

# **Strategic Plan**

FY 2021 - 2024

Families in Transition extends a heartfelt thank you to the Strategic Planning Committee for their insights, commitment to the mission, and continued support in the development of this Strategic Plan

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### **OVERVIEW**

## Introduction

Throughout its history Families in Transition has been an integral part of the community, providing housing and homelessness services to the most vulnerable. Although these activities will remain core to what the organization achieves, we recognize that we have a responsibility to show measurable improvement over time to partner social service agencies, the public, our donors and those that rely on our services.

With this implied obligation as the backdrop for continual improvement, our leadership will seek to increase its internal capacity so that we can truly define, create and achieve increases to our core services and programs, and ensure continuation of such services through sound financial growth and stability. The leadership aspires to create greater community impact in order to meet the growing needs and expectations and to align with state and local strategies and direction around the issues of homelessness.

The Strategic Plan is a dynamic guide for Families in Transition leadership and is intended to be updated periodically or when significant change occurs within the organization. The plan is designed to build and better focus community services by outlining protocols that will help staff mobilize the necessary resources to successfully implement their goals.

Building partnerships and promoting volunteerism, developing our staff, increasing our revenue, and always seeking new opportunities to create more housing will be key in the developing solutions for us to help resolve many of our community's most complex issues. The leadership team is committed to making progress toward these goals and being proactive in managing the challenges and needs of New Hampshire and its residents.

At the time of the creation of this plan, the nation was in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. It is important to know that during the entire pandemic the organization remained fully functional as an essential service. For over 30 years Families in Transition has provided selfless service to families and individuals experiencing homelessness. It has housed thousands of individuals during that time, along with providing food through our dining and food pantry services. We have also delivered leading individualized substance use treatment services for people in recovery.

The Families in Transition leadership team would like to thank the communities it serves, its volunteers and its donors for the tremendous support they have provided to the organization in the past, and thanks you in advance for your support of our future.

Kind Regards,

The Leadership Team Families in Transition

### **WHO WE ARE**

### **Our Mission**

To prevent and break the cycle of homelessness.

### **Our Aspiration**

To be the most effective and respected resource in our region preventing and breaking the cycle of homelessness.

### **Our Values**

- Treating others with dignity
- Building collaborative relationships
- Empowering people

### **Our Core Strategy**

- Pursuing evidence-based approaches to address the root causes of homelessness
- Meeting people where they are by providing essential needs while engaging clients in a transformative process to reach their fullest potential
- Providing all the resources and support someone needs to prevent and break the cycle of homelessness
- Building strong, collaborative relationships with our clients and partners to provide the best support possible

### Why is Our Symbol a Butterfly?

The butterfly speaks to the hidden potential within every human being. It represents periods of personal growth and transition. As families and individuals exiting homelessness experience a significant shift in their inward and outward lives, the butterfly demonstrates how they can navigate drastic changes gracefully. We are here to ease the process.

### **Our Value Proposition**

We are the only organization in the region providing a wide range of services and support necessary to assist individuals and families in preventing and breaking the cycle of homelessness within a single agency.

## 1. Program and Service Models

### Evidence-based approaches addressing the root causes of homelessness

Homelessness is a complex problem that requires comprehensive solutions. Pictures of homelessness can look very different, depending on the individual or family and their unique situation and needs. We design programs and services using evidence-based models and practices to ensure that people have the seamless support they need to find and maintain a home long-term. Our goal is to partner with our program participants and serve as a single hub they can utilize wherever they are in their journey in exiting homelessness.

### **1.1. Housing First Approach**

Housing First is an approach focused on prioritizing housing in the delivery of homelessness support. Putting permanent housing first in the development of programs and services for families and individuals creates a platform for them to achieve an improved overall quality of life. Finding employment, addressing health and wellness issues, and recovering from the traumatic impacts of homelessness are made possible with a stable home.

### 1.2. Integrated Case Management and Services

Families in Transition aims to serve the whole person. Integrating case management and supportive services into all of our programs is a critical success factor for people exiting homelessness. We build strong, collaborative relationships with our program participants and help them best utilize all available support structures. Our experienced case management team works directly with individuals and families exiting homelessness and connects them to services that will support them and promote long-term stability.

