

MEDICAID COMPLIANCE POLICY

It is the policy of the Board of Education that all school district's practices regarding Medicaid claims for services be in compliance with all applicable federal and state laws and regulations. To prevent, detect, and report incidents of Medicaid fraud and abuse, the school district is required to develop and implement an effective Compliance Program. The administration shall develop such a program to meet the requirements of applicable law and regulations.

Ref.: New York State Public Health Law Section 32
New York State Social Services Law Section 363-d
New York State Regulations 18 NYCRR Section 521.3

Approved: November 19, 2009
Reviewed by BOE Policy Committee Oct. 8, 2014

MEDICAID COMPLIANCE PROGRAM

CODE OF CONDUCT

The Board of Education has an obligation to exercise diligence, care, and integrity when submitting Medicaid claims for payment for services rendered. Honest, fair, and accurate billing practices shall be maintained.

The Board of Education recognizes its obligation to put a plan and program in place to prevent or otherwise detect fraud, waste and abuse in the Medicaid program. In general, the Board expects that its officers and employees will operate with integrity and in conformance with its adopted code of ethics (policy 2160). The Board directs the Superintendent and the internal auditor to ensure that the following program elements are in place and are implemented effectively.

Employees, non-employees and contractors involved in the provision of, or claiming federal Medicaid financial compensation or reimbursement for, school and preschool supportive health services are required to conform their conduct to the governing federal and State statutes and regulations. Failure to do so may result in adverse consequences to them.

Medicaid claims shall be submitted only for necessary services provided, as supported by appropriate documentation. Billings should not be duplicated to create overpayment. Proper and timely documentation of services provided must be maintained. Claims will be considered only when such documentation is maintained and available for review.

Compensation for any employee or service provider shall not include any financial incentive to make claims. No employee or service provider will knowingly and willfully offer, pay, solicit, or receive any remuneration, directly or indirectly, in return for referrals or to induce referrals, or to arrange for or recommend goods, facilities, services or items for which payment may be made under the Medicaid program.

Services will not be billed unless the provider has certified that the services were provided, and appropriate documentation completed in compliance with federal and State laws, regulations, and School District guidelines.

When a provider submits such certification, the provider is certifying that there is supporting documentation to support the claim and that: (1) all services reported were personally provided or personally supervised; (2) such services were necessary and appropriate; and (3) the rendering of such services, the coding or charging for these services, and the documentation of such services have all been performed in accordance with federal and State laws and regulations and School District guidelines.

Speech services may not be billed unless those services are provided by a licensed speech pathologist or provided under the direct supervision of a qualified speech pathologist. Any individuals working under the direction of a qualified speech pathologist must be given contact information to enable them to directly contact the supervising speech pathologist as needed during treatment.

Transportation may not be billed unless the provider can clearly document the child's attendance on the vehicle for eligible services on the specific day being billed.

Counseling services may not be billed unless provided by a professional whose credentials' allow that same service outside of school.

The School District will attempt to ensure that all claims for services are accurate, properly documented, and correctly identify the services performed or provided.

All employees and service providers are required to report suspected fraud or abuse or other non-compliance problems. Failure to report suspected problems, assisting or participating in fraud, abuse or other non-compliant behavior, or encouraging, directing, permitting or facilitating such activities whether actively or passively will result in disciplinary action.

Suspected fraud, abuse or other non-compliance problems must be reported to the immediate supervisor, unless the immediate supervisor is suspected of being involved in the issue. In that case, the report should be made to the next higher level supervisor not suspected of being involved. If the supervisor is not available, the report should be made to the next higher-level supervisor. If the suspected violation is on an organization-wide level or the Administration, the report should be made to the President of the Board of Education.

Monies obtained from any federal or State funded healthcare programs that clearly represent overpayments are monies which must be returned promptly.

SCHOOL DISTRICT COMPLIANCE OFFICER

Responsibility for monitoring the School District's Compliance Program shall be vested in Kelly Squires, 1 Raider Lane, Horseheads, NY.

