

# BROOKS<sup>®</sup>



## Rehabilitation

### **CODE OF CONDUCT**

# MESSAGE FROM LEADERSHIP

Brooks Health System is committed to the highest standards of ethics and integrity. Our environment is constantly changing, and that change results in challenges to our organization on many levels. To meet these challenges we have a corporate compliance program that is designed to set standards, provide information and measure our performance.

The success of this program depends on our employees and their shared vision and efforts. Ongoing recognition of the program and the importance of meeting the highest standards both internally and those of external regulatory agencies are critical for our continued success.

As CEO, I fully endorse the compliance program. It demonstrates the commitment of Brooks Rehabilitation to assume a leadership role in meeting the highest standards of integrity.



*Doug Baer*  
CEO

**Vision:** Brooks Rehabilitation is the recognized leader in providing a system of world-class rehabilitation solutions advancing the health and well-being of our communities.

**Mission:** To empower people to achieve their highest level of recovery and participation in life through excellence in rehabilitation.

**Values:** Excellence in care, as demonstrated through innovation, integrity, service, compassion, teamwork, accountability and continuous learning.

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## **Introduction**

It is the policy of BROOKS HEALTH SYSTEM (“Brooks”), its subsidiaries and affiliates, that all individuals associated with Brooks act properly and follow all federal and state laws, as well as the policies, procedures and Mission Statement of Brooks.

Each employee must follow the Brooks Code of Conduct and Corporate Compliance Program and report potential violations to the Corporate Compliance Officer (the “Compliance Officer”) at **904-345-7081**. Failure to report violations of the Code can lead to disciplinary action.

The Code of Conduct does not cover all potential issues. Employees should use good judgment when making decisions not specifically addressed by this Code. To help employees, additional guidance is provided in Brooks’ policies and procedures.

The Compliance Department provides a toll free HELPLINE for reporting concerns or asking ethics-related questions. The HELPLINE provides a means for reporting illegal activities or disobedience with legal responsibilities.

The HELPLINE is managed by an independent company called The Network and is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. You may report issues to the HELPLINE without ever revealing your identity if you choose. Concerns reported in this manner must contain enough information for Brooks to complete a thorough investigation of the issue reported.

It is Brooks’ policy that no threats or punishment will be carried out against any employee due to good faith reporting of a suspected violation or wrongdoing.

Once issues or concerns are reported it is the duty of the Compliance Officer to coordinate an investigation and take appropriate steps within a reasonable time period.

**HELPLINE: 866-TELL-BHS**

Online: [reportlineweb.com/brooksrehab](http://reportlineweb.com/brooksrehab)

**Compliance Officer: (904) 345-7081**

**Conflicts of Interest**

Brooks employees must not do anything where their personal interests could conflict or reasonably appear to conflict with the interests of Brooks. For example, if you were to participate in any business opportunity where you might receive personal financial gain apart from your normal wages, you could be in a conflict of interest situation.

**Personal Financial Gain**

You should not take any money separate from your normal wages that could affect your decision making abilities as a Brooks employee such as:

- You or a family member taking money from a company that does business with Brooks.
- You or a close family member having ownership in a business that competes with Brooks.

**Outside Activities**

You should avoid outside work or actions that could have a bad effect on Brooks' reputation in the community or could conflict with your duty to Brooks.

If you feel you may have a conflict of interest, you should contact the Compliance Officer.

**Brooks' Confidential and Private Business Information**

You should always protect Brooks' confidential and private business information. This includes information not generally made known to the public or information that could be useful to Brooks' competitors. This could include, in some cases:

- Financial data
- Information about expansion plans
- Capital investment plans
- Managed care contracts
- Planned new projects
- Employee information
- Projected earnings
- Liability coverage issues

You should only discuss Brooks' confidential and private business information with others on a need-to-know basis. Brooks' private information should only be disclosed to persons outside of Brooks when an approved disclosure agreement has been obtained. Do not mistakenly discuss confidential information in social conversations or in routine business relations.

**Company Property**

Brooks' equipment, money, supplies, ideas, plans, and other information about our business are to be used for the benefit of Brooks. You may not use Brooks' assets for your personal gain. In some cases property that is no longer needed by Brooks can be sold to employees at a fair cost.