### **1.3. Collaboration with Community Partners**

To deliver comprehensive services for our program participants, we collaborate with community partners to ensure they have the solutions they need. We work with organizations in healthcare, first responders, and other local and state agencies and housing providers.

## 2. Property Management

### Dignified housing solutions for families and individuals in need

Families in Transition operates more than 25 properties around the state of New Hampshire. Our residential buildings and programs provide housing and emergency shelter for nearly 500 people on any given night, including families and children. These refurbished historic sites and newly built housing facilities are carefully planned and maintained with sustainable design principles. Our buildings offer clean, safe, affordable living to the many residents who come to call our properties home.

### 2.1. Property Administration

Our Property Administration team works directly with tenants in our housing, as well as with our housing intake team to locate apartments and place new tenants. This team works hand-in-hand with residents to assess and ensure our housing is properly maintained.

### 2.2. Property Maintenance

Our Property Maintenance team serves a variety of roles in the upkeep of our properties, including updates and improvement, repairs, and supporting tenant maintenance requests. They also provide cleaning services for common areas and our commercial properties.

### 2.3. Property Development

Families in Transition has a strong history of real estate development, with proven experience in renovating and repurposing properties for the intended purpose of providing affordable housing and supportive services. Our team is committed to creating dignified and suitable housing solutions for people exiting homelessness and our low-income community members. Working with construction partners and other vendors, our team is skilled in the management and execution of projects that deliver value to people in need.

### 2.4. Property Governance and Oversight

In 2009, Families in Transition established Housing Benefits, a Community Based Housing Development Organization (CHDO), in response to encouragement from both the City of Manchester and the New Hampshire Housing and Finance Authority. Housing Benefits is an independent nonprofit with a governing Board of Directors whose aim is to increase the supply and quality of affordable housing in New Hampshire. By working to increase affordable housing supply, Housing Benefits works to alleviate one of the most significant causes of homelessness.

## **1. Housing Programs**

Everyone needs a place to call home

We believe housing is an essential need that must be met to successfully prevent and break the cycle of homelessness. Barriers faced by people experiencing homelessness are overwhelming and extremely challenging to overcome without a safe and secure place to call home. Families in Transition provides housing options to meet people where they're at in every stage of their journey as they work to exit homelessness. Our properties are located in cities and towns around the state, including Concord, Dover, Manchester, and Wolfeboro.

### 1.1. Permanent Affordable Housing

People who meet required income limitations can secure permanent affordable housing through Families in Transition. These low-income residents are able to live independently in housing where costs are reasonable and do not fluctuate with the rental market. For many families and individuals, this affordable housing is a critical option to keep rental costs down, allowing them to maintain housing stability.

### 1.2. Permanent Supportive Housing

Similar to permanent affordable housing, residents of permanent supportive housing at Families in Transition live in their own apartment unit. They receive the additional benefit of an assigned and dedicated case manager who works with them to set and achieve personal goals and break down barriers to exiting homelessness and maintaining stability.

### 1.3. Transitional Supportive Housing

Residents can utilize transitional living programs as a temporary means to finding permanent housing. Stays typically range from 18 - 24 months. Transitional living options also include comprehensive case management and supportive services.

### 1.4. Recovery Housing

People experiencing substance use disorders and in need of programs and services utilize recovery housing as a method of support on their journey to abstinence and recovery. Residents benefit from a community environment, sharing living settings with people on a common path towards long-term recovery.

### 1.5. Rapid Re-Housing

Various housing assistance programs and services are available in the community. Through our case management and supportive services team, families and individuals receive guidance with housing offerings in the community to help them connect to these sources and find housing solutions that will work best for them.

## 2. Emergency Homelessness Services

### Providing safety, security, and basic needs and acting as a bridge to supportive services

Members of the community experiencing homelessness are at a much higher risk for health issues, malnutrition, and the negative impacts of exposure to inclement weather. Maintaining proper nutrition and hygiene proves ever-challenging due to limited access to resources.

The barriers faced by people living unsheltered require a comprehensive array of services to meet people where they are with care. Whether the need is for housing and food, medical care, or overcoming mental health and issues with substance use, each case can prove to be unique.

### 2.1. Emergency Shelters

Our emergency shelter programs provide safe and secure locations for families and individuals who are seeking refuge from unsheltered homelessness. We offer emergency shelter for adults and families with children in multiple locations.

