



Community Standards on Vendor Interaction

Members of the Central Ohio Hospital Council have each adopted policies regarding interaction by vendors with staff and physicians. The following serve as community-wide standards that are commonly held among our hospital systems. They provide a valuable framework as local hospital systems review and revise their internal policies around vendor interaction. These principles were developed at the direction of the Board of Directors of the Central Ohio Hospital Council, adopted by the Board on June 29, 2012, and take effect community-wide October 1, 2012 .

Purpose Statement

COHC-member hospitals share a common belief that consistent, community-wide standards promote efficiencies for both vendors and hospitals in their joint efforts to promote and adhere to appropriate practices;

Establishing common standards assists in the enforcement of and compliance with patient and staff safety standards and protocols;

Community standards reinforce the importance of patient privacy requirements as required by the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and state privacy laws;

Standard vendor credentialing adoption will promote ethical hospital/vendor relationships, protect all parties from the perception of improper relations, and allow for fair access.

Vendor Access to the Facility, Patient Areas

All vendors and vendor representatives must successfully complete the hospital's vendor and vendor representative credentialing processes. While each hospital's process may differ, a list of basic requirements can be found in the next section.

After successfully completing a hospital's credentialing process and scheduling an appointment, but before being granted access to any hospital area, vendors must sign in/register at the hospitals' designated location (kiosk).



At the time of sign-in/registration, hospitals will provide vendor representatives with an identification badge. The badge must be displayed below the shoulders and above the waist, where it can be easily viewed.

Vendor access to patient care areas is prohibited unless authorized by the hospital in a manner consistent with the hospital's internal policies. If granted access to a patient care area, a vendor representative is required to wear the vendor representative identification badge and, if access is granted to an area where scrubs are required, a red scrub hat. Red scrub hats will be provided by the hospital, and must be worn at all times that scrubs are worn.

Each hospital maintains the right to limit vendor access to patient areas to specific days and may deny access altogether without notice due to any unexpected patient safety concerns that may arise.

During their time in the hospital facility, vendors agree to abide by the hospital's Code of Vendor Conduct. While each hospital's Code of Vendor Conduct may differ, common restrictions include, but are not limited to the following:

- Selling products or services while in patient care areas;
- Accessing physician areas, without written permission of hospital purchasing staff or other hospital representative consistent with the hospital's internal policies;
- Unnecessarily accessing patient identifiable information;
- Visiting areas other than those specified in the appointment;
- No presentations or product trials are permitted without prior approval;
- Unless authorized by the patient in accordance with the Hospital Policy on the Release of Medical Record information, access to the patient's medical record is strictly prohibited;
- Vendors are not permitted to post any type of printed or handwritten material, advertisements, signs or other such promotional materials anywhere on the hospitals' premises;
- Vendors should separate their grant-making functions from their sales and marketing functions. Accordingly, if vendor, patient service representative or other corporate representative wishes to discuss a corporate contribution of cash, equipment, supplies or services, they should immediately notify Foundation or Development offices. The office should then become the principal point of contact with the vendor for grant-making purposes.

Each hospital will develop policies regarding actions to be taken if a vendor does not comply with its Code of Vendor Conduct.

These standards may not apply to certain service vendors who require access to areas within the hospital facilities to perform their duties, such as delivery and courier services, maintenance and emergency services. Service vendors should review their contracts with individual hospital systems for any applicable restrictions.

Standards on Credentialing of Vendors, Vendor Representatives

Franklin County hospitals believe that consistency in vendor and vendor representative credentialing will assist in protecting our organizations, our physicians, our staffs and, most importantly, our patients.



Vendor Credential – In order to ensure the financial health of the vendor, COHC-member hospitals have each adopted requirements in order for a vendor to gain access to the hospital facility. All vendors are required to meet these requirements before their representatives present themselves.

Vendor Representative - After a vendor organization is credentialed by the hospital, its representatives must also complete a credentialing process established by the hospital. While each hospital's vendor credentialing requirements may differ, common requirements include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Photo identification;
- Proof of employment with the vendor organization;
- Proof of current immunizations;
 - Specific immunization requirements are outlined in policies of individual hospital systems.
- Check against the Patriot Act Exclusions List of suspected terrorist organizations;
- Proof of product competency or training provided by supplier organization;
- Review and acknowledgement of hospital policies and procedures.

Principles on Gifts

Staffs of COHC-member hospitals may not accept gifts by vendor organizations or vendor representatives. Gifts could include, but may not be limited to, meals, cash, cash equivalent (gift cards), and entertainment.

Gifts to departments or hospital foundations may be permitted, depending on the internal policies of each hospital. Hospital policies on the acceptance of gifts by departments or foundations include requirements for proper documentation of such gifts.

The appropriateness of donations or support for education opportunities is at the discretion of individual hospital systems.

Hospitals' individual policies regarding permissible gifts or donations will be shared with vendors and vendor representatives at the time that they are credentialed. Acknowledgement that the gift policy has been received and understood is a requirement of the hospital's vendor representative credentialing process.

Vendors and their representatives who are found not to be in compliance with the hospital's gift policies may receive penalties, which could include loss of access to the facility by the vendor organization or vendor representative.

On-going Community Review of Community Standards, Vendor Infractions

COHC-member hospitals will periodically review and update the "Community Standards on Vendor Interaction."



COHC-member hospitals will share with other member hospitals infractions of the “Community Standards on Vendor Interaction” and infractions of hospitals’ individual vendor policies made by vendor organizations or vendor representatives. Hospital representatives will also meet quarterly to review and discuss such infractions.

The “Community Standards on Vendor Interaction” are in place and being enforced in the following hospitals:

Mount Carmel Health System

Mount Carmel East Hospital
Mount Carmel West Hospital
Mount Carmel St. Ann’s Hospital
Mount Carmel New Albany Surgical Hospital

Nationwide Children’s Hospital

The Wexner Medical Center at the Ohio State University

James Cancer Hospital and Solove Research Institute
OSU Harding Hospital
Richard M. Ross Heart Hospital
Ohio State University Hospital
Ohio State University Hospital East

OhioHealth

Doctors Hospital Nelsonville
Doctors Hospital
Dublin Methodist Hospital
Grady Memorial Hospital
Grant Medical Center
Hardin Memorial Hospital
Marion General Hospital
Riverside Methodist Hospital

