



Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance

DBSA National
Capital Area

Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance DBSA National Capital Area Chapter

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For use by the Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance (“DBSA”) National Capital Area (“NCA”) Chapter.

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Code of Ethics

Statement of Core Values

Our Vision

DBSA NCA envisions wellness for people living with depression and bipolar disorder.

Our Mission

DBSA NCA provides hope, help, support, and education to improve the lives of people who have mood disorders.

Our Values

- 1. Community**—DBSA NCA creates the opportunity for meaningful lives by compassionately engaging with individuals and providing peer-led support groups, educational materials, and wellness tools that focus on resiliency, achievement, creativity, and connection.
- 2. Inspiration**—DBSA NCA celebrates peers' accomplishments, including those of the many talented, successful individuals recognized by the public for their contributions to the world.
- 3. Wisdom**—DBSA NCA advances learning through research and experience while promoting a transformative understanding of mental health through wide, timely dissemination of information about the latest treatments, wellness practices, and lived experiences.
- 4. Responsibility**—DBSA NCA advocates for the right of peers to choose their own paths to mental, emotional, and physical wellness while promoting structures and practices that advance whole health and accessible care for everyone.

Guiding Principles

1. Believe that every individual has strengths and the ability to learn and grow.
2. Respect the rights and dignity of others.
3. Protect the privacy and confidentiality of chapter participants.
4. Never intimidate, threaten, or harass. Never use undue influence, physical force, or verbal abuse. Never make unwarranted promises of benefits.
5. Do not practice, condone, facilitate, or collaborate in any form of discrimination on the basis of ethnicity, race, gender, sexual orientation, age, religion, national origin, marital status, political belief, or mental or physical disability.

6. Display honesty and integrity.
7. Abide by federal, state, and local laws.
8. Do not use the chapter or board for your own personal gain or interests.
9. Be accountable.

Information and Resources

Please contact us at hello@dbsanca.org

Conflict of Interest Policy

Section 1. Purpose of Conflict of Interest Policy

The purpose of this conflict of interest policy is to protect this tax-exempt corporation's interest when it is contemplating entering into a transaction or arrangement that might benefit the private interest of an officer or director of the corporation or any "disqualified person" as defined in Section 4958(f)(1) of the Internal Revenue Code and as amplified by Section 53.4958-3 of the IRS Regulations and which might result in a possible "excess benefit transaction" as defined in Section 4958(c)(1)(A) of the Internal Revenue Code and as amplified by Section 53.4958 of the IRS Regulations. This policy is intended to supplement but not replace any applicable state and federal laws governing conflict of interest applicable to nonprofit and charitable organizations.

Section 2. Definitions

- a. **Interested Person.** Any director, principal officer, member of a committee with governing board delegated powers, or any other person who is a "disqualified person" as defined in Section 4958(f)(1) of the Internal Revenue Code and as amplified by Section 53.4958-3 of the IRS Regulations, who has a direct or indirect financial interest, as defined below, is an interested person.
- b. **Financial Interest.** A person has a financial interest if the person has, directly or indirectly, through business, investment, or family:
 1. An ownership or investment interest in any entity with which the corporation has a transaction or arrangement;
 2. A compensation arrangement with the corporation or with any entity or individual with which the corporation has a transaction or arrangement; or
 3. A potential ownership or investment interest in, or compensation arrangement with, any entity or individual with which the corporation is negotiating a transaction or arrangement.

Compensation includes direct and indirect remuneration as well as gifts or favors that are not insubstantial.

A financial interest is not necessarily a conflict of interest. Under Section 3, paragraph B, a person who has a financial interest may have a conflict of interest only if the appropriate governing board or committee decides that a conflict of interest exists.

Section 3. Conflict of Interest Avoidance Procedures

- a. **Duty to Disclose.** In connection with any actual or possible conflict of interest, an interested person must disclose the existence of the financial interest and be given the opportunity to disclose all material facts to the directors and members of committees with governing board delegated powers considering the proposed transaction or arrangement.
- b. **Determining Whether a Conflict of Interest Exists.** After disclosure of the financial interest and all material facts, and after any discussion with the interested person, he/she shall leave the governing board or committee meeting while the determination

of a conflict of interest is discussed and voted upon. The remaining board or committee members shall decide if a conflict of interest exists.

