



CREDENTIALING ADVANTAGE

STANDARDS FOR CERTIFICATION OF HEALTHCARE STAFFING AGENCIES

ABBREVEATIONS

DOL: Department of Labor

HSA: Healthcare Staffing Agency

OSHA: Occupational Safety and Health Administration

BUSINESS ORGANIZATION

Rationale:

The business structure of the staffing agency is in compliance with applicable state and federal regulatory laws and abides by an established Business Code of Ethics.

Methods of Compliance:

- ◆ The HSA operates with a valid, current business license as required and issued by the jurisdiction in which it is located.
- ◆ Required regulatory posters are prominently displayed in an area highly visible to all applicants.
- ◆ The HSA should have posted on its website, if applicable, its Business Code of Ethics.
- ◆ The HSA should have posted in its office waiting room(s), or similar public area(s), a statement of adherence to a Business Code of Ethics or model for ethical behavior on which the company bases in its dealings with employees, clients, and the public.

PERSONNEL RECORDS

Rationale:

Individual personnel files are maintained for each employee to ensure appropriate credentialing and hiring processes are in place in compliance with applicable laws and regulations.

Methods of Compliance:

Written employment applications are used by the HSA.

- ◆ All employee medical records are housed in a file separate from personnel files. In jurisdictions that require records to be kept together, the access to the file should be limited to those with a need to know.
- ◆ Application forms contain specific queries regarding:
 - The applicant's current licensing;
 - Status of past, current, or pending sanction or professional disciplinary actions, in regard to the position(s) for which candidate applies.
- ◆ Application or other documentation contains disclosure statements, signed by the applicant, containing the following elements:
 - Attestation that all information provided on the application is true and correct.
 - Applicant understands that false or intentionally/materially inaccurate information may be cause for termination.
 - Authorization to conduct background investigations as to prior employers, driving records, credentials, criminal history, and professional disciplinary history.
 - Acknowledgement of "at-will" employment, in applicable states.
 - Permission to release information to other entities making legal, legitimate inquiries.
 - Agreement to accept assignments within the scope of the applicant's training/credentials/expertise, within geographical area as agreed to by the applicant, at the time of application.
 - Agreement to submit to drug screening test when requested by the staffing company, or as specified in the company's substance abuse policy and in accordance with applicable jurisdictional laws.
- ◆ All applications/employment contracts are signed by applicants, including e-signatures on web-based documents.
- ◆ All blanks and/or questions on the applications/employment contracts completed.
- ◆ Applications/employment contracts do not contain medical/health related questions
- ◆ Personnel files contain completed and signed drug consent release.
- ◆ Personnel files contain completed and signed criminal history background investigation release.

INTERVIEW/EMPLOYEE SELECTION

Rationale:

Interviewing applicants for positions is an accepted method to assist in determining if applicant meets with the HSA's, applicant's, and client's current assignment needs.

Methods of Compliance:

- ◆ The HSA has a method to document if interviews were conducted in-person or by telephone.
- ◆ No medical or health related questions are asked prior to conditional job offers.

EMPLOYEE SCREENING, CREDENTIALING, QUALIFICATION ASSESSMENT, AND SELECTION

Rationale:

Many professions are regulated by state and national organizations. Clients also expect that certain minimum standards and criteria will be met by an H.S.A. in processing and hiring applicants.

Methods of Compliance:

- ◆ The HSA should have written minimal hiring standards for use in the selection of employees.
- ◆ Educational degrees, when applicable to the profession, should be verified by using a reputable 3rd party information source, or by primary source verification.
- ◆ Personnel files evidence that the HSA verified work experience with prior or current employers claimed by the applicant.
- ◆ If utilized, subcontractors ("secondary suppliers") are required to evaluate and qualify their employees on a level consistent with the HSA's standards for evaluation and qualification, and as required by client specific policies.
- ◆ **Eligibility to Work**
 - Personnel files contain properly completed and executed *US Citizenship and Immigration Services Form I-9*.
 - The personnel files of resident aliens contain copies of *US Citizenship and Immigration Services Form I-1551*, the "Green Card".
 - Depending on applicability, personnel files show evidence of verification of renewal of Resident Alien status, via renewed "Green Cards" or checks through *USCIS*.

- ◆ Personnel files contain evidence that the candidate/employee was checked on the Office of the Inspector General and General Services Administration (OIG/GSA) websites to ensure the candidate/employee is eligible to provide services to Center for Medicare/Medicaid Services (CMS) funded services

- Personnel files show evidence of annual OIG/GSA website checks for employees of over one years' tenure.