The duties of the Compliance Officer shall include, but not be limited to:

- A. Overseeing and monitoring compliance activities;
- B. Reporting regularly to the Superintendent and periodically to the Board of Education;
- C. Establishing procedures to improve efficiency and to reduce vulnerability to fraud, abuse and waste;
- D. Ensuring that the Compliance Program is implemented and evaluated periodically;
- E. Developing, coordinating, and participating in a multifaceted educational and training program that focuses on elements of the Compliance Program, and seeks to ensure that all appropriate employees and service providers, administrators and Board of Education members are knowledgeable of and compliant with pertinent Federal and State requirements;
- F. Educational and training programs shall occur periodically and shall be made a part of the orientation for any new employee, service provider, administrator, and Board of Education member;
- G. Coordinating internal and external audit of all compliance requirements on a periodic basis;
- H. Establishing and administering a reporting system that is available to report any suspected illegal conduct or other conduct that violates applicable law, regulation or school district guidelines;
- I. Developing and publishing notices that encourage the reporting of all suspected fraud and other improprieties without fear of retaliation;
- J. Investigating any report or allegation concerning possible unethical or improper business practices and monitoring subsequent action and compliance;
- K. Monitoring any and all fraud alerts issued by the Office of the Medicaid Inspector General;
- L. Monitoring the website of the Office of the Medicaid Inspector General for Compliance Program guidelines, including any Compliance Program template and revising the school district's Compliance Program if necessary;
- M. During the month of December of every school year certify using a form provided by the Office of the Medicaid Inspector General on its website if one is available that an effective compliance program meeting the requirements of the regulations is in place.

STATE COMPLIANCE OFFICER

1. Any employee who believes that any practice or billing procedure related to Medicaid reimbursement of school or preschool supportive health services is inappropriate, may send information concerning such practice or billing procedure in writing to the State Compliance Officer by U. S. mail, courier service, email, or facsimile transmission. The address, phone numbers, and fax number of the State Compliance Officer are:

Rose Firestein, Medicaid State Compliance Officer
New York State Department of Health Office of General Counsel
90 Church Street, 4th floor
New York, NY 10007
Ref01@health.state.ny.us
(212) 417-4393 fax: (212) 417-4392

Disclosure may be made anonymously. Any verbal communication of any such allegation will not be sufficient to require any further action to be initiated under the Confidential Disclosures Policy procedures set forth below.

2. The state Compliance Officer will send any disclosures to the relevant state agency and to the implicated local school district, if any. If the state Compliance Officer is aware of the employee's identity, it will not be revealed to any other person without the employee's written consent, provided by U.S. mail, courier service, email or facsimile transmission.
3. The relevant state agencies and the school district shall undertake a review of the practice described in the disclosure without attempting to uncover the identity of the complaining employee and shall determine: (a) whether the allegations are credible, (b) whether any federal or state statute, regulation or policy pertaining to any practice or billing procedure related to Medicaid reimbursement of school or preschool supportive health services has been violated, and (c) whether any such violation is systemic or was limited to one or a small number of cases.
4. The relevant state agencies and the school district shall address any violation found during the review whether systemic or limited, in a manner designed to avoid a similar violation in the future and to remedy the effect of the violation in the cases in which it was found to have occurred. If the review determines the violation was systemic, the relevant state agencies and the school district shall take all steps necessary to identify the cases in which the violation occurred and then to remedy the effect of the violation in those cases.
5. Within 90 days of receiving notice from the state Compliance Officer of the information provided by an employee, the relevant state agencies and the school district shall: (a) complete the review of such allegations and any remedial plan required as a result of such review and (b) provide to the state Compliance Officer a written description of the review, the remedial plan and all actions taken pursuant to such plan. In the event the relevant state agencies and the school district determine the allegations are not credible,

the written response shall identify the individual(s) at the relevant state agencies and the school district who were responsible for approving the review, the remedial plan and all action taken pursuant to such plan, including the name, job title, telephone number, mailing address, email address and fax number of the person(s) who took such action.

6. If the state Compliance officer is not satisfied with the review, the remedial plan, or the actions taken pursuant to such plan, the state compliance officer may discuss the matter with the relevant state agencies and the school district to resolve these concerns. In addition, the state Compliance Officer may request that the Audit unit of Department of Health's Division of Administration undertake an audit to determine; (a) whether a violation occurred; (b) whether any such violation has been remedied; and (c) whether the remedial action is sufficient to prevent similar violations in the future.
7. In the event the employee's identity becomes known to a state agency or the school district or to an employee of such agency or school district no adverse employment action of any type shall be taken against such employee because information was provided to the state Compliance Officer or the a person conducting a review of the disclosure.
8. The relevant state agencies and the school district shall include in every training (a) a description of the confidential disclosure policy procedures described above; (b) the name, mailing address, email address, and fax number of the state compliance officer and school district Compliance Officer; and (c) an assurance that no adverse employment action of any type will be taken against an employee because information was provided to the state Compliance Officer and school district or to a person conducting a review concerning alleged inappropriate practices or billing procedures related to Medicaid reimbursement of school or preschool supportive health services.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The school district's Compliance Program requires compliance and ethics training for all employees and service providers associated with Medicaid services and claims. This training will emphasize the school district's commitment to compliance with all Federal and State laws, regulations, and guidelines. This training will be conducted on an annual basis to ensure all such employees and service providers fully comprehend the implications of failing to comply with the school district's Compliance Program.