- c. **Procedures for Addressing the Conflict of Interest.** An interested person may make a presentation at the governing board or committee meeting, but after the presentation, he/she shall leave the meeting during the discussion of, and the vote on, the transaction or arrangement involving the possible conflict of interest.

The chairperson of the governing board or committee shall, if appropriate, appoint a disinterested person or committee to investigate alternatives to the proposed transaction or arrangement.

After exercising due diligence, the governing board or committee shall determine whether the corporation can obtain with reasonable efforts a more advantageous transaction or arrangement from a person or entity that would not give rise to a conflict of interest.

If a more advantageous transaction or arrangement is not reasonably possible under circumstances not producing a conflict of interest, the governing board or committee shall determine by a majority vote of the disinterested directors whether the transaction or arrangement is in the corporation's best interest, for its own benefit, and whether it is fair and reasonable. In conformity with the above determination, it shall make its decision as to whether to enter into the transaction or arrangement.

- d. **Violations of the Conflicts of Interest Policy.** If the governing board or committee has reasonable cause to believe a member has failed to disclose actual or possible conflicts of interest, it shall inform the member of the basis for such belief and afford the member an opportunity to explain the alleged failure to disclose.

If, after hearing the member's response and after making further investigation as warranted by the circumstances, the governing board or committee determines the member has failed to disclose an actual or possible conflict of interest, it shall take appropriate disciplinary and corrective action.

Section 4. Records of Board and Board Committee Proceedings

The minutes of meetings of the governing board and all committees with board delegated powers shall contain:

- a. The names of the persons who disclosed or otherwise were found to have a financial interest in connection with an actual or possible conflict of interest, the nature of the financial interest, any action taken to determine whether a conflict of interest was present, and the governing board's or committee's decision as to whether a conflict of interest in fact existed.
- b. The names of the persons who were present for discussions and votes relating to the transaction or arrangement, the content of the discussion, including any alternatives to the proposed transaction or arrangement, and a record of any votes taken in connection with the proceedings.

Section 5. Compensation Approval Policies

A voting member of the governing board who receives compensation, directly or indirectly, from the corporation for services is precluded from voting on matters pertaining to that member's compensation.

A voting member of any committee whose jurisdiction includes compensation matters and who receives compensation, directly or indirectly, from the corporation for services is precluded from voting on matters pertaining to that member's compensation.

No voting member of the governing board or any committee whose jurisdiction includes compensation matters and who receives compensation, directly or indirectly, from the corporation, either individually or collectively, is prohibited from providing information to any committee regarding compensation.

When approving compensation for directors, officers and employees, contractors, and any other compensation contract or arrangement, in addition to complying with the conflict of interest requirements and policies contained in the preceding and following sections of this article as well as the preceding paragraphs of this section of this article, the board or a duly constituted compensation committee of the board shall also comply with the following additional requirements and procedures:

- a. the terms of compensation shall be approved by the board or compensation committee prior to the first payment of compensation;
- b. all members of the board or compensation committee who approve compensation arrangements must not have a conflict of interest with respect to the compensation arrangement as specified in IRS Regulation Section 53.4958-6(c)(iii), which generally requires that each board member or committee member approving a compensation arrangement between this organization and a "disqualified person" (as defined in Section 4958(f)(1) of the Internal Revenue Code and as amplified by Section 53.4958-3 of the IRS Regulations):
 1. is not the person who is the subject of the compensation arrangement, or a family member of such person;
 2. is not in an employment relationship subject to the direction or control of the person who is the subject of the compensation arrangement;
 3. does not receive compensation or other payments subject to approval by the person who is the subject of the compensation arrangement;
 4. has no material financial interest affected by the compensation arrangement; and
 5. does not approve a transaction providing economic benefits to the person who is the subject of the compensation arrangement, who in turn has approved or will approve a transaction providing benefits to the board or committee member.
- c. the board or compensation committee shall obtain and rely upon appropriate data as to comparability prior to approving the terms of compensation. Appropriate data may include the following:

1. compensation levels paid by similarly situated organizations, both taxable and tax-exempt, for functionally comparable positions. "Similarly situated" organizations are those of a similar size, purpose, and with similar resources;
2. the availability of similar services in the geographic area of this organization;
3. current compensation surveys compiled by independent firms;
4. actual written offers from similar institutions competing for the services of the person who is the subject of the compensation arrangement;

As allowed by IRS Regulation 4958-6, if this organization has average annual gross receipts (including contributions) for its three prior tax years of less than \$1 million, the board or compensation committee will have obtained and relied upon appropriate data as to comparability if it obtains and relies upon data on compensation paid by three comparable organizations in the same or similar communities for similar services.