### 2.1.1. Adult Emergency Shelters

Our adult emergency shelter programs offer a low-barrier congregate living setting for people experiencing homelessness over the age of 18. Program participants have access to hot showers, a bed each night, nutritious meals each day, and day programming. They can connect with a case manager who will help them access local resources related to housing, job training and placement, and other services, including healthcare through HealthCare for the Homeless from Catholic Medical Center, located on-site in our Manchester shelter.

### 2.1.2. Family Emergency Shelters

We offer two family emergency shelters, one in Manchester and one in Wolfeboro, New Hampshire. They offer designated units for families with children and serve many of the same needs that are found in our other shelter programs, including regular meals, and on-going support to help people exiting homelessness. Case management services are key in helping families find suitable housing for their family and in connecting people to resources for themselves and for their children.

### 2.2. Homelessness Outreach, Triage, and Case Management

Our outreach team works directly with those who are living unsheltered or without suitable living arrangements. They partner with other emergency service providers to connect with people who are experiencing homelessness and provide on-going assistance. Working directly with other providers, they provide on-going case management and act as a channel to various resources that are available, including emergency shelter and housing, health services, community services, and mental health and substance use treatment.

## **3. Food Programs**

### Serving the most essential physiological needs of our community members

Proper nutrition is key in caring for the health and well-being of people experiencing homelessness and households at risk of becoming homeless. We offer a variety of food programs to help prevent and break the ongoing cycle of hunger and malnourishment.

Low-income households and those experiencing homelessness face significant challenges in the area of health and nutrition. The lack of financial resources (among other things) creates a barrier to accessing healthy foods. This lack of healthy food options leads to an imbalanced diet that puts people at risk of malnutrition and other health challenges.

### **3.1. Dining Services**

Families in Transition supports basic needs of individuals at our emergency shelters and recovery housing programs. Our culinary staff prepares healthy meals each day in our fully licensed kitchen and ensures that people's health and well-being are of the utmost importance.

### **3.2. Food Pantry Services**

Our food pantry serves as a resource for low-income families in the community to reduce their vulnerability to food insecurity and homelessness. Qualifying low-income individuals and families can access our food pantry in Manchester. Families and individuals can utilize the pantry on a monthly basis and will receive groceries based on the number of individuals residing in the household.

## 4. Substance Use Treatment

### Committed to success in recovery

Homelessness and substance use are often interconnected in the complex cycle of homelessness. As part of a comprehensive approach to addressing homelessness, our Willows Treatment Center offers substance use treatment services, including outpatient and intensive outpatient services by licensed counselors and therapists.

### **4.1. Client Assessments**

Individuals seeking substance use treatment meet with our counselors to assess their needs and determine their necessary level of care. We specialize in providing evidence-based practices to address substance use disorders as well as mental health and trauma to support overall wellness and recovery. We break down barriers so each person receives effective treatment.

### 4.2. Intensive Outpatient Services

Through our Intensive Outpatient programs individuals receive therapy and case management to address their unique goals while in treatment. This phase of treatment allows participants to maintain their daily responsibilities such as parenting and employment while addressing their substance use and mental health.

### 4.3. Outpatient Services

Participants in our Outpatient programs focus on maintaining their recovery and building concrete skills that support a healthy lifestyle. Staff support participants in recognizing and understanding the effects of substance use and trauma on their lives and families.

### 4.4. Recovery-Specific Housing

Recovery housing provides a safe and supportive environment to build a foundation for recovery. Individuals live in a substance-free setting and engage in peer support programs and other services to overcome the barriers to living a happy and useful life. Families in Transition offers recovery housing in Manchester, NH alongside outpatient recovery services and substance use treatment at our Willows Treatment Center to aid clients in their journey.

### 4.4.1. Men's and Women's Recovery Housing

We provide recovery housing at dedicated locations for men and women. In shared living quarters, program participants engage with other individuals in the program, participate in peer support groups, and work on their recovery together.

### 4.4.2. Recovery Housing for Women with Children

Families in Transition provides a unique program for mothers, affording them stability and support as they work toward recovery. Our recovery-based housing offers dedicated units that are safe and substance free for mothers with children and those working toward reunification with their child.

