

ISSUE DATE: March 28, 2023  
EFFECTIVE DATE: May 18, 2023  
REVISION DATE: XX/XX/XX

RECOMMENDER: Sarah Begeal LCSW DATE: 5/18/23  
Sarah Begeal, Deputy Director of Community Services

ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVAL: Lori Morgan LCSW DATE: 5/18/23  
Lori Morgan, Director of Community Services

COMMUNITY SERVICES BOARD APPROVAL: John Bezirganian MD DATE: 5/18/23  
John Bezirganian, Medical Director &  
Community Services Board Chair

REASON: Update to the 18 NYCRR Part 521 Regulations AND;  
Amendments of the New York State Social Service Law Section 363-D

**Policy and Procedure: Corporate Compliance**  
**Topic: Response to Governmental Investigations**

**Purpose:**

Federal and State law enforcement and regulatory agencies routinely conduct interviews to gather information during audits, inquiries, and investigations. It is important that TIOGA COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HYGIENE (sometimes referred to as "Tioga County Department of Mental Hygiene" or "TCMH") responds to any official requests for information consistently and appropriately. Therefore, this Policy is established to provide guidance on how to handle any unannounced visits by government representatives. This Policy does not address visits by regulatory agencies to perform program certification or quality assurance functions.

**Policy:**

It is the policy of TIOGA COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HYGIENE to appropriately respond and not interfere with any lawful audit, inquiry, or investigation by a government agency.

**Regulatory Reference:**

N/A

## **Procedures:**

1. Announcement of an impending visit by any government investigator or auditor should be immediately reported to the Director of Community Services, who is responsible for notifying the Compliance Officer and legal counsel.
2. Employees will remain courteous and professional when dealing with investigators or agents.
3. Procedures for handling the receipt of a search warrant or subpoena are covered by separate policies. Please refer to specific policies.

## **Visits to any of TIOGA COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HYGIENE's facilities:**

1. If an individual arrives at any Tioga County Department of Mental Hygiene facility and identifies themselves as a government auditor, investigator, or other representative, the individual (agent) will be treated with respect and courtesy. Request the reason for the visit. (Do not attempt to photocopy credentials, as this is a violation of Federal law).
2. The agent will be asked to wait in an unused office or a location where business is not conducted.
3. Immediately contact the Director of Community Services, who will contact the Compliance Officer and legal counsel. The Director of Community Services will identify one employee to be responsible for responding to the agent's questions.
4. Await direction from legal counsel. Do not submit to questioning or an interview. Do not provide documents or other information at this point
5. Refer to policy on Search Warrants, if applicable.
6. Other than providing information to direct the agents to information requested in the search warrant, do not submit to any form of questioning or interviewing.

## **Visits to any location outside TIOGA COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HYGIENE (e.g., personal residence):**

Note: Employees and Board members are free to speak to government investigators or auditors; however, they are not required to submit to questioning. The following is provided as general information regarding off-site visits:

1. Individuals have the right to decline an interview or to postpone an interview until they have had an opportunity to seek legal counsel or other advice.
2. Employees and Board members who agree to be interviewed should always be truthful. If the party does not know the answer to a question, they should say so.
3. Employees and Board members should report any off-site visits by government agents, investigators, or auditors to the Director of Community Services. The Director of Community Services will notify the Compliance Officer and legal counsel.
4. Refer to policy on Search Warrants, if applicable.

**Sanction Statement:**

Non-compliance with this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

**Compliance Statement:**

As part of its ongoing auditing and monitoring process in its Compliance Program, TIOGA COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HYGIENE will review this policy based on changes in the law or regulations, as TIOGA COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HYGIENE's practices change, and, at minimum, on an annual basis. Additionally, this policy will be tested for effectiveness on an annual basis or more frequently as identified in accordance with TIOGA COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HYGIENE's Compliance Program. Testing will include but is not limited to ensuring that the policy is appropriately followed; the policy is effective; the policy has been disseminated to all affected individuals, as well as notified of any updates or changes.

Tracking of the criteria above and results of this testing will be completed by the Compliance Officer, or designee. Additionally, results will be reported to the Compliance Committee and Governing Body on a regular basis.

**Record Retention Statement:**

TIOGA COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HYGIENE will retain this policy and all subsequent revisions, and any related documentation will be retained for a period of, at minimum, six years.