

Rutgers Health
Statement on Professionalism in the Workplace

Rutgers Health is committed to (1) providing exceptional health care, education and training, research, and discovery for the people of New Jersey and beyond; (2) serving as a distinguished national model for health care access and quality, research and innovation, interprofessional education and healthcare, and community service and engagement; and (3) showing dedication to respect, collaboration, inclusion, excellence, innovation, and accountability in all that we do. This commitment reflects our mission, vision, and values, and it requires us to conduct ourselves with integrity, ethics, and professionalism, and to create an environment of care and respect for colleagues, patients, and visitors alike.

While not an exhaustive list, this Statement on Professionalism (“Statement”) provides general guidance regarding the University’s and Rutgers Health’s expectations for professionalism in the workplace. Employees (including students serving as employees or functioning in a clinical setting) are required to familiarize themselves not just with this Statement, but with the policies and resources referenced in this Statement (many of which are referenced below) and adhere to these values and principles in the workplace at all times. In the event of any conflict between this Statement and a University Policy or collective negotiations agreement, the University Policy or collective negotiations agreement shall govern.

This Statement is founded upon and incorporates our established values and principles and is reflected in existing University Policies and Rutgers Health policies, statements, and other official guidance. Your commitment to following these standards ensures that Rutgers Health will continue to provide excellent patient care, encourage innovations in education, create a supportive learning environment, and conduct ground-breaking research while ensuring a safe, respectful, and professional workplace for all.

Some examples of general guiding principles include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Behaving courteously and professionally with trainees, students, patients, staff, internal and external community members, volunteers, reporting agencies, and colleagues;
- Following University Policy and Rutgers Health policy, including but not limited to, the prohibition against unlawful harassment and/or discrimination, compliance, lab safety, and training requirements;
- Conducting honest and ethical research endeavors, data interpretation, and reporting;
- Providing thoughtful, ethical, and kind clinical care for our patients;
- Participating in open, professional intellectual discourse; and
- Avoiding language that could be considered demeaning and/or aggressive.

Our Values

- Rutgers University Values

The Rutgers community embraces and upholds the fundamental values that define the university: academic excellence that is both accessible and affordable; building a beloved community where every single member of the university has a voice; and serving the common good while making a meaningful difference in the world.

<https://www.rutgers.edu/about-rutgers>

Our Commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

- RBHS Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Statement

The RBHS Diversity, Equity and Inclusion statement emphasizes that the term “diversity” embodies “inclusiveness, mutual respect, and multiple perspectives.” It provides that inclusion is achieved by nurturing both climate and culture, including through interprofessional teamwork. The Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Statement memorializes the commitment by Rutgers Health to become an inclusive learning community that fosters respect, belonging, and value for all.

<https://facultyaffairs.rbhs.rutgers.edu/diversity-inclusion/rbhs-diversity-equity-and-inclusion-statement/>

Our Obligation to Treat Others with Respect

- University Policy 60.5.1, Statement on Professional Ethics

University Policy 60.5.1, which contains the Statement on Professional Ethics, emphasizes that “[a]s colleagues, professors have obligations that derive from common membership in the community of scholars. Professors do not discriminate against or harass colleagues. They respect and defend the free inquiry of associates. In the exchange of criticism and ideas professors show respect for the opinions of others.”

<https://policies.rutgers.edu/B.aspx?BookId=12137&PageId=459505>

- RBHS Students Rights, Responsibilities, and Disciplinary Procedures

Many Rutgers Health employees are also Rutgers students. Rutgers Health students, as future healthcare professionals and/or biomedical scientists who hold a public trust, have the responsibility to adhere to all generally recognized standards of professional and ethical conduct.

<https://rutgershealth.org/sites/default/files/2022-09/rbhs-policy-101-1-29.pdf>

How To Respond to Unprofessional or Unethical Conduct

- Conduct that may constitute a criminal offense, including but not limited to, rape, sexual assault, dating or domestic violence, stalking, fondling, incest, statutory rape, aggravated assault, robbery, burglary, motor vehicle theft, arson, bias-motivated intimidation, larceny-theft, simple assault, or destruction of property or vandalism, should be immediately reported to the Rutgers University Police Department. **Call 911 in the event of an emergency.**

<https://ipo.rutgers.edu/publicsafety/rupd>

- Conduct that may involve violations of University Policies prohibiting discrimination and/or harassment based on membership in a protected class, sexual harassment (including under Title IX), workplace violence, and whistleblower retaliation should be reported to the Rutgers Office of Employment Equity. All faculty and supervisors have an affirmative duty to report alleged violations of these Policies to the Office of Employment Equity.

<https://uhr.rutgers.edu/oe/home>

- Conduct that may involve violations of any other University Policies, including, but not limited to, conduct relating to conflicts of interest and/or commitment, Rutgers Code of Ethics violations, the employment of family members, prohibited relationships, or the improper use of University resources; and conduct that may involve violations of state or federal law, including, but not limited to, potential violations of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) or the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), and incidences of fraud, waste, or abuse, should be reported to Rutgers University Ethics & Compliance.

<https://helpline.rutgers.edu/uec>

- Conduct that may constitute research misconduct, including intentional, knowing, or reckless fabrication, falsification, or plagiarism in proposing, performing, or reviewing research, or in reporting research results, should be reported to the Office for Research.

<https://research.rutgers.edu/faculty-staff/compliance/report-research-misconduct>

Supervisors' Rights and Obligations

- Even when workplace conduct may not violate a particular University Policy, supervisors have both the right and the obligation to address instances of unprofessional or unethical conduct that they personally observe or are otherwise brought to their attention. Performance-related issues should be appropriately documented and addressed in a timely manner. Employee evaluations, where applicable, should accurately cover performance-related issues (including professionalism-related issues) and pathways for improvement.

All faculty and supervisors have an obligation to report alleged violations of University Policies prohibiting discrimination and/or harassment based on membership in a protected class, sexual harassment (including under Title IX), workplace violence, and whistleblower retaliation to the Office of Employment Equity (<https://uhr.rutgers.edu/oee/home>). This obligation applies even if you do not supervise the person reporting a violation or the person who is alleged to have violated the University Policy.

- As many of our employees are subject to the provisions of a particular collective negotiations agreement, discipline and counseling decisions for employee misconduct should be discussed, in advance of making such a decision, with the Office of University Labor Relations. www.laborrelations.rutgers.edu.
- Non-aligned employees may consult with University Human Resources [Business Partner Services](#) for guidance on discipline and counseling decisions, in advance of making such decisions. <https://uhr.rutgers.edu/business-partner-services/home>.

Colleagues' Rights and Obligations

- In addition to the reporting options listed above, peers or others who observe unprofessional or unethical conduct on the part of someone whom they do not supervise, directly or indirectly, are encouraged to report that conduct to their supervisor, department head, Dean, Chancellor, or other individual in the employee's upward reporting chain.

Rutgers Prohibition on Retaliation

- Rutgers strictly prohibits retaliating against any person for reporting an allegation or concern or for participating in an investigation of the same.

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