## 1. Outfitters Thrift Store

The Outfitters Thrift Store offers a large, open showroom and a local store feel with a wide selection of everything from gently used furniture, housewares, and clothing for the whole family to books, movies, small electronics, and seasonal decorations. Outfitters Thrift Store is the Manchester destination for selection and savings with off-street parking and a convenient location near I-293, downtown Manchester, and South Willow Street.

The store serves as a vital source of revenue to fund the mission of Families in Transition and also serves as a channel for donated goods to support our program participants, whether it is for essential clothing needs for people experiencing homelessness in our emergency shelter, or through store vouchers for low-income families in our housing programs.

## 2. NH Coalition to End Homelessness

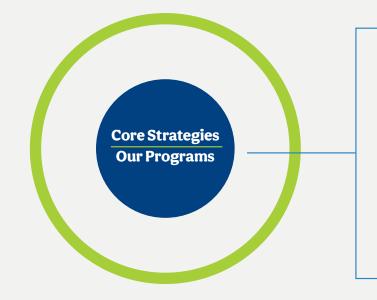
The New Hampshire Coalition to End Homelessness (NHCEH) is a nonprofit organization, founded in 1990. As homelessness increased throughout the state, individuals and organizations began working on solutions to house and serve this growing population. In response, the NHCEH organized leaders in the state to research solutions on ending homelessness, educate providers on best practices, and empower people to advocate on behalf of those experiencing homelessness.

The coalition engages in research, education, and advocacy in the community that aids the work of homeless service providers around the state, providing vital data and information for the public and the media around homelessness.

### **CORE STRATEGIES AND ENABLING STRATEGIES**

## 1. Our Core Strategies and Programs

The following charts describe Core Strategies and Programs and also explain the relationship between these strategies and the supporting Enabling Strategies.



- Pursuing evidence-based approaches to address the root causes of homelessness
- Meeting people where they are by providing essential needs while engaging clients in a transformative process to reach their fullest potential
- Providing all the resources and support someone needs to prevent and break the cycle of homelessness
- Building strong, collaborative relationships with our clients and partners to provide the best support possible

## 2. Enabling Strategies

Our Core Strategies and Program are in the center of the diagram. They are surrounded by Enabling Strategies. Our Core Strategies define our Program and the way we interact with clients. Enabling Strategies define how we gather, deploy and manage the resources we need to fulfill our mission and execute our Core Strategies.



## **3. Strategic Planning Process**

### **3.1. Implementation and Modification**

On an annual basis, the CEO will present the Families in Transition Board of Directors with a set of proposed goals and action items for the next 12 – 24 months. Each goal and action item will be based on the board-approved strategic plan. Completion of a goal will not be tied to any specific time period because many strategic goals are going to perpetually be a work-in-progress or may take more than a year to complete. There is also a risk that significant events (e.g. a global pandemic) may overwhelm a carefully crafted plan.

The CEO is expected to delegate responsibility for meeting strategic goals to other Families in Transition executives and managers, but the CEO remains responsible for implementation of the plan.

The CEO's annual performance review and evaluation will be based on strategically important goals that the CEO selected, and the board approved, at the beginning of each year. If the CEO determines that events during the year require a change in goals, the CEO should promptly inform the board and submit a new set of goals.

The CEO has complete discretion to propose modifications to the strategic plan at any time, and to submit a revised plan to the Board for discussion.

### 3.2. Achieving our Plan and Reaching our "Future State"

In the following section are specified goals for our Core Strategies and Enabling Strategies. We expect the goals for our Core Strategies and Programs to remain relatively unchanged year-to-year, unless we decide to make a change to our Core Strategies or Program which would only happen if the change is driven by evidence-based practices and data. Conversely, we expect the goals related to our Enabling Strategies to change more frequently as we build our capacity and improve our capabilities.

### Through successful implementation of the plan, Families in Transition will:

- Be recognized as a local leader in housing, homelessness services, and substance use treatment and as an essential and key partner with city and state agencies, businesses, community organizations and faith based organizations.
- Be proactive in all areas of the state and engage with communities on issues of homelessness and substance use in order to better respond to needs of those most vulnerable.
- Work to attract and retain talented and diverse staff, volunteers, and board members who are strategically recruited and properly trained to create an inclusive environment where our team feels successful and appreciated.
- Ensure that best practices, successful program models and effective strategies are sought and implemented throughout the organization, also leveraging technology solutions to support all operational, fundraising and programmatic elements.
- Optimize visibility of our mission and programs in order to achieve our greatest brand awareness and fundraising potential.