- d. the terms of compensation and the basis for approving them shall be recorded in written minutes of the meeting of the board or compensation committee that approved the compensation. Such documentation shall include:
 1. the terms of the compensation arrangement and the date it was approved;
 2. the members of the board or compensation committee who were present during debate on the transaction, those who voted on it, and the votes cast by each board or committee member;
 3. the comparability data obtained and relied upon and how the data was obtained;
 4. If the board or compensation committee determines that reasonable compensation for a specific position in this organization or for providing services under any other compensation arrangement with this organization is higher or lower than the range of comparability data obtained, the board or committee shall record in the minutes of the meeting the basis for its determination;
 5. If the board or committee makes adjustments to comparability data due to geographic area or other specific conditions, these adjustments and the reasons for them shall be recorded in the minutes of the board or committee meeting;
 6. any actions taken with respect to determining if a board or committee member had a conflict of interest with respect to the compensation arrangement, and if so, actions taken to make sure the member with the conflict of interest did not affect or participate in the approval of the transaction (for example, a notation in the records that after a finding of conflict of interest by a member, the member with the conflict of interest was asked to, and did, leave the meeting prior to a discussion of the compensation arrangement and a taking of the votes to approve the arrangement);
 7. The minutes of board or committee meetings at which compensation arrangements are approved must be prepared before the later of the date of the next board or committee meeting or 60 days after the final actions of the board or committee are taken with respect to the approval of the compensation arrangements. The minutes must be reviewed and approved by the board and committee as reasonable, accurate, and complete within a reasonable period

thereafter, normally prior to or at the next board or committee meeting following final action on the arrangement by the board or committee.

Section 6. Annual Statements

Each director, principal officer, and member of a committee with governing board delegated powers shall annually sign a statement which affirms such person:

- a. has received a copy of the conflicts of interest policy;
- b. has read and understands the policy;
- c. has agreed to comply with the policy; and
- d. understands the corporation is charitable and in order to maintain its federal tax exemption it must engage primarily in activities which accomplish one or more of its tax-exempt purposes.

Section 7. Periodic Reviews

To ensure the corporation operates in a manner consistent with charitable purposes and does not engage in activities that could jeopardize its tax-exempt status, periodic reviews shall be conducted. The periodic reviews shall, at a minimum, include the following subjects:

- a. Whether compensation arrangements and benefits are reasonable, based on competent survey information, and the result of arm's-length bargaining.
- b. Whether partnerships, joint ventures, and arrangements with management organizations conform to the corporation's written policies, are properly recorded, reflect reasonable investment or payments for goods and services, further charitable purposes, and do not result in inurement, impermissible private benefit, or in an excess benefit transaction.

Section 8. Use of Outside Experts

When conducting the periodic reviews as provided for in Section 7, the corporation may, but need not, use outside advisors. If outside experts are used, their use shall not relieve the governing board of its responsibility for ensuring periodic reviews are conducted.

Crisis Response Guide

What can I do if someone in our support group is talking of suicide or is threatening the safety of others?

As a DBSA support group facilitator, you can be prepared to lead a response to challenging situations that may arise in your group. If someone is threatening suicide or threatening the safety of other people, the facilitator can take steps to manage the situation.

Included in this Crisis Response Guide are suggestions for managing different types of crises in your chapter. There are suggested plans for:

- Situations when a support group participant is talking of suicide.
- Situations when a support group participant is threatening other people.
- Situations when a support group participant has attempted or completed suicide.