## **Social Media**

Social media refers to online communities and personal blogs in which users post information, personal messages and other content. When you use social media:

- ✓ Do **not** post protected health information (PHI)
- ✓ Do **not** post pictures of patients, members or residents
- ✓ Do **not** speak on behalf of Brooks unless authorized to do so
- ✓ Do **not** initiate online social relationships with current or former patients or residents
- ✓ Do **not** answer health related questions on social networking sites
- ✓ Do **not** use your Brooks work email on social networking sites
- ✓ Do **not** post comments of any kind about current or former patients or residents. This applies even if the individual's name is not mentioned
- ✓ **Do** be professional, use good judgment, be accurate and be honest in what you say

## **HIPAA**

The HIPAA Privacy Rule gives individuals a right to know the privacy practices of their health plans and of most of their health care providers, and to know their privacy rights with respect to their personal health information. Brooks provides our patients with a clear explanation of these rights and practices. All employees are required to maintain the privacy of every patient's protected health information (PHI) and the security of electronic protected health information (EPHI). If you have questions regarding use or disclosure of PHI or EPHI please contact the Privacy Officer.

**Gifts**

No employee may ever ask for or accept cash or cash-equivalent gifts (e.g. gift cards) from patients, contractors or vendors/suppliers. Any cash or cash-equivalent gift must be returned to the patient, contractor, vendor or other supplier with an explanation of Company policy.

Employees may accept non-cash equivalent gifts of small value (e.g. a fruit basket or food items) not to exceed a total value of \$50. In the event you receive a spoilable food gift you may accept the gift but make sure to share the gift with your team or department.

Gifts to individuals who refer patients to Brooks cannot be cash or cash equivalents; they should only be given infrequently; and must never exceed an aggregate value of \$50. Additionally, the amount of the gift cannot be determined in a manner that takes into account the volume or value of referrals and the gift must not violate the Anti-Kickback Statute. If you have a question regarding whether you should or should not accept or give a gift contact the Compliance Officer.

**Suppliers/Vendors/Referral Sources**

Dealing with product/service suppliers, as well as referring providers, can present ethical and legal problems. The following guidelines are intended to help you make proper decisions in these potentially difficult situations.

You or your family may not take or give gifts, kickbacks or discounts in exchange for the purchase or sale of goods or services or to encourage patient referrals. Kickbacks or rebates are not limited to cash payments or credits.

Brooks often makes purchases from companies that also make purchases from us. This practice is normal and acceptable. You must never ask suppliers to buy our products or services in order to become a Brooks supplier.

**Entertainment**

You may not ask for or receive entertainment-type gifts from any individual with whom Brooks does business. On a very limited basis, a vendor could provide a meal if it is tied to staff education and takes place in the hospital or physician office setting.



**Anti-Bribery Laws**

It is illegal in the United States to offer a bribe to any U.S. or foreign government official in order to get or keep business or influence the official's actions. Bribes include cash, gifts, services, entertainment or anything of value.

**Overpayments by Government Entities**

If Brooks receives an overpayment of funds for services provided, the overpayment when discovered will be returned according to the timeframes required by federal and/or state regulations.

**Other Improper Payments**

The use of Brooks' funds or assets for any unlawful or unethical purpose is not allowed. Making payment to a third party for any purpose other than that which is clearly documented in Brooks' records is prohibited.

**False Claims Act**

The federal government and many states have False Claims Act laws to punish billing fraud, waste and abuse crimes. Examples of actions that could cause a violation of these laws include:

- ✓ Charging for a service that was not provided or not ordered by a physician or other appropriately licensed person
- ✓ Charging for a service that differs in any way from the actual service provided

If you suspect billing errors are occurring, you have a duty to report these to management or the Compliance Officer. Employees who report in good faith are protected and do not need to fear that anyone will attempt to "get even." Refer to the False Claims and Non-Retaliation policy for additional details.

**False Information in Records**

Federal law requires that Brooks' financial and medical records correctly reflect the true nature of the transactions represented. You must not create or be a part of the creation of any records intended to mislead or to hide anything that is improper.

