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<b>Employee Relationships With Clients Policy</b>	Policy Number: PA-110
Last Reviewed: 2019/09/01	Next Review: 2020/09/01

**Purpose:** To ensure appropriate client-employee interaction and relationships.

**Policy Statement:** It is the policy of the Pinnguaq Association that all employees and employees of partner organizations co-delivering programming will always maintain appropriate interactions and/or relationships with clients who are receiving services through Association programs. Ultimately, employees are expected to exercise good judgement when interacting with clients.

**Scope:** In this case, ‘clients’ refers to but is not limited to participants, co-facilitators and hosts of Pinnguaq Association programs.

#### **Guidelines:**

Certain employee/client relationships require important consideration and care in order to maintain appropriate interactions. Employee-client relationships where the employee is in a position of authority over the client are extremely sensitive and require strict guidelines.

#### **Direct clients**

Examples of direct client/employee relationships that require important consideration include:

1. Children and youth receiving instruction or services through Pinnguaq Association programs;
2. Adults who have special needs receiving instruction or services through Pinnguaq Association programs;
3. Any client receiving financial compensation to participate in Pinnguaq Association programs.

As a condition of employment, in respect the clients referenced, in addition to following all work guidelines and expected behaviours (see policy PA 002) certain behaviours are not permitted. These behaviours are as follows: :

- Socializing outside of delivery of approved Pinnguaq Association job duties;
- Communicating outside of program delivery directly (Phone, online, messaging apps, etc.);
- Any type of personal relationship (Romantic/dating, Sexual contact);
- Consumer exploitation;

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- Solicitation of client services for any personal reasons;
- Paying clients to behave in a specific way;
- Financial interactions of any sort, including loaning money and selling items of any type to a consumer;
- Charging clients money to perform additional duties;
- Any form or threat of physical and/or verbal abuse toward clients;
- Taking any action which could be construed as a violation of human rights, including accessing client information for personal reasons; and
- Providing and/or denying services unequally amongst clients.

### **Indirect clients**

Employees will often interact with other people considered clients. Indirect Clients may include:

- People who work at an organization or institution that has requested Pinnguaq Association services;
- People who work at an organization or institution that is hosting Pinnguaq Association services or programming;
- Community members or others invited to attend events (such as exhibitions, showcases, information sessions) related to Pinnguaq Association services or programming.

When interacting with indirect clients employees must use good judgment to ensure they represent Pinnguaq Association in a respectful and positive manner. Interaction with these clients must not bring the employer into disrepute or cause any conflict of interest. Generally, when interacting with indirect clients, employees should behave as if they are at work and follow all related conduct expectations.

### **Interaction with clients outside work hours**

Certain situations require important consideration and care in order to maintain appropriate interactions. Examples of situations that require important consideration include:

- Socializing with clients and/or staff from client organizations (schools, recreation centres, etc.) outside of scheduled program delivery;
- Attending community events where clients will be present;

In these situations, employees should use good judgment to ensure they represent Pinnguaq Association in a respectful and positive manner.

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### **Communication with Clients and Third-Parties**

1. Employees must at all times adhere to the Pinnguaq Association Social Media policy.
2. Employees who seek to communicate with clients, or third-party members met during programming, or work-related travel, for work-related purposes, must communicate through Pinnguaq monitored communication platforms, preferably on Pinnguaq issued devices.
3. Employees should, where possible, avoid using personal devices for work purposes and shall not use personal accounts or communication platforms (ie. text messages, Facebook, email) to communicate for business purposes. If communication begins on a personal account, an employee should redirect the conversation to an official channel.
4. Employees may create Pinnguaq Associated social media accounts and other online accounts; such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, etc. to communicate for business purposes. Pinnguaq will have access to and may monitor messages and files on such communication platforms, as deemed necessary and appropriate.
5. Employees must discuss, and gain approval from their manager before creating a Pinnguaq associated social media account.
6. Accounts will be created by the Communications and Social Media Manager, who will then provide employees with their Pinnguaq username and password information or employees may create their own Pinnguaq accounts and provide the Communications and Social Media Manager the username and password.
7. Authentication/password reset contacts for employee work accounts must set to be received by the Communications and Social Media Manager

### **Procedure:**

1. Employees are obligated to disclose any relationships with clients.
2. Any violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal, at the discretion of the Pinnguaq Association Board of Directors.