While the following information is intended to help your chapter develop a crisis response plan for your support groups, DBSA does not endorse the use of any particular plan. The guide is built from the input of DBSA chapter leaders and experienced support group facilitators. Furthermore, many of the suggestions are borrowed from local DBSA chapter policies and procedures as well as from other respected sources, such as the New Jersey Self Help Clearinghouse and the American Association of Suicidology.

Being prepared is key to responding to crises in your support group. Don't wait for a crisis to happen before you develop your plan. Be sure that your support group participants are aware of your chapter's policies and plans regarding crisis situations.

Special thanks to:

DBSA Boston (MA)

New Jersey Self Help Clearinghouse

American Association of Suicidology

Support Group Participant Who Is Considering Suicide

Tips to Remember:

1. Suicide is preventable. Most people who are suicidal desperately want to live; they are just temporarily unable to see solutions to their situation or see it as a way to end their pain.
2. Talking about suicide does not cause someone to be suicidal. Don't be afraid to ask direct questions about their intentions or desires.
3. The decision to take one's own life rests with that person, but there are steps that others can take to help and support someone through a crisis.
4. Call for help if needed. There are professionals trained for crisis situations. Call 911. Know of other community resources.
5. Never underestimate the power of a support group to provide hope and support to a person in crisis when it is most needed.

If someone is talking of suicide during a support group that you're facilitating, consider the following actions:

- **Check Yourself.** Take a deep breath and remember that as a facilitator your job is to guide the group through helping each other. All the responsibility is not on your shoulders. Make yourself aware of your own reactions and calmly respond to the situation and try not to panic. Feelings of anxiety are contagious, so do your best to trust yourself and provide authentic support to the person in need. When in doubt, think about what you would want if it were you in crisis. How would you want to be treated, what would you want people to say? While the person may not have the same needs or desires, your sharing may help the person express their own needs and desires.
- **Assess.** Express your concern for the other person with concrete examples, and ask direct questions to determine how specific, how available, and how lethal their suicide plan is. Some questions might include:
 - "I notice that you seem to be withdrawing from your loved ones, are you thinking about suicide?"
 - "I'm concerned by the way you're talking. It sounds like you feel as though your life is not worth living – are you considering harming yourself?"
 - "When you say, 'I'd be better off dead,' are you saying that you are planning to end your life? Do you have plans to do that?"

- **Acknowledge Feelings.** Be empathetic not judgmental. Suicidal thoughts are not wrong to have, but they are very dangerous. Do not relieve the other person of responsibility for his/her actions. Acknowledge that you hear them, you understand them, and that they have ultimate control over the decision to take their own life. Don't be afraid to let the person know how important they are to you and the group; let them know these feelings will pass.
- **Engage the Support of Others.** Involve the rest of the group in providing support for the person considering suicide. Ask others to share their stories of survival and recovery. Use the power of the group to provide support, hope, and help. The group should commit to not leave the person alone until he/she is in the care of another responsible person such as a health care professional or a trusted family member.
- **Reassure.** Stress that suicidal thoughts are temporary and that suicide is permanent. Remind the person that there is help and things will get better, even if it doesn't seem like it right now. Ask the person considering suicide to talk about the moments in recent weeks that they have felt the best. Try to bring him/her back to a time when things seemed hopeless but then got better.
- **Be Honest.** Do not promise confidentiality. Do not make unrealistic promises (i.e. no hospitalization, no calling 911, etc.).
- **Get Help.** Do not try to manage this situation alone – or even as a group. Contact trusted people and trained professionals to provide the help that is needed.
 - Tell the person that you will be calling for help.
 - Ask if they have prepared a crisis plan for themselves that you can use to find them the help that they need.
 - Ask if there is a person that they trust whom you can call to assist, such as a family member, doctor, therapist, etc.
 - If no other trained health care professionals are immediately available, and the person appears to be in imminent danger, call 911 for local emergency services. Ask for a Crisis Intervention Team, when available.
- **Support Yourself and Each Other.** After a crisis situation in a support group, it is important to be sure that you have the support that you need, and the group has a chance to debrief about the situation.