- ◆ **Professional Licensure and Certification**

- Personnel files contain evidence that the HSA verified licenses and/or permits necessary for the candidate/employee to engage in his/her practice directly with the applicable issuing body.
- The HSA maintains a copy of the current license(s) or certificate(s), as applicable, in the personnel file of each employee.
- Personnel files contain evidence that renewal of licenses and permits at required intervals is completed and that all required professional licenses, certificates, and registrations are active, current, and in good standing .
- Personnel files contain evidence of checks with applicable regulatory and licensing organizations to verify the credential is free from current disciplinary action.

- ◆ **If assignments involve driving as part of the job, the following should be maintained in the personnel file:**

- The personnel file contains a copy of current state motor vehicle record(s) (MVR) for the state(s) in which the candidate resided for the past three years.
- The personnel file contains evidence of annual MVR updates and reviews.

- ◆ **Evaluation of Skills**

- Personnel files contain documentation of current Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR), as applicable and required for the position.
- The HSA has an established method to evaluate the applicable skill set of an applicant/employee upon hire and annually thereafter to ensure proper matching with job orders. Documentation of the skill evaluation method is maintained in the personnel file .
- Personnel files contain documentation of annual skills checklist updates.
- The HSA has a method to evaluate the performance of employees at periodic intervals.

◆ **Medical Screening**

- Employee files contain records of, or signed declinations of, HBV Vaccinations, consistent with OSHA 1910.1030, Blood Borne Pathogen Standard, requirements.
- Employee files contain evidence that current (negative) TB test results were obtained at the time of hire, and that annual or more frequent, if warranted, TB tests are administered, and verified for negative results.
- Employees with known positive TB skin test results are required to complete an alternative TB assessment tool, such as a questionnaire, in addition to providing copies of chest x-rays and treatment records, as required by law or recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.
- Proof of required immunizations and medical tests, as required by law, client specifications, practice specialty, are maintained current in file.
- Files contain a current certificate or other current documentation of physical examination of the candidate/employee when required and as permitted.
- Employee files contain documentation of acceptable drug test results, when required, and as permitted.

EMPLOYEE ORIENTATION and TRAINING

Rationale:

The HSA has established methods to conduct orientation to the agency and coordinates client specific orientation at work site in cooperation with the client. General mandatory training is provided upon employment and annually thereafter as required by applicable laws, regulations, and client requirements.

Methods of Compliance:

- ◆ Files contain evidence the HSA's policies and procedures were individually reviewed with each new employee.
- ◆ All employees are informed of the staffing service's workers compensation philosophy, policies and procedures.
- ◆ Accident/injury policies and procedures reviewed with all employees during orientation.
- ◆ The HSA has a documented method to provide orientation training to new employees upon hire.
- ◆ Employee files contain documentation of initial and annual training in compliance with OSHA regulations (e.g., infection control, bloodborne pathogens) and other applicable laws (e.g., HIPAA).

- ◆ Employee files document orientation and training specific and/or unique to the assignment, and client's facility procedures, methods of operation, procedures, and equipment whenever possible.
- ◆ Employee files document initial and annual training on topics required by client to meet client third party accreditation mandates.
- ◆ The HSA has a method to encourage continuing employee education, such as by assisting employees in obtaining required continuing education credits for re-licensure or coordinating CPR classes.

CLIENT COORDINATION AND COMMUNICATION

Rationale:

Appropriate client communication and coordination helps to ensure quality service is provided by the HSA.

Methods of Compliance:

- ◆ The clients are informed of the agency contact information applicable both during business hours as well as after hours call procedures.
- ◆ Client files contain documentation of client-specific requirements for employee credentials, skill set, and job duties, including those that exceed, or are different, from universally-understood standards for healthcare occupations, *(e.g., a client requiring criminal background checks when this is not required by the state nor licensing board for a given profession)*.
- ◆ Clients are provided with a copy of the HSA's Business Code of Ethics, and informed of the HSA's intention to conduct business in accordance with the same.
- ◆ There is a method to inform the client of the accident/injury procedures of the HSA.
- ◆ There is evidence of an understanding between the HSA and the client as to which entity will be responsible for providing:
 - Employee orientation and training specific and/or unique to the assignment, and client's facility (ies), procedures, methods of operation, procedures, and equipment.
 - Orientation and training required by regulatory agencies (e.g., OSHA's Bloodborne Pathogen Standard)
 - HIPAA orientation and training.
 - Employee orientation and training in topics required of the client by 3rd party accreditation organizations.

MANAGEMENT OF SERVICE DURING DISRUPTION EMERGENCIES

Rationale:

In cases of emergency or disaster, the HSA should have a plan designed to prevent or minimize disruption of service.