### 3.3. Programs

### Improve and convey the effectiveness of program and service delivery.

### Background

As the key element of success for Families in Transition, we are committed to building upon our Core Strategies and improving the delivery and effectiveness of our programs. Since our founding, we have experienced continual growth and expansion in the nature and scope of the services we offer.

We grew from a single housing project to one of New Hampshire's largest affordable housing and homeless service provider. With more than 200 affordable housing units, the state's largest adult shelter, two family shelters, a food pantry, thrift store, and substance use treatment center, there is great range and depth within our program and service offerings.

The primary intention of this Strategic Plan is to expound upon the specifics of our model and identify opportunities to enhance current program and service offerings. As part of this effort, it's important that we gather and present data to demonstrate the overall effectiveness of our work.

### **Desired Outcomes:**

- Ensure the readiness of resources for program and service delivery.
- Implement methods to improve efficiency, reduce costs, and generally become more efficient and effective delivering our programs to those in need.
- Document the evidence-based programming leveraged by and best suited for Families in Transition to solidify and improve upon our best practices.
- Demonstrate the effectiveness of our model through data and storytelling.
- Raise awareness of our services to staff, donors, volunteers, and the public in general.

### 3.4. Facilities

### Scale housing supply and food service capacity for sustainable growth.

### Background

The demand for affordable housing, emergency homeless services, and food assistance is growing in the areas Families in Transition serves and in other communities in New Hampshire. Given the continual growth experienced by the organization over the past several decades, it is important to approach further expansion responsibly. We want to ensure we deliver the most effective programs possible while utilizing our resources efficiently. Growing wisely in line with our model is critical to our long-term ability to fulfill our mission and needs to be at the forefront of each new project we take on.

- Identify opportunities to expand our footprint and capacity in a manner that allows us to properly manage the growth and operations of each program.
- Explore projects that will allow us to increase our ability to serve people experiencing homelessness and food insecurity in our service areas.
- Maintain our position and reputation as a leading affordable housing organization.

### 3.5. Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

### Offering a welcoming and inclusive environment for our staff and those we serve.

### Background

Families in Transition values the diversity of its workforce, its suppliers, partners and the people we serve. We recognize the power of harnessing collective similarities and difference that equip our organization and its people to deliver on the our mission of service in a manner that is both sensitive and culturally competent. In order to be more sensitive and culturally competent, Families in Transition is implementing a DEI strategy to help us further define our path forward in this important work

Fostering a diverse and inclusive culture for our employees and volunteers is essential to the success of our mission. The Families in Transition Board and Leadership team recognizes diversity and inclusion as a strategic differentiator and is dedicated to defining and strengthening in this area.

- For our people increasing diversity at all leadership levels.
- Increasing hiring selection, retention and promotion of diverse talent to mirror or exceed diverse labor force representation.
- Ensuring that a diverse candidate pool is considered for management level positions.
- Supporting current recruitment, hiring and development strategies and lead efforts to expand strategies.
- Participating in periodic review of performance measurements on advancing workforce diversity.
- For our culture creating and sustaining an inclusive and culturally competent organization.
- Employees and volunteers participating in diversity awareness and sensitivity programs.
- Ensuring opportunities for ongoing training exists for all staff and volunteers.
- For our community- leveraging inclusion programs to enhance mission delivery, volunteer recruitment, donor and partnership engagement.
- Working with our diversity and inclusion committee to develop an implementation plan to engage local partner organizations to further our learning and continually develop our DEI knowledge.

### 3.6. Revenue Sources

### Diversify our funding sources and strengthen relationships with our supporters.

### Background

The mix of funding that Families in Transition has utilized historically has been a mix of federal, state, and local funding, supplemented by revenue from other foundations, charitable trusts, and private funders. A large percentage of our programmatic budgets still rely heavily on federal and state funds which can be restrictive or limiting in long-term growth. Developing private funding sources will provide greater freedom and flexibility to provide services based on the methods we find to be most effective for our clients. We want to build a diversified and sustainable financial resource base. We can do this by providing opportunities for private donors to contribute in meaningful ways alongside responsible financial management and reporting about the donors contribution.

