

## Overview

A just culture is essential to building a culture of safety. Leaders must ensure a consistent, fair, and just process for assessing accountability and working with healthcare providers involved in adverse events. All health care providers must be encouraged to monitor and participate in safety efforts and learn from incidents that occur.

**The goal of a just culture is to create an environment of transparency where everyone feels safe to talk and support each other in reporting vulnerabilities and failures without fear of reprisal.**

### What is a Just Culture?

A just culture recognizes that individual healthcare providers should not be held accountable for system failings over which they have no control (i.e., incomplete information, inadequate support, etc.). Rather than seeking "who to blame", a just culture seeks to understand the actions which lead to the adverse event.

In contrast to a culture that touts "no blame" as its governing principle, a just culture does not tolerate conscious disregard of clear risks to patients/clients/residents or gross misconduct (i.e., falsifying a record, performing professional duties while intoxicated).

### What does a just culture of safety include?

- ✓ Recognizes adverse events can occur
- ✓ Takes steps to avoid or reduce risks
- ✓ Deals effectively with harm when it occurs
- ✓ Is a supportive learning environment that implements improvements leading to safer patient/client/resident care
- ✓ Facilitates fairness for both patients/clients/residents and healthcare providers
- ✓ Fosters psychological safety
- ✓ Does not promote blame
- ✓ Learns from incidents that occur

**KEY POINT**  
Ensuring a consistent, fair, and just process for assessing accountability and dealing with healthcare providers involved in adverse events is key to building a safety culture.