

# Mesa County Department of Human Services Child Welfare Training Program Manual



## Mission Statement

*The Mesa County Department of Human Services Employee Mentoring Program is designed to provide our employees with opportunities to develop and build leadership and mission-critical knowledge and skills, and increase employee performance and retention.*

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Welfare

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## **Mentoring Mission Promise**



Mesa County Department of Human Services  
Employee Mentoring Program  
June 2017

### **Background**

The Employee Mentoring Program, or “EMP,” was designed by a group of Mesa County employees who were involved in the Leadership Institute. The Employee Mentoring program is designed for new employees to partner with mentors assigned by learning styles, personalities, and characteristics. New employees will learn the generalized function and purpose of each department prior to attending the Child Welfare Training Academy. When the Child Welfare Training Academy has been completed, new case managers will be assigned a mentor based on the DISC (Dominance, Inducement, Submission, and Compliance) assessment results. The mentor will partner with the new employee for the next 6-12 months, teaching them, guiding them and focusing on perfecting their daily job duties.

### **Vision Statement**

The Mesa County Department of Human Services Employee Mentoring Program seeks to decrease employee turnover, increase retention, build strong and productive working relationships, educate new employees, improve job performance, and create consistency in training and development.

### **Mission Statement**

The Mesa County Department of Human Services Employee Mentoring Program is designed to develop and build leadership and mission-critical knowledge and skills, and increase employee performance and retention.

### **Value Statements**

The MCDHS Employee Mentoring Program will honor and practice the MCDHS values. Humanity, Balance, Honesty, Inclusion, and Teamwork will be upheld in our experiences and practices throughout our journey through the Employee Mentoring Program.

### ***Program Commitments***

Welcome aboard! We here at the Employee Mentoring Program are very pleased to have you join our mentoring team. Working with new employees can be very challenging, but we think you will find that this new leadership opportunity will also be some of the most rewarding work you will ever be a part of. We believe in and value open, honest communication, teamwork, and dedication. As the Employee Mentoring Program grows, we hope to reduce employee turnover and build a better working environment with seasoned employees; creating a more efficient workplace culture. As program coordinators, we will work hard in seeing you succeed as a mentor in the employee mentoring program.

### **Commitments**

We realize in order to succeed; we must strive for outstanding performance in every aspect of the program. Our program coordinators are dedicated to the following commitments:

- Measures of success
- Support
- Training
- Recognition
- Performance Feedback
- Monthly Meetings
- Respect for time
- Supervisor Feedback
- Consistency
- Effective Communication

Once again, we welcome you to the Employee Mentoring Program. We will strive to make positive differences in the lives of our new employees every day. We look forward to working with you and making a difference in our workplace culture.

Thank you.

## **Code of Conduct**

As a mentor, you are now about to begin one of life's most rewarding and fulfilling experiences. Your commitment indicates that you believe in the development of new employees. You recognize the magnitude of the responsibility that you accepted in choosing to work with new employees and agree to interact appropriately with your mentee according to the highest ethical standards at all times.

### **Your Role as a Mentor:**

- *Educate!* Don't try to speed up the process by going out of your way to accommodate your mentee, such as performing or completing your mentee's tasks for them.
- During the initial phase of the mentoring relationship, the mentee is more interested in getting to know how he/she can trust you. *Establish how you can reach your mentee* (i.e., by phone, email, etc.) and designate a consistent time when you can meet and honor those commitments.
- Don't try to be a parent, disciplinarian, therapist, Santa Claus or babysitter. Be a *dependable, consistent coworker*. Present information carefully without distortion, listen carefully, and offer possible solutions without passing judgment. Don't criticize or preach. Think of ways to problem solve together.
- *Respect* the uniqueness and honor the integrity of your mentee and influence him/her through constructive feedback.
- Set *realistic expectations* and goals for your mentee. Remember there is a big difference between encouraging and demanding. Look for signs of mentee improvement such as increased employee performance and knowledge, showing up for meetings, and overall understanding of the mentees' discipline.
- As a mentor you can share and advise, but know your limitations. Problems that your mentee may share with you regarding any violations regarding the Department's Code of Ethics, standards, or statutes are best handled by your supervisors and managers. If you have any concerns, *contact the Employee Mentoring Program Coordinator immediately*.

## **Expectations**

Keep the content of discussions within the mentoring relationship professional. All your exchanges with your mentee--both personal and professional--are subject to the expectations of professional confidentiality.

Keep regular and frequent contacts with your mentee, a minimum of the following:

- 1-2 Month Expectations: Mentor and Mentee meet once a week
- 3-4 Month Expectations: Mentor and Mentee meet twice a month
- 5-6 Month Expectations: Mentor and Mentee meet once a month
- 6+ month Expectations: Mentor checks in with mentee once a month, mentee checks in with mentor as needed

Mentors are expected to evaluate a mentee's work.