- Refer to your own wellness plan or contact your health care professional to process the experience.
- As soon as possible (at the current or the next support group meeting) discuss the experience of supporting a group participant through a suicidal crisis as a group, and determine what went well and how you would do things differently in the future. Encourage each other to have personal crisis plans prepared to be sure that each person is treated as they choose. Included at the end of this guide is “DBSA’s Plan for Life” that can help get individuals started.
- **Prepare for the Future.** Discuss with the group the idea of participants giving permission for an appointed group representative to contact an individual's family, doctor, therapist, or counselor in extenuating circumstances. DBSA does not encourage chapters or support groups to require its participants to provide this information. Work as a group to educate each other on individuals' early warning signs that might indicate they are becoming very ill or potentially dangerous.

Violent/Threatening Support Group Participant

Tips to Remember:

1. Safety first. The safety of the support group participants should be the first priority for any support group facilitator. When deciding on a course of action in a challenging situation, always choose the route that provides for the safety of your group.
2. Call for help if needed. There are professionals trained for crisis situations. Call 911. Know of other community resources.
3. Never underestimate the power of a support group to provide hope and support to a person in crisis when it is most needed.

If someone is threatening to harm another support group participant(s) during a support group that you're facilitating, consider the following actions:

- **Check Yourself.** Take a deep breath and remember that as a facilitator your job is to guide the group through helping each other. All the responsibility is not on your shoulders. Be sure to distinguish between anger and threats. Many people have different thresholds of comfort when it comes to anger. Check with the group to see if they feel the behavior is acceptable or not. Make yourself aware of your own reactions and calmly respond to the situation and try not to panic. Feelings of anxiety are contagious, so do your best to trust yourself and provide authentic support to the person in need.
- **Calmly Confront the Behavior.** Clearly state that the behavior being displayed is not acceptable and firmly ask the person to stop. Be firm but respectful in your tone – do not raise your voice or start speaking as you would to a child. Offer to have a discussion to de-escalate the situation privately in a small group (never meet alone with a person who is threatening).
- **Ask the Group for Help.** Refer to the DBSA Support Group Guidelines (included in the addendum to this guide) to which your group should agree to abide by before each meeting. Remind the threatening participant that he/she is violating his agreement with the group, and calmly ask if they can talk about the situation as a group.
- **Ask Someone to Call for Help.** If it becomes necessary, ask at least two people to go together to call 911 or another appropriate service in your community. The safety of the group participants and the person in distress should be the top priority, so do not hesitate to call for help.

- **Seek To Understand.** The distressed individual may simply be frustrated by their inability to communicate something – people need to be heard, so offer to listen intently to truly understand what the person needs. Say something like, "I can see that you're hurting. I want to help. Help me understand what you're feeling right now. We're here to support you."
- **De-escalate.** Don't overlook the obvious – many situations can be effectively handled by offering to accompany an upset person on a walk or out for a cup of coffee. Keep it simple – some distressed individuals can be asked to come back on a day when they are feeling better. In some cases it may be appropriate to walk the person home, call a friend or family member, or offer to accompany them to their doctor. Remember, never go anywhere alone with a person who is threatening.
- **Support Yourself and Each Other.** After a crisis situation in a support group, it is important to be sure that you have the support that you need, and the group has a chance to debrief about the situation.
 - Refer to your own wellness plan or contact your health care professional to process the experience.
 - As soon as possible (at the current or the next support group meeting), discuss the experience of supporting a group participant through a crisis as a group, and determine how you would do things differently in the future.
 - Encourage each other to have personal crisis plans prepared to be sure that each person is treated as they choose.
- **Prepare for the Future.** Discuss with the group the idea of participants giving permission for an appointed group representative to contact an individual's family, doctor, therapist, or counselor in extenuating circumstances. DBSA does not encourage chapters or support groups to require its participants to provide this information. Work as a group to educate each other on individuals' early warning signs that might indicate they are becoming very ill or a potential danger to others.

Support Group Debriefing in the Event of a Suicide Attempt

Adapted from DBSA Boston

In cases of suicide attempts or completed suicides by a group participant, family member or friend, it is important for a support group to debrief. Society discourages talk of suicide and suicide attempts, but a DBSA support group is one place where people can have these conversations in an atmosphere of trust and care. Before starting any conversations regarding suicide, the facilitator should give an opportunity for those who may be triggered by this topic to excuse themselves.

If the person who has attempted suicide is not present at the meeting...

