

RESPONSIBILITY TO THE COMMUNITY

As a NORA staff person or Mentor/Peer Leader I will:

- ☞ Combat the stigma of addiction within society through education and example.
- ☞ Advocate for changes in addiction services to improve care and social justice for individuals suffering from addiction.
- ☞ Remember that NORA peer-driven services are funded by federal funds and are responsible to use those funds to serve those in the recovery community.



***Designing Specialized Services
to Support Recovery and Prevent Relapse***

Code of Ethics

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NORA Code of Ethics

OVERVIEW

The *NORA Code of Ethics* is intended to serve as a guide to the conduct of NORA Mentor/Peer Leaders and Staff. The *Code* includes two parts. The first part, “Ethical Principles” provides an overview of NORA’s ethical principles based on focus groups determination of values for the organization. The second part “Ethical Standards” provides ethics based guidance for behavior within the organization. This information can help program Mentors/Peer Leaders and staff determine what is appropriate behavior in difficult situations and provides a guideline for staff to use in determining possible inappropriate behavior to be handled.

NORA is a multi-county agency providing services in Cuyahoga, Summit and Lorain counties to improve the recovering community members’ overall quality of life. NORA’s purpose is to empower recovery community members from among the areas diverse recovering population to deliver culturally competent peer-to-peer recovery support services in order to:

- ☞ Prevent Relapse*
- ☞ Promote long-term recovery from substance abuse/dependence and*
- ☞ Enable full integration into the larger community*

This Code of Ethics is adapted from the NASW Code of Ethics (1996), Justice in Mental Health Organization Inc. Code of Ethics and The Register of Addiction Specialists Code of Ethics.

- ☞ Protect participants from unethical conduct by those in the treatment and recovery community.*
- ☞ Work together as a group of equals.*
- ☞ Work to represent all in the recovery community.*
- ☞ Do my best to make NORA belong to the recovery community.*
- ☞ Be responsible to NORA and its staff.*
- ☞ Maintain credibility.*
- ☞ Maintain the conditions, rules and expectations for participation in NORA to protect the rights of participants and the recovery community.*
- ☞ Accept, without discrimination all individuals associated with NORA regardless of race, color, national origin, height, weight, age, sex, sexual preference, marital status or disability.*

☞ Treat participants equally, showing no preference to anyone, treating everyone as your peer and equal.

☞ Be a role model to others.

RESPONSIBILITY TO THE ORGANIZATION

As a NORA staff person or Mentor/Peer Leader I will:

☞ Respect the rights and views of fellow Mentors/Peer Leaders and NORA Staff.

☞ Maintain respect for institutional policies and management within the agency and take initiative to improve such policies if it is in the best interest of the recovery community.

☞ Uphold the concept, principles and practice of peer-driven services in the recovery community.

☞ Work to prevent discrimination, injustice and violation by or within the organization.

☞ Use the organization's power, resources and assets only in the pursuit of helping those in recovery.

☞ Advocate for better treatment, recovery services, opportunities and acceptance for those in the recovery community.

Ethical Principles

The following ethical principles are based on the core values of the Northern Ohio Recovery Association. These values are recovery first, participatory process, authentic recovery community voice, leadership development and cultural diversity.

Value: *Recovery First*

Ethical Principle: *NORA's primary guiding principle is to promote recovery for all; Mentors/Peer Leaders and participants of services to provide overall well-being and quality of life.*

NORA staff and Mentors/Peer Leaders make their individual recovery a priority each day. They draw on their own personal recovery knowledge, values and skills to help people in and striving toward recovery. Staff and Mentors/Peer Leaders are expected to maintain their own recovery and seek help if needed.

Value: *Participatory Process*

Ethical Principle: *NORA Staff and Mentors/Peer Leaders will make participation by the recovery community accessible to all.*

NORA Staff and Mentors/Peer Leaders pursue ways to make services available to all. They encourage participation of others in the recovery community, either as Mentors/Peer Leaders or participants in service.

Value: *Authentic Recovery Community Voice*

Ethical Principle: *NORA Staff and Mentors/Peer Leaders practice tolerance and embrace diversity.*

NORA Staff and Mentors/Peer Leaders provide a “safe” environment for all to voice their opinions, ideas and thoughts. NORA offers cultural diversity training and encourages those in the recovery community to recognize many pathways to recovery.

