



**Policy No.:** A-44  
**Effective Date:** December 1, 2023  
**Title:** Behavior Expectations for Clients, Patients, and Visitors<sup>1</sup>

The County of San Mateo (County) strives to be an organization where everyone - members of the workforce, partners and the people we serve - feel welcome and safe. To this end, the County's Board of Supervisors (Board) has passed resolutions reaffirming the County's commitment to anti-racism and racial equity ([June 23, 2020](#)), as well as to diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging ([November 14, 2023](#)). Our Board has strongly rejected "hatred, prejudice, racism, sexism, bigotry, bullying, or violence of any manner toward any individual regardless of race, ethnicity, disability, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, socioeconomic status, ancestry, immigration status or country of birth...and efforts to intimidate, threaten, or marginalize any members of the community"<sup>2</sup>.

As part of this commitment, San Mateo County Health strives to ensure a safe, secure, respectful, and healing environment for everyone, including patients, clients, visitors, providers, and staff. In such an environment, we expect kind and respectful behavior from both our staff and those persons receiving services on our premises, at home, via phone or email, virtually online, and in the community.

For this environment to be possible, and echoing our Board's commitments described above, we prohibit:

#### **Abusive Language Including Threats and Slurs**

- Actions and/or behaviors that would reasonably be interpreted as discrimination based on gender, racial, cultural, religious, sexual orientation, and/or other identities.
- Actions and/or behaviors that would reasonably be interpreted as abusive, aggressive, inappropriate, or disruptive.

#### **Harassment**

- Inappropriately crossing personal boundaries, including calling employees at their homes or on personal cell phones, and following employees.
- Language and/or actions that would reasonably be interpreted as sexual harassment, such as suggestive language and unwelcome behavior.

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<sup>1</sup> While all San Mateo County Health work units are strongly encouraged to comply with this policy, there may be specific teams with patient populations that require specialized care. Division directors responsible for such teams may request modification or exemption of the policy by emailing their rationale for such modification or exemption to the Health Chief at [HealthChiefApproval@smcgov.org](mailto:HealthChiefApproval@smcgov.org).

<sup>2</sup> Proclamation No. 4625, [November 14, 2023](#).





**Assault**

- Any act or threat of violence or intimidation, or behavior that would reasonably be interpreted as an act of threat or violence, including but not limited to physical assault.

**Weapons**

- The use or brandishing of any weapon to intimidate, threaten, or assault anyone.

San Mateo County Health may take action to ensure a safe environment, including:

1. Ending a phone call, appointment, or other interaction early;
2. Rescheduling an appointment;
3. Bringing in another individual to assist;
4. Choosing not to reply to abusive texts and/or emails;
5. Requiring a person to leave the County Health facility, which could result in future visits being restricted;
6. Requiring patients or clients to continue their care plan elsewhere;
7. Reporting a person's conduct to the appropriate authorities.

