknowledge that I have
read and fully understand all the
information in this Standards Guide.*

Name: _____

Date: _____

Signature: _____