



Director's Message

August 15, 2011

Dear Colleagues,

At our core, OYA values integrity, professionalism, accountability, and respect. These are the values all of us selected through employee surveys and work groups. When this agency chose these values, they became the guideposts for how all of us agreed to conduct business and serve youth.

Although these values are naturally intertwined, today I would like to focus on the meaning of integrity. Simply said, **integrity is who you are when no one is looking**. In our agency's [value statements](#) we define integrity as displaying ethical and honest behavior in all that we do. Key to this concept is that we model appropriate behavior regardless of whether people are watching – whether we are with others or are alone.

As professionals we are accountable to the taxpayers of Oregon, the families of the youth we serve, and the individuals with whom we work. More importantly, we are committed to providing a safe environment for our youth and their reformation. We are obligated by the values, policies, rules, and laws that guide our agency to model positive, law-abiding behavior.

It is clearly unacceptable for OYA employees to engage in illegal activity. Criminal activity being committed by OYA employees, even when off duty, goes against everything OYA is trying to accomplish. OYA does not tolerate illegal activities by employees at any time, whether on the job or off duty. Engaging in unlawful behavior may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from state service. We work within a treatment environment serving youth offenders, and we must emulate the behaviors we want to see from them.

Illegal activity includes illegal drug activity. As you know, OYA has a [Drug-Free Workplace Policy](#) (0-4.0) that bans use of alcohol or illegal drugs in the work place. This is to ensure not only compliance with the law, but also to avoid creating a risk to youth offenders, staff or the public by working under the affects of substances that can impair job performance. This includes medical marijuana.

For those of you who may be experiencing a drug or alcohol dependency problem, we encourage you to seek confidential assistance through OYA's [Employee Assistance Program](#). You can reach a counselor by calling 1-800-433-2320.

We expect each and every employee to adhere to and demonstrate the values and standards required by OYA's [Principles of Conduct Policy](#) (0-2.0). Reports of illegal activity will be investigated and, even if the information is wrong, employees who made the reports in good faith will not be disciplined. Employees who spread false information will be held accountable.

As stated in the [Professional Standards Policy](#) (0-2.1), OYA is committed to developing an effective workforce to achieve our goals in a manner that merits public confidence and respect. This requires all staff to appreciate the impact of their actions, both on the job and in their personal lives, on their role as public officials. A single staff member's misconduct or ineffective performance not only hinders our ability to reform youth, it reflects negatively on other OYA staff and all government agencies.

As employees of a criminal justice agency and as members of the public safety and juvenile justice systems, each of us must model the behaviors we expect of the youth in our care and custody. Our job is to help them take responsibility for their actions and learn to create productive, crime-free lives for themselves. It is our responsibility to model for them our agency's core values of integrity, professionalism, accountability and respect.

Thank you for your efforts in this regard.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Colette S. Peters". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Colette S. Peters
Director

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Fariborz Pakseresht". The signature is cursive and somewhat stylized, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Fariborz Pakseresht
Deputy Director