Mandatory training will include compliance, prevention of fraud and abuse, whistleblower protections, ethical standards, confidentiality, and conflicts of interest. All affected employees and service providers must attend an initial training session following hire and participate in ongoing, routine training sessions thereafter as required. As new developments or concerns arise, the Compliance Officer may require additional training sessions.

All compliance training must be documented. The Compliance Officer will maintain all such documentation signed by those attending any training session. All affected employees and service providers must sign an Acknowledgement form at initial training, and thereafter when any updates of those documents are received.

Education and training will cover the school district's Compliance Program and will reinforce the requirement that strict compliance with the Compliance Program is a condition of employment. Employees will be informed that failure to comply with the Compliance Program may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

In addition to compliance and ethics training, the need for periodic continuing education, which may be required by law or regulations, will be provided for affected personnel. The school district will post in common work areas and other prominent places a notice reminding all affected individuals of the school district's commitment to compliance with all Federal and State laws and regulations regarding Medicaid claims and services.

COMMUNICATION – ACCESS TO COMPLIANCE OFFICER

An open line of communication between the Compliance Officer is critical to the successful implementation and operation of the Compliance Program. Accordingly, there is an open-door, confidential, complete anonymity, non-retribution assurance to all employees, service providers administrators, and Board of Education members to encourage good faith reporting of potential compliance issues.

Reports that suggest violations of the Compliance Program will be maintained by the Compliance Officer in a log and will be investigated promptly by the Compliance Officer to determine their validity. The Compliance Officer will report the findings to the Superintendent and Board of Education for possible further investigation of and possible corrective action regarding each compliance issue.

Identifying and reporting compliance issues may also be made directly to the New York State Department of Health or the Office of the Medicaid Inspector General.

The school district will not penalize, discriminate, or retaliate against anyone who in good faith discloses a practice that violates any law, regulation, or guideline, initiates, cooperates or participates in an investigation, or objects to or refuses to participate in any activity, policy or practice that violates any law, regulation, or guideline.

INVESTIGATING, REPORTING AND CORRECTING IDENTIFIED PROBLEMS

Any and all reports of violations of the school district's Compliance Program regarding Medicaid claims and services will be investigated. The Compliance Officer or designee will conduct an investigation. The investigation will be done promptly and will be conducted under advice of legal counsel as deemed necessary. The purpose of the investigation will be to determine if any violation has occurred. If a violation has occurred, steps will be taken promptly and thoroughly to remedy the violation. The investigation may include interviews, review of relevant document, and any other information deemed necessary to conduct a thorough investigation. Outside auditor or legal counsel may be retained to assist when deemed necessary. If at the completion of the investigation disciplinary action is required, discipline will be imposed in accordance with applicable law, regulation, and collective bargaining agreement. Law enforcement will also be informed if the conduct may have violated criminal law.

The Compliance Officer will direct that appropriate correction action be taken to prevent similar violations of the Compliance Program from recurring. Any issue for which corrective action was directed to be taken shall be specifically targeted for monitoring and review in future audits.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION

Failure to comply with the Compliance Program may result in disciplinary action. Discipline may include:

- Discipline of individuals who fail to report known non-compliant conduct;
- Discipline of individuals involved in non-compliant conduct;
- Discipline of individuals involved in encouraging, directing, facilitating, or permitting either actively or passively non-compliant behaviors;
- Discipline of supervisors if the misconduct reflected poor supervision or lack of diligence;

The ongoing review and implementation of these policies address Medicaid compliance, as well.

The Superintendent is responsible for developing regulations which will further detail the procedures associated with this policy. The Board will periodically review and update this policy and the associated plan.

DISSEMINATION OF REGULATION

The Board directs the Superintendent to ensure that this regulation, as well as the cross-referenced policies, are disseminated to employees as well as those entities providing Medicaid covered services, with particular attention to those employees involved in administering the programs and services associated with Medicaid and their billing.