Mentors should evaluate the mentoring relationship every 6 months from the time of assignment with the mentee and their direct supervisor. Mentors are to contact the Program Coordinator for advice or needed changes. Annual mentee and mentor evaluation forms are also distributed for this purpose.

Mentors should be a positive role model. A positive role model is someone who serves as an example of the values, attitudes, and behaviors associated with a role. Role models should be someone who distinguishes themselves in such a way that others admire and want to emulate them. Role models should have a positive outlook about their organization and exhibit behaviors that match this outlook.

Take the initiative in the mentor/mentee relationship.

Listening attentively is a big part of effective mentoring. Avoid distractions such as workplace drama and issues or interruptions that do not pertain to your mentee.

Make observations or suggestions, and offer advice.

Avoid making judgments or issuing evaluative statements.

Be explicit that you are offering suggestions that should be weighed along with advice and ideas received from supervisors and managers.

Respect the privacy and time commitments of your mentee.

Introduce and expose your mentee to their professional department and external community resources.

Make only positive or neutral comments about your mentee and the employee mentoring program. All disparaging comments or issues should be addressed with the Employee Mentoring Coordinator or supervisor or manager.

Review your mentoring relationship agreement on a biannual basis. Most mentoring relationships end naturally when the relationship is no longer beneficial for both parties. Mentors should help introduce their mentee to the professional development coach.

Upon completion of the employee mentoring program, continue to invite your mentee to meet with a coach, suggest topics to discuss, and offer advice.

### **Communication Etiquette**

The following communication expectations will help to decrease personal bias and increase professional understanding. These expectations serve as useful tools to enhance services and an opportunity to strengthen teamwork.

- Use active listening skills, including reflecting, clarifying, paraphrasing, and summarizing without interrupting.
- Communicate openly, honestly, and directly with others in an "adult to adult" fashion.
- Give positive and supportive feedback to others on a regular basis.
- Show empathy and respect.
- Encourage mutuality in communication.
- Use "I" statements and take responsibility for your own messages.
- Model respectable communication.
- Use appropriate vocabulary for the situation; avoiding acronyms and profanity.
- Be aware of your own and others' non-verbal communication.
- Speak with a calm, un-elevated voice.
- Speak with respect and understanding.
- Respect others' boundaries and privacy.
- Allow sufficient time for communication; arrange for a setting conducive for transparent communication.
- Address issues as they arise.
- Avoid insults, shaming, and blaming others.
- Vent in appropriate settings and follow up with an appropriate resolution.
- Avoid communication in areas that are disruptive or distracting to others.
- Avoid condescension and confrontation when speaking with others.
- Adhere to the rules of confidentiality.
- Resolve issues directly with the parties who are involved in the conflicts and follow the appropriate chain of command when needed
- Avoid initiating or participating in negative gossip or inappropriate conversation.
- Avoid bringing in unnecessary third parties in to any conflict.
- Listen to feedback without becoming defensive

## **Mentor/Mentee Relationship**

The **mentor's** role is to guide, to give advice, and to support the **mentee**. A **mentor** can help a person (**mentee**) improve his or her abilities and skills through observation, assessment, modeling, and by providing guidance.

### **1. Keep communications open.**

Help your mentee set realistic expectations. Also, if you know you will be unavailable because of business or personal travel, let them know.

### **2. Offer support.**

Encourage communication and participation. Help create a solid plan of action.

### **3. Define expectations.**

Help set up a system to measure achievement.

### **4. Maintain contact.**

Respond to your e-mails. Answer questions and provide advice, resources and guidance when appropriate.

### **5. Be honest.**

Be truthful in your evaluations, but also be tactful.

### **6. Actively participate.**

Engage in your own learning while you are mentoring; collaborate on cases, ask questions and make ethical and safe decisions.

### **7. Be innovative and creative.**

Share your ideas, give advice and be a resource for new ideas.

### **8. Get to know each other.**

Remember that people come from diverse backgrounds and experiences. Get to know each other on an individual basis.

### **9. Be reliable and consistent.**

The more consistent you are, the more you will be trusted.

### **10. Stay positive!**

Recognize the work the mentee has done and the progress made.

## **Conflict Resolution**

**Conflict resolution** in the workplace can be broken down into steps to simplify the **process**. ... Here are four steps to the **conflict resolution process**: clarify the disagreement, establish a common goal, discuss ways to meet the goal, and agree on the best way to resolve the conflict.

