

Patient and Visitor Code of Conduct

Vanderbilt University Medical Center

Respect

We believe that you're the most important member of your health care team. As a team, we ask for your support in making Vanderbilt a safe, caring place where we respect one another and make everyone feel that they belong.

Our Patient and Visitor Code of Conduct helps us meet this goal. We do not tolerate words or actions that:

- show disrespect
- are racist
- discriminate
- are hostile
- harass.

We pledge to treat you with respect, honesty, dignity, and compassion. And we expect you, your family, and your visitors to treat others the same way.

Mistreatment and discrimination

We do not allow behavior by any patient or visitor that mistreats or discriminates against our staff, other patients, or other visitors. This includes in-person encounters, messages in My Health at Vanderbilt, emails or letters, phone calls, or any other setting.

It includes any behavior that:

- makes anyone feel unsafe
- limits our staff from giving care

- disturbs another patient's care or experience.
- is abusive or shows disrespect
- discriminates or is racist.

Examples of bad behaviors

- **Racism:** offensive or bigoted comments about someone's race or ethnicity, or sarcastic insults about a person based on their background
- **Discrimination:** judging or singling out someone based on their
 - race, ethnicity, national origin, or skin color
 - sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, or gender expression
 - age
 - disability
 - religion
 - immigration status
 - genetic information
 - veteran or active military status
 - any other legally protected status.

One example of this is to refuse care or service from a staff member based on their race, skin color, ethnicity, or gender.

- **Verbal abuse:** name calling, yelling, cursing, belittling, or ranting
- **Emotional abuse:** bullying, stalking, or any acts or words that make our staff feel unsafe or uncomfortable.

- **Sexual abuse:** unwanted touching or use of sexual or vulgar words or other actions
- **Threats:** any words or actions meant to threaten or intimidate others
- **Physical abuse:** any violent actions or physical abuse such as throwing things, blocking, hitting, kicking, or spitting.

How we'll respond to these behaviors

If we believe you've violated this code, we'll give you a chance to explain your point of view. We'll then carefully consider your response before we make any decisions about your future care at VUMC.

If we decide that you violated the code, we may:

- report your behavior to other VUMC staff members
- make you sign an agreement or contract that says you will not do it again
- force you to leave the building or the medical center property
- restrict your visitors
- document your behavior in the patient's medical record

- ask you to leave without getting your care, treatment, or services. For example: if you mistreat a clinician, you will not be allowed to have your appointment.
- stop your non-emergent care. This could be for a single clinician, an entire department or service, or all of VUMC, including all of our hospitals and clinics across the region.
- take away your privilege to use your My Health at Vanderbilt account
- call the police.

This information is available in Spanish and Arabic upon request.