Cross-ref: 2160 School District Officer and Employee Code of Ethics
2210 Board Organizational Meeting
2250 Audit Committee
2520 Board Member Development Opportunities
6650 Internal Auditor
6655 Claims Auditor
6660 Independent Auditor
9645 Disclosure of Wrongful Conduct
9700 Staff Development

Ref: False Claims Act, 31 U.S.C. §3729, et seq.
State Finance Law §§187 et seq. (New York False Claims Act)
Social Services Law §§145-b (False Statements); 145-c (Sanctions);
363-d (Provider Compliance Program)
Labor Law §740 (Prohibits Retaliation)
18 NYCRR §§521.1 et seq. (Provider Compliance Program regulations)

SUSPECTED MEDICAID FRAUD AND ABUSE FORM

Please submit to Medicaid Compliance Officer Kelly Squires, Director of Student Services.

Your Information:

Name _____ Date: _____

Address – Street & No. _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Email _____ Telephone (____) _____

- If you are a Medicaid provider: Provider ID _____ NPI # _____
- If you are a Medicaid client/beneficiary: CIN# _____ Case # _____

Describe your Complaint below:

Who is engaging in misconduct? What wrongdoing occurred? When did it happen? If there are witnesses to the misconduct who can we contact?

If complaint is about a Medicaid Provider:

Name Provider of Facility _____

Address – Street & No. _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Provider ID (if known) _____ Telephone (____) _____

If complaint is about a Medicaid Client or Beneficiary:

Beneficiary First Name _____ Last Name: _____

Address : Street & No. _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Telephone (____) _____ Cell (____) _____

CIN# _____ Case # _____

SSN _____ DOB or Age _____

DISCLOSURE OF WRONGFUL CONDUCT

The Board of Education expects officers and employees of the district to fulfill the public's trust and to conduct themselves in an honorable manner, abiding by all district policies and regulations and by all applicable state and federal laws and regulations.

However, when district officers or employees know or have reasonable cause to believe that serious instances of wrongful conduct have occurred, they should report such wrongful conduct to the Superintendent of Schools or the Board. For purposes of this policy, the term "wrongful conduct" shall be defined to include:

- theft of district money, property, or resources;
- misuse of authority for personal gain or other non-district purpose;
- fraud;
- violations of applicable federal and state laws and regulations; and/or
- serious violations of district policy, regulation, and/or procedure

Disclosure and Investigation

Employees and officers who know or have reasonable cause to believe that wrongful conduct has occurred or is occurring shall report such mismanagement, fraud or abuse to the Superintendent or the Board, if the allegation involves the Superintendent. Upon receiving a report of alleged wrongful conduct, the district shall take prompt steps to conduct an investigation.

The Superintendent or other designee (e.g., School Attorney, Independent Auditor, etc.) shall maintain a written record of the allegation, conduct an investigation to ensure that the appropriate unit (e.g., auditors, forensic auditors, police, etc.) investigates the disclosure, and notify the Board when appropriate to do so.

"Whistleblower" Protections

Pursuant to section 75-b of the Civil Service Law, an employee or officer who provides disclosures of wrongful conduct that presents a substantial and specific danger to the public health or safety or which he or she reasonably believes to be true and improper on the part of the Board or the district shall have "whistleblower protection" against retaliation in the nature of adverse action affecting compensation, appointment, promotion, transfer, assignment, reassignment or evaluation of performance.

Pursuant to section 3028-d of the Education Law, an employee who has reasonable cause to suspect that the fiscal practices or actions of an officer or employee of the district violates any local, state, or federal law, rule or regulation relating to the financial practices of the district, and who, in good faith, reports such information to a district official, Office of the State Comptroller, Commissioner of Education, or law enforcement authorities shall have immunity from any civil liability that may arise from the making of such report. Further, no district employee or officer may take, request, or cause a retaliatory action against any employee who makes such a report.

Any employee or officer who is concerned that retaliation for providing information regarding wrongful conduct has occurred or is occurring should report this to the Superintendent or the Board.

False Complaints

False or malicious complaints of wrongful conduct may result in corrective or disciplinary action against the complainant.

Dissemination and Review

This policy shall be published in employee handbooks, posted in employee lounges and given to all employees with fiscal accounting and/or money handling responsibilities on an annual basis.

The Superintendent of Schools, the Auditor, the School Attorney and others involved in implementing this policy shall meet with the Board once a year to evaluate the effectiveness of this policy and to make appropriate adjustments, if any, to the policy.

Ref: Civil Service Law §75-b
Education Law §3028-d
Labor Law §740
Garrity v. University at Albany, 301 A.D. 2d 1015 (3rd Dept. 2003)
Matter of Brey v. Bd. of Educ., 245 A.D. 2d (3rd Dept. 1997)

Approved: May 7, 2007
Board of Education