Honor the group participant's right to privacy and, if possible, speak with them prior to the meeting to see if they are comfortable with this being discussed. If they are not comfortable, please respect this right and lead the group away from discussion about the attempt. If they are, report to the support group the facts as you know them, or ask others to report on the facts of the situation. You do not need to give details about the actual attempt, the focus of the discussion should be on sharing feelings. Give group participants an opportunity to respond individually about how they feel about the suicide attempt. Give ample time to the topic, but be sure to move on to other topics in the meeting – including, of course, the progress toward recovery each person has made since the last meeting. Remind the group of the confidentiality policy of the meeting.

If the person who has attempted suicide is present at the meeting...

If the facilitator is made aware of the suicide attempt, ask the person (in private) if they want to talk about the attempt. If they are not comfortable talking about this with the group, please respect this right and lead the group away from discussion about the attempt. If the person is willing to discuss their attempted suicide, ask them to tell the group how they were feeling then and how they are feeling now. Whether or not the person talks further, ask group participants to respond individually about how they feel about what the person who attempted suicide has reported. Facilitate the group in expressing genuine care and concern, and move on to other topics.

If the group is not aware of an attempted suicide, but the person brings it up during discussion...

Be sure that people talk about it – don't ignore it. Ask the person if it would help her/him to talk about how they were feeling then and how they are feeling now. Help the group express that you are all glad to have the person there. Whether or not the person talks further, ask group participants to respond individually about how they feel

about what the person who attempted suicide has reported. Facilitate the group in expressing genuine care and concern, and move on to other topics.

In the event of a group participant, family member, or friend completing suicide...

At the beginning of the meeting, inform the group of the situation. Tell the facts as you know them, or ask others to report on the facts of the situation. You do not need to give details about the method, the focus of the discussion should be on sharing feelings. Allow the group some flexibility in their communication. Allow grieving, and allow time to just be with one another as a group. Let the group know that they may bring this up during discussion in future meetings, and facilitate a discussion about all the support systems that are available for the group participants after they leave the meeting. Consider bringing in a trained grief counselor or utilize your professional advisor as a resource at a specially arranged meeting. Be sure to discuss other topics at the meeting – including, of course, the progress toward recovery each person has made since the last meeting. You may consider arranging (or having another group participant arrange) for a card, flowers, or other appropriate gestures on behalf of the group.

Disruptive Participant Policy

The DBSA Support Group Guidelines were created by the national office to ensure support group meetings are a safe place for peers to share. DBSA NCA strives to always meet those same guidelines.

When a participant violates the guidelines, it is a disruption to the functioning of the support group. Our facilitators are trained to redirect disruptive behavior. However, if a facilitator determines that the participant is unable or unwilling to follow their guidance, the facilitator may ask the participant to leave the support group for the remainder of the meeting.

If a facilitator or participant reports instances of disruptive behavior to a Board Member and/or Facilitator by a particular individual, a single warning will be issued. The warning will occur in the support group setting or shortly thereafter. If a verbal warning is not possible, then the participant may be contacted by email. The Board will provide the participant with the Disruptive Participant Policy, which outlines the process the Board of Directors will follow if the disruptive behavior continues to be an issue. The participant will also be provided with the DBSA NCA Support Group Guidelines as a reminder of what constitutes appropriate behavior.

If, after the warning, the Board of Directors continues to receive reports of disruptive behavior, a notification will be issued that the member will be banned if the Board deems that the behavior violates the guidelines.

If the Board votes to ban a participant from attending support groups, he or she will be notified.

Appeals Process

A banned participant may request a meeting to appeal the Board's decision. If a meeting is granted, the participant will have 10 minutes to state their case. A Board decision to allow the participant to return must be made by a two-thirds majority in favor of the appeal. The Board's final decision and notification to the participant will be made within two weeks.

Six Month Review

After six months' absence, a banned participant who wishes to return to the support group may submit a written request to the Board of directors. In making its decision, the Board will consider the participant's progress and the initial reason for the ban. A Board decision to allow the participant to return must be made by a two-thirds

majority in favor of the appeal. The Board's final decision and notification to the participant will be made within two weeks.

Sexual Harassment

In cases of documented sexual harassment in a support group setting, the Board may bypass the warning and notification steps and vote to ban the participant with a simple majority in favor of the ban.

