****Code of Ethics

**template**

How to use this template

This code of ethics template contains 28 sections that can be edited, rewritten, replaced or adapted to meet the needs of your company. Each section contains a brief instruction, which you can delete, followed by an example of the text you may wish to include in the section. The table of contents can be updated to reflect any changes you make in the document. New sections headers should be designated as “header 2” to ensure they are included in the table of contents when you update it.

The footer in the document contains the i-Sight logo. This is editable and can be replaced with your own company logo, alternate text, or nothing at all.

writing your CODE OF CONDUCT

Here are some resources to help you write your code of conduct. Before you begin, read the following articles:

* [10 Tips for Writing an Amazing Code of Ethics](https://i-sight.com/resources/10-tips-for-writing-an-amazing-code-of-ethics/)
* [What’s the Difference Between a Code of Conduct and a Code of Ethics?](https://i-sight.com/resources/whats-the-difference-between-a-code-of-conduct-and-a-code-of-ethics/)
* [Best Practices: Code of Ethics](https://i-sight.com/resources/best-practices-code-of-ethics/)

Message from the CEO/President/Founder

Include a message about the company’s commitment to ethics and the importance of ethical behavior to both company-wide and individual success.

*Read this* [*example from Baptist Health South Florida*](https://pspaprd.baptisthealth.net/pa_content/HR_ONBRD_Code_of_Ethics_Brochure.pdf)*:*

*Among the many reasons people are attracted to work at Baptist Health is our high ethical standards. Over the years, we have developed and nurtured a corporate culture of integrity. We expect all employees to behave in a manner that reflects these high standards. Integrity begins at the top — with our mission statement and our Board of Trustees.*

*Our mission statement describes why Baptist Health exists — our purpose — and the corporate values we hold near and dear. It describes the importance of putting our patients first, above all else, and our commitment to the core values of honesty, integrity and transparency. These are the cornerstones of our corporate culture. Our Board of Trustees provides oversight of the decisions and actions of management to ensure that they are consistent with our mission and in the best interests of our community and our patients.*

*In order to communicate our ethical standards to all employees, physicians, vendors and Board members, we have developed our Code of Ethics. The Code provides guidance regarding the standards Baptist Health has adopted and, most important, communicates our expectations that all stakeholders will adhere to these standards. Within the Code you will find information regarding our nonretaliation policy and your responsibility to report any situation that you believe may violate our Code of Ethics. Every employee should review the Code of Ethics on an annual basis.*

*Throughout the healthcare industry, ethical organizations such as Baptist Health have established corporate compliance programs to promote ethical behavior and investigate allegations of wrongdoing. At Baptist Health, the Audit and Compliance Department, under the direction of the Chief Compliance Officer, assists the Baptist Health Board with its oversight responsibilities. The department reports directly to the Board’s Audit and Compliance Committee — not to management. When necessary, the department conducts its own independent investigations of problems that come to its attention, including anonymous calls to the Baptist Health Compliance Hotline.*

*We also have embraced a philosophy of full transparency in all of our governance, operational and business dealings. I have always made it my policy to keep the Baptist Health Board and Executive Committee fully informed of everything that occurs within Baptist Health — both the good and the bad, our accomplishments as well as our mistakes. With all of management’s actions and decisions “in the sunshine” and fully transparent, our governing Board members can continue to confidently exercise their oversight responsibilities — and sleep well at night.*

*Brian E. Keeley*

*President and Chief Executive Officer*

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## **Purpose and Scope**

Explain why you’ve written the code of ethics and who it applies to (e.g. employees, managers, executives, contractors, suppliers).

*For example:*

*The purpose of this Code of Ethics is to provide ethical guidance for confusing or controversial situations. This document explains how [Company Name]’s ethical standards and core values should inform business decisions made within or on behalf of the company.*

*[Company Name]’s Code of Ethics applies to employees at every level. In addition, to uphold our ethical standards, we will hold all vendors, contractors, suppliers, interns, temporary workers and volunteers to these guidelines as well.*

## **Our Ethical Standards and Core Values**

List your company’s core beliefs and values.

*For example:*

*At [Company Name], we operate around five core values:*

* *Honesty*
* *Courage*
* *Respect for others*
* *Accountability*
* *Obedience to the law*

## **Decision Making Under the Code of Ethics**

Provide guidance on ethical decision making in the workplace.

*For example:*

*When making a decision within or on behalf of [Company Name], ask yourself the following:*

* *Does it comply with relevant laws and regulations?*
* *Does it comply with the code of ethics and other internal policies?*
* *Does it reflect [Company Name]’s values and ethical standards?*
* *Does it respect the rights of others?*
* *If you are unsure about any of the answers, ask your manager or a Human Resources staff member for further guidance.*

## **Reporting an Incident**

In this section, outline your company’s whistleblowing policy and provide multiple ways for employees to report concerns or breaches of the code of ethics. If possible, at least one of these methods should be anonymous and available 24-7, such as an ethics hotline.

