



## VNS Health Personal Care

### POLICY

**TITLE:** Policy on Texting for Paraprofessional staff

**APPLIES TO:** LHCSA

**PREPARED BY:** Quality Management Services

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this policy is to support the communications of paraprofessional staff with VNS Health Personal Care office staff involved in patient care, while ensuring that the agency complies with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 and the regulations promulgated thereunder ("HIPAA") and mitigates any risk of protected health information (PHI) being compromised.

**DEFINITION:**

Paraprofessional Staff: Home Health Aide, Personal Care Worker, Health Coach, Homemaker, etc.

**POLICY:**

1. The default and preferred method of communication between VNS Health Personal Care office staff and any paraprofessional staff should be either telephonic or face-to-face.
2. Paraprofessional staff should not initiate text communication with any VNS Health staff.
3. If there is an individual need to communicate with paraprofessional staff via text, Office staff should use the CareConnect application for texting. This function is available when placing a paraprofessional on a case, and for seven days post-placement. Paraprofessional staff can then use the CareConnect application to communicate via text in return.
4. Texting communication in the CareConnect application should be limited to discussion about case placement, including but not limited to reminders of schedule start times, details of locating the client's residence, etc.
  - a. Any non-placement related client information should not be communicated via text.
  - b. Any information not related to that specific client or shift cannot be communicated via text.
  - c. No client PHI should be communicated via text.
5. Texting can only be initiated by the Office staff who places the case in CareConnect. Paraprofessional staff cannot initiate text communication, they can only respond.

**SEE ALSO: POLICY HISTORY**

Date of Origin	2/8/2025							
Reviewed								
Revised								