Violent and/or Threatening Behavior

The Disruptive Participant Policy does not apply to violent or threatening behavior. Such behavior is covered in our Crisis Response Policy.

Documentation

All disruptive behavior reports, actions, results, and follow-ups must be recorded in writing via email and submitted to the Board.

5/28/23
Rev 10/21/24

Records and Retention Policy

Record

Number of years

Corporate Records

Newsletters	2 years
Volunteer Contact List	Permanent
Chapter By-laws	Permanent
IRS Determination Letter	Permanent
Minutes (board executive session)	5 years

Financial Records

Quarterly Financial Reports/Presentations to the Board	3 years
Checks Issued	2 years
Canceled Checks	1 year
Bank statements	5 years
Annual Budgets	3 years
Volunteer expense reports	3 years
Independent contractor invoices	3 years

Removal of Facilitator and/or Board Member Policy

Removal of Board Member Policy

All volunteers including board members are valued members of DBSA NCA. However, if a board member is not meeting the expectations of his or her role such as adhering to the Code of Ethics, the board will take the necessary actions to protect the interests of the organization. The board will work with the individual to resolve issues internally whenever possible.

If the issues cannot be resolved, the board of directors may vote to remove the board member from the board.

Per DBSA NCA's bylaws, any officer or board member may be removed by the board of directors for any reason, with or without cause as stated in the chapter's bylaws by a majority vote.

If the board votes to remove a board member, he or she will be notified in writing.

Removal of Facilitator Policy

All volunteers including facilitators are valued members of DBSA NCA. However, if a facilitator is not meeting the expectations of their role as listed below, the board will address those issues directly with the facilitator.

If those issues cannot be resolved, the board of directors may vote to relieve the facilitator of their duties. If the board votes to remove a facilitator, the facilitator will be notified either verbally or in writing. The facilitator may request official written notice. The facilitator may also continue to participate in the chapter's support group meetings as a non-facilitator.

Facilitator Expectations

1. The facilitator will follow DBSA NCA's Code of Ethics.
2. The facilitator will open and close the support group meetings on time.
3. The facilitator will open the meeting with the official Welcome Statement, Preamble, and Support Group Guidelines.
4. The facilitator will follow and enforce the Support Group Guidelines.
5. The facilitator will notify the board of disruptive participant behavior.

Whistleblower Policy

DBSA NCA requires board members, employees, and volunteers to observe high standards of business and personal ethics in the conduct of their duties and responsibilities. As representatives of DBSA NCA, we must practice honesty and integrity in fulfilling our responsibilities and comply with all applicable laws and regulations.

Reporting Responsibility

This Whistleblower Policy is intended to encourage and enable individuals to raise serious concerns internally so that DBSA NCA can address and correct inappropriate conduct and actions. It is the responsibility of all board members, employees, and volunteers to report concerns about violations of DBSA NCA's code of ethics or suspected violations of law or regulations that govern DBSA NCA's operations.

No Retaliation

It is contrary to the values of DBSA NCA for anyone to retaliate against any board member, employee, or volunteer who in good faith reports an ethics violation, or a suspected violation of law, such as a complaint of discrimination, or suspected fraud, or suspected violation of any regulation governing the operations of DBSA NCA. A person who retaliates against someone who has reported a violation in good faith is subject to discipline up to and including removal.

Reporting Procedure

Individuals with ethical concerns or complaints should submit their concerns to The President.

Acting in Good Faith

Anyone filing a written complaint concerning a violation or suspected violation must be acting in good faith and have reasonable grounds for believing the information disclosed indicates a violation. Any allegations that prove not to be substantiated and which prove to have been made maliciously or knowingly to be false will be viewed as a serious disciplinary offense.

Confidentiality

Violations or suspected violations may be submitted on a confidential basis by the complainant. Reports of violations or suspected violations will be kept confidential to the extent possible, consistent with the need to conduct an adequate investigation.

Handling of Reported Violations

DBSA NCA's Compliance Officer will notify the person who submitted a complaint and acknowledge receipt of the reported violation or suspected violation. All reports will be promptly investigated and appropriate corrective action will be taken if warranted by the investigation.