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8 Rules for Professional Caregivers

To help ensure your success as a Caregiver, we've prepared the following guidelines. Please review and commit to practicing them in your day-to-day client service.

1. **Keep Your Job Professional.** Your service to the Care Recipient is very valuable and very personable. There is, however, a delicate balance between being friendly and loving toward the Recipient (which is essential) and expecting to be friends or family-like with the Recipient (which is inappropriate). Stay professional and be careful about crossing that line as it can create hardship and resentment among the Recipient's family members.
 - **DEPENDABILITY.** Arrive on time and leave on time. If you are ill or need to change your schedule, call your client and office immediately. Give as much notice as possible, and, with approval, do your best to ensure back-up is secured.
 - **APPEARANCE.** Dress comfortably in scrubs or attire as outlined in the dress code policies. Groom yourself neatly and avoid excessive amounts of jewelry.
 - **CONFIDENTIALITY.** Do not disclose any information about the client's personal life, medical condition, etc., to any person other than your employer, the client, or other *authorized* person. This includes the client's friends and family, unless you have expressed permission to discuss matters with them.
2. **Communicate Clearly.** Communication is very important in your role as a Caregiver. It is essential that you regularly keep the relevant people informed of the Care Recipient's state of being. Take note of any questions, concerns, changes in the client's conditions, or notable mood alterations.
 - While in the presence of the Client, always speak in his or her primary language and not your own, if it is different.
 - Listen carefully and attentively. Ask questions if something is unclear. Be sure to thoroughly read all materials pertinent to the client's care.
 - Keep concise records concerning the client. Ensure that these records are accurate, clear, and updated regularly.
 - Advocate for your client in the most respectful way possible. Promote your client's best interests; do your best to ensure their needs are met



and their dignity and privacy are respected.

3. **Be Solution-Oriented.** If you have concerns about your work environment, the tasks you are asked to perform, your relationship with the client, the Representative, or a family member, write your concerns out and then set a time to discuss the matter with someone who can help you resolve the matter. Be solution-oriented. Don't let anxiety build up before you take action!



4. **Avoid Handling Client Finances.** Unless you are specifically instructed otherwise by the Care Recipient's Representative, **DO NOT** get involved in the client's financial affairs. If it becomes necessary for you to help with purchasing items from a store, or handling the client's money for any other reason, you must call the office at the time **WITH** the client present. Keep meticulous records of the date, the amount, and the purpose of your dealings on your log sheet and we will keep a record of it here in the office also. Always be sure you are authorized by either an office personnel or family member in advance.



5. **Avoid Accepting Gifts.** Often clients are so grateful to have a Caregiver helping them that they will want to give money or gifts to the Caregiver in return. It's a very nice gesture, but usually not appropriate. Avoid being accused of stealing from or taking advantage of your client. If your client wishes to give you something (e.g., money, jewelry, etc.), feel free to politely tell him/her, "Thank you very much, but I'm not permitted to accept gifts as part of my job." Call office to discuss situation.

6. **Monitoring Medications.** is a very delicate matter and should be discussed in detail between the Client's Representative, his or her Health Care Professionals, and the Caregiver. Many home care providers are not certified to administer medication to their clients. Aside from obvious legal matters, a client could have an allergic or negative reaction to a drug or drugs, causing upset or severe problems in the overall care. There are ways that a Care Provider can aid in this process, such as reminding the Client when it's time to take his/her medication. Pre-sorted meds in a compartmentalized pill container (by a medical professional or POA) are useful and can be handed to the client in a small pill cup, allowing him/her to take the medication(s) at will. **NEVER** just assume this responsibility. This is an important and serious matter!



7. **Know the Meal Plan.** If you are responsible for preparing the Client's meals find out, in advance, what dietary restrictions the Client may need to follow and what are his or her likes and dislikes. Plan the meals in advance with a menu system. Respectively speak with the office or family member whether or not you will be dining with the Client or having your own meals separately with food from home if you are providing over a 4 hour shift.



8. **Honor Your Boundaries.** Finally, be sure to honor appropriate boundaries in your client's home. This

means respecting their space and privacy. For example:

- Do not enter any area(s) of the house unrelated to the client's needs without permission.
- Don't answer their telephone, open any mail not addressed to you, or use items in the house for your personal needs.
- Never invite family/friends/guests to visit you at work unless you have express permission from the employer or family representatives.
- DO NOT abuse the use of personal phone calls. Save these tasks for your breaks. ALWAYS request permission BEFORE stepping away from the client.
- Respect family members' space. If other family members live in the client's residence, don't enter their rooms unless invited, unless you need to obtain information.