- ✓ It is against our policy for any employee to cause our books and records to be inaccurate
- ✓ Do not make records appear as though payments were made to one person when payments actually were made to another
- ✓ Do not submit expense accounts which do not accurately record the real expense
- ✓ Do not create any records that do not truthfully show what occurred
- ✓ Permanent entries in Brooks records must never be altered
- ✓ Payment may not be made if any amount will be used for a purpose other than that described in the documents supporting the transaction

**Retention of Records**

Brooks' records and files must never be destroyed until it is determined that they have been kept long enough to meet the holding period required by law. There are federal and state laws which require that certain records be kept for specific periods of time, particularly records related to:

- ✓ Contracts
- ✓ Employees
- ✓ Health, safety and the environment
- ✓ Patients
- ✓ Research
- ✓ Taxes and finances

Records relating to any pending lawsuit, government investigation, or audit must not be destroyed until the entire matter is fully settled and closed. Destroying records to avoid discovery in a legal proceeding may be a criminal offense. For more information refer to the Records Retention policy for guidance on retention periods and restrictions.

**Safety, Health and Environment**

Brooks is committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace for you and visitors to our facilities. We are also committed to wisely managing and sustaining natural resources and minimizing the impact of our operations on the land, air and water. These commitments are met only through your cooperation. Each of us has a responsibility to:

- ✓ Follow safe operating procedures
- ✓ Guard your own and your fellow employees' health and safety

Brooks must follow numerous laws enforced by federal, state and local agencies concerning the handling, release, reporting, transporting and disposal of hazardous materials/waste. It is our policy to obey these laws and to cooperate with inspection and enforcement personnel. You are encouraged to report any conditions that you believe to be unsafe, unhealthy or hazardous to the environment.

**Employee Relations**

Everyone should be treated with respect at Brooks, including our patients and their families and your coworkers. Equal opportunity in employment and education is a moral and legal obligation. Brooks provides equal employment opportunities to individuals who are qualified to perform job requirements regardless of their race, color, sex, religion, national origin or age. Brooks is also committed to upholding laws prohibiting discrimination on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, gender, age, national origin, marital status, veteran status or disability. If you know or suspect a possible violation this should be reported. You may use the HELPLINE for reporting (see page 3).

**Political Activity**

You are encouraged to participate in the political process outside of the workplace but you are not allowed to take part in political activities during work hours. It is against Brooks' policy and may be illegal for you to:

- ✓ Enter, directly or indirectly, any political donation on your expense account that causes Brooks to reimburse you for that expense. This includes the cost of fundraising tickets for political functions.
- ✓ Use any Brooks property, facilities, employee time or intranet for any political activity. Examples of prohibited actions include: using secretarial time to send invitations for political fundraising; using Brooks telephones to make political solicitations; or allowing any candidate to use meeting rooms for political campaigning.

**Frequently Asked Questions:**

**Q.** I believe someone got a contract because he/she is dating the manager. Is that all right?

**A.** No. Contracts should be based on merit. A dating relationship would be considered a conflict of interest in this situation. The manager should disqualify himself/herself from the contract selection process.

**Q.** If I call the Compliance HELPLINE will anyone in management be told that it was me who reported the violation of the Code of Conduct?

**A.** No. When you call the HELPLINE the report sent to Compliance does not identify the source of the information unless you provided your name. Your identity, if given, is kept in the strictest confidence.

**Q.** A competitor called me today and asked me if we planned to bid on a certain contract. What should I do?

**A.** You are not to share any information regarding potential contracts or strategies with anyone who is not authorized to know this information.

**Q.** I recently saw a patient with whom I went to high school. I would like to contact her. Is it okay for me to look up her patient record to get her home phone number?

**A.** No. Accessing a patient record for any reason other than treatment and billing is prohibited. That would be a misuse of the patient's private information and could lead to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

**Q.** Especially around the holidays patients and/or family members may offer gifts of money. Should such gifts be accepted?

**A.** No. Cash gifts or cash-equivalent gifts must never be accepted from a patient, a patient's family member, or a business partner.

**Q.** I accidentally charged a patient's bill to the wrong insurance. I'm afraid if I tell my supervisor, I will get fired. What should I do?

**A.** You must correct the problem by speaking to your supervisor immediately. Brooks is obligated to comply with all federal and state laws regarding patient billing.

**Q** A coworker frequently posts to Facebook and makes reference to his day at work. He doesn't mention patient names but the level of detail given about some cases makes me uncomfortable. What should I do?

**A.** Omitting a name does not guarantee that the patient cannot be identified. You should discuss with your supervisor or contact the Privacy Officer for assistance.

# Compliance Team



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