Value: *Leadership Development*

Ethical Principle: *NORA provides leadership opportunities for those in the recovery community.*

NORA staff is committed to providing training to those in the recovery community in areas such as anger management, parenting skills, job search skills, general life skills and other training to aid in leadership development.

Value: *Cultural Diversity*

Ethical Principle: NORA Staff and Mentors/Peer Leaders value all in the recovery community from all races, backgrounds and recovery experiences.

- ☞ Not exploit relationships with others for personal gain.
- ☞ Not sexually exploit or harass participants.
- ☞ Allow participants to make their own decisions and choices in regards to their own lives.
- ☞ “Do with” or “assist” others in helping themselves, not “do for” them.
- ☞ Safeguard the interests and rights of participants and the recovery community.
- ☞ Not act in any way that violates the civil, legal, and ethical rights of others.
- ☞ Maintain confidentiality and privacy of participants and the recovery community.
- ☞ Treat others with respect, fairness and honesty.
- ☞ Use a strengths perspective. View all individuals as capable human beings with rights, feelings and value. No individual should be viewed as chronic, incapable or less than who they are.
- ☞ Accept participants as who they are where they are and what they are regardless of personal opinions.

RESPONSIBILITY TO PARTICIPANTS

As a NORA staff person or Mentor/Peer Leader I will:

- ☞ Maintain individual responsibility for myself in regard to my conduct and contact with participants.
- ☞ Maintain a commitment to provide authentic services to those I mentor or lead.
- ☞ Be willing to recognize when it is in the best interest of the participant to refer them to a professional for help or other mentor for support.
- ☞ Hold information shared with me confidential (within the agency staff) unless a participant is harming or has the intention to harm themselves or someone else.
- ☞ Accept, without discrimination all participants regardless of race, color, national origin, height, weight, age, sex, sexual preference, marital status or disability.
- ☞ Put the needs of participants first in all actions or situations.
- ☞ Act to prevent actions that are harmful or discriminatory to those in the recovery community.

NORA staff and Mentors/Peer Leaders include individuals using 12-step programs, faith based programs, medicine assisted recovery, those currently in treatment, those in search of recovery and treatment, parents, siblings, children, significant others and allies of those mentioned as the “recovery community”. They are committed to helping those individuals take the lead in formulating non-traditional coalitions for the sake of increasing peer-driven services. The larger goal is to help them form alliances in the recovery community with treatment providers and faith institutions to become leaders in promoting culturally competent, cost efficient peer-driven support services.

Ethical Standards

The following ethical standards are relevant to NORA Staff and Mentor/Peer Leaders. These standards concern:

1. overall conduct
2. responsibility to participants
3. responsibility to the organization and
4. responsibility to the community

OVERALL CONDUCT

As a NORA staff person or Mentor/Peer Leader I will:

- ☞ Maintain high standards of conduct in peer-driven services.
- ☞ Treat others with dignity and respect.
- ☞ Not exploit relationships with others for personal gain.
- ☞ Be dedicated and loyal to peer-driven services.
- ☞ Recognize that I do not have power and control over others.
- ☞ Be honest with myself and others.
- ☞ Make efforts to remain impartial and unbiased.
- ☞ Be alert to resist any influence that interferes with my ability to provide adequate services, be impartial or unbiased including gossip, hearsay, judgments, dishonesty, personality conflicts, etc.
- ☞ Seek to resolve conflicts with others without fighting, choosing sides, having outbursts of anger or harming others.
- ☞ Remember that I represent NORA and the recovery community as a whole and that my actions influence how the larger community views those in recovery.
- ☞ Recognize the difference between making a statement or action as a representative of NORA or the recovery community and a statement or action made by me as an individual.
- ☞ Recognize my primary goal as recovery for myself and participants.
- ☞ Provide evidence and an example of recovery to participants.
- ☞ Continue my commitment to assess my own personal strengths, limitations, biases and effectiveness.
- ☞ Maintain individual responsibility for my own conduct in all areas including but not limited to substance use.