- **Clarify what the disagreement is.** Clarifying involves getting to the heart of the conflict. The goal of this step is to get both sides to agree on what the disagreement is. To do this, you need to discuss what needs are not being met on both sides of the conflict and ensure mutual understanding. During the process, obtain as much information as possible on each side's point of view. Continue to ask questions until you are certain that all parties involved (you and your mentee) understand the issue.
- **Establish a common goal for both parties.** In this step of the process, both sides agree on the desired outcome of the conflict. To accomplish this, discuss what each party would like to see happen and find a commonality in both sides as a starting point for a shared outcome. That commonality can be as simple as "both sides want to end the conflict."
- **Discuss ways to meet the common goal.** This involves listening, communicating, and brainstorming together. Continue with both sides working together to discuss ways that they can meet the goal. Realize that at this point, you as the mentor may need to involve the Employee Mentoring Coordinator, a supervisor, and/or manager.
- **Agree on the best way to resolve the conflict.** Both parties need to come to a conclusion on the best resolution. Start by identifying solutions that both sides can live with. Ask both sides and see where there is common ground. Then start to discuss the responsibility each party has in maintaining the solution. It's also important to use this opportunity to get to the root cause to ensure this conflict will not come up again.

## MENTORING SECTION

### **General Operations**

#### **Qualifications**

- Minimum 18 Months working for Child Welfare
- Supervisor Recommendation
- Desire to achieve more- strong feeling of wanting to see the employee mentoring program succeed and meet the program's primary goals and objectives
- Complete 8 hours of mentor training
- Program Coordinator Approval

#### **Procedure**

- Complete the DISC Assessment
- Attend Mentoring Training
- Set schedules and introduce new hires to team mentors
- Meet with program coordinator and provide feedback about new employees learning styles and personalities from the first three weeks of training
- Receive a mentee
- Attend an initial meeting with the mentee's supervisor, mentee and mentor to establish the understanding of the next steps in the mentee's development.
- Provide positive mentoring for your mentee over the next 6 months while following the mentoring program manual.
- Evaluate the mentee's progress at the 6 month mark.
- Determine next steps in the mentee's development with the mentee, mentee's supervisor, program coordinator and mentor.
- Provide positive mentoring for your mentee over the final 6 months of the employee mentoring program while following the mentoring program manual.
- Evaluate the mentee's progress at the end of the employee mentoring program (12 months).
- Complete the Mentor Evaluation
- Meet with mentees supervisor and program coordinator to gain feedback on mentoring success
- Transition the mentor/mentee relationship to a professional development coach for further development

## **Schedule**

### **Pre-Academy**

Day 1- New Hire Orientation

Day 2-5- CPCLs and Facilitators

Week 2- Assessment

Week 3- Permanency

Weeks 4-9 Academy (2 weeks in employee's discipline)

### **Post Academy:**

1-2 Months: mentor and mentee meet once a week

3-4 Months: mentor and mentee meet twice a month

5-6 Months: mentor and mentee meet once a month

6+ Months: mentor checks in with mentee once a month, mentee checks in with mentors as needed

6 Months: mentee evaluation and mentor evaluation

12 Months: mentee evaluation and mentor evaluation

**Acknowledgement**

I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Employee Mentoring Program Manual, which describes important information about the Mesa County Department of Human Services Employee Mentoring Program and understand that I should consult the Employee Mentoring Coordinator if I have questions. I have entered into the Employee Mentoring Program as a mentor voluntarily and acknowledge that it is a yearlong commitment to a mentee and the Employee Mentoring Program. Accordingly, either I or the Employee Mentoring Program may terminate the relationship at will, with or without cause, at any time, for any reason or no reason. I understand that neither this Manual nor any policy, practice or procedure is intended to provide any contractual obligations related to continued employment, compensation or employment contract.

Since the information, qualifications and benefits described here are necessarily subject to change, I acknowledge that revisions to the Manual may occur, except to the Mesa County Department of Human Services policy of employment-at-will. I understand that the Mesa County Department of Human Services may change, modify, suspend, interpret or cancel, in whole or in part, any of the published or unpublished personnel qualifications or practices, with or without notice, at its sole discretion, without giving cause or justification to any employee. Such revised information may supersede, modify or eliminate existing qualifications. The Employee Mentoring Program Coordinator and Manager shall have authority to add, delete or adopt revisions to the requirements in this Manual.

I understand and agree that I will read and comply with the qualifications contained in this Manual and any subsequent revisions.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF the Employer has caused this agreement to be executed by its duly authorized officers and the Employee has set his hand as of the date first above written. SIGNED, SEALED AND DELIVERED in the presence of:

\_\_\_\_\_ [Name of Employee]  
\_\_\_\_\_ [Signature of Employee]  
\_\_\_\_\_ [Name of Program Coordinator]  
\_\_\_\_\_ [Signature of Program Coordinator]  
\_\_\_\_\_ [Signature of Employee Supervisor]