### **Desired Outcomes:**

- Evaluate sources of funding and our funding mix regularly to determine strategic changes needed to continually strengthen our fundraising/philanthropic efforts.
- Evaluate sources of government funding, develop criteria for evaluating sources, such as alignment with our program, sustainability, constraints, etc and base our grant-writing focus on our analysis of those criteria.
- Increased fundraising revenue year-over-year.
- Promote donor opportunities for legacy giving and bequests.
- Increased number of corporate and individual donors year-over-year.

### 3.7. Finance & Management

### Develop and maintain the highest level of ethical and secure financial practices.

### Background

As a recognized leader and esteemed organization in the community, Families in Transition is committed to maintaining the highest level of ethical business practices and financial reporting standards throughout the organization. We seek to remain a highly regarded resource in the community through planning, organizing, controlling and monitoring financial resources with integrity while aiming to achieve our organizational goals and objectives.

- Ensure Families in Transition has the appropriate financial business intelligence systems to monitor all financial resources of the organization.
- Timely dissemination of monthly, quarterly and annual financial information to internal and external stakeholders.
- Create financial plans and forecasts aimed at facilitating efficiency in the current and future activities of the organization.
- Create the appropriate contingency measures for both operational and strategic risks.
- Create the internal controls necessary over financial resources to reduce financial risks.

### 3.8. Communications

### Clearly articulate and garner support for the organization's mission and Strategic Plan.

### Background

The development of a long-term Strategic Plan represents a significant evolution for Families in Transition. Internal and external communication to enroll our key stakeholders in our new strategy and win their support is essential for success. The communications element of the plan will work to bring alignment of our board, leadership team, and staff with the strategic goals and initiatives. It's also important to make sure internal and external stakeholders understand and strongly agree with our goals, and why those goals matter in the long-term fulfillment of our mission.

### **Desired Outcomes:**

- Develop internal and external communications plan to communicate our strategy.
- Build awareness of the Families in Transition strategic plan at all levels of the organization.
- Generate engagement and commitment of key stakeholders for our goals and initiatives.
- Generate enthusiasm for Families in Transition and the strategic plan.
- Garner support for elements of the Core and Enabling Strategies.

### 3.9. Collaboration

### Identify, evaluate, and select opportunities that advance our mission.

### Background

Collaboration with community partners is critical to the success of our organization and the people we serve. Opportunities for collaboration that are presented to us are diverse in nature and range from projects large and small, including work with government entities, other service providers, and various for-profit and nonprofit organizations. It is important that our leaders and managers be mindful of the costs and benefits of each project. We must work to ensure we take on projects that align to our mission and make effective use of our limited resources.

- Evaluate opportunities for collaboration with our mission and strategic plan in mind.
- Promote and model effective collaboration and advocacy in New Hampshire.
- Preserve good-working relationships if we choose not to pursue opportunities.

### 3.10. People

### Enhance the culture, people and environment of our organization.

### Background

Families in Transition is committed to being the nonprofit of choice for employees and volunteers who want to make a difference in their community. Our greatest assets are our mission and our people. It's our job to create opportunities that allow people to fulfill on their own personal purpose in a collaborative, energetic and exciting climate while building successful and collaborative relationships with the people we serve. We are committed to investing in and developing our people to be their best selves and have the latitude and support to do meaningful work, led by qualified leaders of character.

#### **Desired Outcomes:**

- Enhance our recruiting strategies to attract the right talent whose personal goals align with our mission, values, and culture.
- Hire the right people for the right positions and retain them long-term.
- Strengthen employee engagement by enhancing manager effectiveness and encouraging our people to do their best work.
- Develop and provide quality training and mentoring programs.
- Develop and implement a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion strategy.

### 3.11. Board Governance

### Ensure sound governance and operational accountability.

### Background

Sound organizational board governance will help guide the work of our strategy and the continuation of ethical business practices. Families in Transition strives to make progress on the goals described in our Strategic Plan and the outlined initiatives will be the basis for evaluation of the performance of our Board of Directors, CEO, and Executive Leadership team.

- Develop on-going support of the strategic plan from our Board of Directors.
- Oversee the management of Families in Transition and advise executive officers.
- Uphold the values, integrity, and reputation of the organization.