Methods of Compliance:

- ◆ A written Service Disruption Emergency Management plan is in place that addresses at least the following elements:
 - Recognition of the types of potential emergencies that may affect the HSA's ability to provide service.
 - Contingency plans identifying procedures to be followed, available resources, authority structure, and other necessary elements to effectively manage and overcome emergency service disruptions.
 - Primary and back-up communications and contact systems, to maintain communications with staff and clients during the course of an emergency.

RISK MANAGEMENT

Rationale:

Claims and liability may be minimized or eliminated when handled effectively and in a timely fashion.

Methods of Compliance:

- ◆ The HSA has a method to analyze reported or discovered incidents to identify trends by type, frequency, or severity, and to identify areas in which modified/improved training, procedures, or practices would be of benefit.
- ◆ The staffing service should provide and document risk management/loss control training for full time staff.
- ◆ Staffing service risk management meetings should be conducted at pre-established intervals.
- ◆ **Insurance Coverage/ Financial Responsibility**
 - The HSA should carry a current Workers Compensation insurance policy (ies), or equivalent mechanism(s) of financial responsibility for workers compensation, capable of providing statutory limits of liability, valid in all states of operation.
 - The HSA should carry a current General Liability insurance policy (ies), or equivalent mechanism(s) of financial responsibility, of adequate limits of liability to cover loss from reasonably foreseeable occurrences.

- The HSA should carry a current Professional Liability insurance policy (ies) or equivalent mechanism(s) of financial responsibility, of adequate limits of liability to cover loss from reasonably foreseeable occurrences.
- If HSA field employees operate vehicles while on company business, the HSA should carry a current Automobile Liability insurance policy (ies) or equivalent mechanism(s) of financial responsibility, of adequate limits of liability to cover loss from reasonably foreseeable occurrences.

Incident Management

Rationale:

The HSA should review and resolve all incidents reported or discovered in a timely, consistent, and appropriate manner to continuously improve delivery and quality of services.

Methods of Compliance:

- ◆ The HSA should have an incident management plan.
- ◆ The incident plan/procedure should provide for cooperative communication and handling of the incident between the client, HSA, employees, and other entities.
- ◆ The incident plan/procedure should provide for a review of the incident, utilizing forms that pre-establish categories of information normally utilized in the review of various incidents or alleged adverse events.
- ◆ The incident plan/procedure should require that remedial actions be identified, as applicable to the circumstance, so as to minimize the potential for recurrence of the same or similar incidents.
- ◆ The incident plan/procedure should also include notification or report to appropriate bodies of authority as dictated by the circumstance and in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.

Workers Compensation

Rationale:

The HSA should appropriately and efficiently handle work related injuries.

Methods of Compliance:

- ◆ All accidents/injuries should be investigated, including onsite investigation when possible. Corrective action should be taken as appropriate to the circumstance and in coordination with the client facility.
- ◆ There should be a procedure in place to effectively handle exposure incidents (e.g., needle sticks, airborne exposures, skin exposures) in accordance with the OSHA Bloodborne Pathogen Exposure Control Plan.
- ◆ Drug testing should be conducted post accident for injuries as applicable and/or allowed by jurisdictional laws.

Claims Management

Rationale:

Appropriate claims handling by the HSA can maximize efficiency, minimize liability, and improve client and employee service thereby ensuring proper claim reporting and investigation.

Methods of Compliance:

- ◆ The staffing service should have a qualified individual (staff or contract) designated to handle claims.
- ◆ All claims should be reported in a timely manner as required by the state and/or carrier/TPA.
- ◆ The HSA should conduct at pre-established periodic intervals a review and analysis of claims by consulting the staffing service accident log and/or the carrier/TPA loss runs.
- ◆ An accident/injury log should be maintained and monitored at each office to facilitate a working knowledge of accidents/injuries and so as to identify trends, frequency, and types of accidents.

IMPROVEMENT OF BUSINESS OPERATIONS

Rationale:

Improving the ways of doing business is labeled in many ways, such as quality assurance and performance improvement. The goal should be for the HSA to conduct its business in a way that it continuously monitors its performance and finds ways to improve all services provided.

Methods of Compliance:

- ◆ Solicit feedback from clients regarding service provided by the agency.
- ◆ Solicit feedback from clients regarding service provided by employees.
- ◆ Corporate Risk Manager or designated personnel of equivalent status should analyze all client and employee reports of grievances, complaints, incidents, and claims to identify opportunities for improvement and make recommendations for implementation of such improvements.