Emmet County Public Health
Policy & Procedures – Community Services

Subject: **Confidentiality Policy** Date: **5/2/2007**

Section: **Organization** Reviewed/Revised:**1/29/2013 3/20/2019, 5/19/2021, 9/25/25**

Approved by:

PURPOSE: To ensure client and client record confidentiality.

POLICY/PROCEDURE:

1) Information about a patient obtained through oral and written communication, examination and observation, as well as from statements of those persons who may surround the patient shall be considered confidential to all employees, students, and those under contract to Emmet County Board of Health.

2) Communication with the attending physician is part of the Plan of Care and not subject to release of information.

3) Text messaging may be used to communicate appointment reminders, service updates, and other relevant information. Employees will not include protected health information (PHI) in text messages unless the patient has given explicit consent. Patients are informed that standard SMS text messaging is not a fully secure method of communication and carries some risk of unauthorized access. By providing their mobile phone number and choosing to receive text messages, patients acknowledge and accept these risks.

4) No mobile information will be shared with third parties/affiliates for marketing/promotional purposes. All other categories exclude text messaging originator opt-in data and consent; this information will not be shared with any third parties.

5) Agency employees will be oriented to HIPAA and maintain those policies – see Emmet County HIPAA policies and procedures.