*For example:*

*[Company Name] encourages all employees to ask questions and raise issues without fear of retaliation and is committed to treating reports seriously and investigating them thoroughly.*

*Employees are required to report suspected unethical, illegal or suspicious behavior immediately. The company does not tolerate retaliation against anyone who makes a good faith report or otherwise assists with an investigation or audit.*

*To report an ethics breach, incident or concern:*

* *Talk to your manager*
* *Contact Human Resources at (555) 555-5555 or hr@company.com*
* *Contact the Ethics and Compliance office at (555) 555-5556 or ethics@company.com*
* *Call the anonymous ethics hotline at 1-800-555-5555*
* *Submit a confidential and/or anonymous report online at www.companyreportingportal.com*

## **Honesty**

In this and the following sections, describe how each value or standard should guide employees’ behavior.

*For example:*

*At [Company Name] we value honesty, transparency and integrity in all aspects of our work. We will* ***not****:*

* *Lie, cheat or deceive others to get ahead*
* *Steal from or otherwise defraud the company, vendors or other employees*
* *Sacrifice the company’s values, ethical standards and mission in the name of success*

*We* ***will****:*

* *Disclose conflicts of interest*
* *Freely share information with other employees if it could impact their work*

## **Courage**

Give clear examples and guidelines for each standard or value. If the “will” and “will not” format doesn’t fit your brand, try a question and answer setup or example scenarios.

*For example:*

*At [Company Name], employees must be courageous enough to step out of their comfort zones. This applies not only to innovation in their work tasks, but also making tough decisions. We* ***will not:***

* *Accept bribes, kickbacks or gifts from vendors, even if we have worked with them for years*
* *Hire employees or vendors that we have a personal connection to because it is “easier” than properly researching the options*

*We* ***will****:*

* *Report suspected or witnessed wrongdoing of other employees*
* *Ask questions when we aren’t sure if a decision fits [Company Name]’s ethical standards*
* *Admit when we make mistakes and accept the consequences*

## **Respect for Others**

Use “we” and “us” rather than “you” language. This gives employees a feeling of belonging to something bigger and shows that employees at every level must follow the Code of Ethics.

*For example:*

*[Company Name] values respect and kindness towards others, including not only other employees, but vendors, partners, visitors and temporary workers as well. We* ***will not****:*

* *Act physically, mentally or emotionally violent towards others*
* *Discriminate against others based on race, religion, age, gender or other protected status during work tasks or while making hiring and firing decisions*
* *Dismiss or make fun of others’ ideas and work*

*We* ***will****:*

* *Treat others as we would like to be treated*
* *Act politely towards everyone, regardless of tenure or position*
* *Report harassment, discrimination, bullying and violence incidents that happen to us and that we witness*

## **Accountability**

If you have a separate Code of Conduct, don’t feel like you need to include all of the same information in your Code of Ethics. Instead, use this document as a supplement that ties conduct rules to ethics.

*For example:*

*[Company Name] strives to balance teamwork with employee independence. While we support our colleagues, each employee is ultimately responsible for their own actions. We* ***will not****:*

* *Make other employees’ work harder for them, either intentionally or unintentionally (e.g. “slacking off,” sabotaging work)*
* *Blame others for our mistakes*
* *Ask for help when we are struggling or confused*

*We* ***will****:*

* *Admit to mistakes and failures and find ways to fix them*
* *Help and support coworkers to the best of our abilities*
* *Seek out ways to improve our skills*

## **Obedience with the Law**

Explain how your company’s ethical standards work alongside compliance.

*For example:*

*Ethics and compliance go hand in hand. At [Company Name], employees must follow not only our ethical standards, but also adhere to all relevant laws and regulations. We* ***will not****:*

* *Knowingly break laws and regulations while fulfilling workplace responsibilities*
* *“Look the other way” when we witness others breaking laws or regulations*
* *Steal, leak or otherwise expose proprietary information, customer data or other confidential information*

*We* ***will****:*

* *Stay up to date with new and changing laws and regulations that apply to our work*
* *Report lapses to the [insert relevant internal department here]*
* *Ask the legal department for help when drafting contracts, disclaimers and other documents*

## **Code of Ethics Acknowledgement**

This is where employees should sign off that they’ve received, read and understood the document.

*For example:*

*By certifying to the company code of conduct, I acknowledge that:*

* *I have read the entire code of ethics and understand your responsibilities related to it.*
* *I have had the opportunity to ask questions to clarify any unclear aspects of the code.*
* *I agree to abide by its principles.*
* *I agree to report to the company any violations of the code.*
* *I agree to cooperate in any investigations of violations of the code.*

*Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*

*Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*

*Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*