

CODE OF ETHICS

General Principles

1. The purpose of this code of ethics is to introduce and maintain standards of professional practice for Members and applicants of Academy of Certified Counsellors and to update and guard members of the public seeking their services.
2. The Academy of Certified Counsellors has been established to monitor, maintain, set and improve professional standards in counselor education and practice.
3. Members have a sense of responsibility both to the clients who are served and to the agencies within which the service is provided and also to maintain high standards of professional conduct and competence in their work.
4. Where differences of age, gender, race, ethnicity, cultural background, religion, sexual orientation, disability, language or socio-economic status significantly affect members' work concerning the particular individuals or groups, members should obtain the training, experience, consultation, or supervision necessary to ensure the competence of their services or they make appropriate referrals.
5. Members should avoid establishing dual relationships with clients that could impair professional judgement or potentially lead to exploitation of the clients.

As Members of the Academy of Certified Counsellors, we will ensure :-

- A non-judgemental professional service, free from discrimination, honouring the Individuality of the client will be upheld.
- An ongoing personal and professional development will be maintained.
- To offer a promise of confidentiality and explain the limits of duty of care.
- Clients understand the purpose and boundaries of the counseling relationship.
- To recommend suitable referral where competent service cannot be provided.

Core values of Counselling

- Respect for human dignity
- Autonomy
- Responsibility to the client
- Personal Integrity
- Social Justice

Ethical Principles of Counselling

A. Competence

1. Counsellors must be aware of their level of competence and limitations before commencing counseling and must maintain continuing professional development as well as regular and ongoing supervision. Counsellors should also accept those appointments or responsibilities for which they are professionally qualified by education, training, or experience.
2. Counsellors must recognize one's limitations and be able to refer clients when needed.
3. Counsellors respect the right of others to hold values, attitudes, and opinions that differ from their own.
4. Counselors must recognize the need for continuing education in their chosen profession to maintain a level of awareness of current scientific and professional information and education in their particular fields of activity.
5. Counsellors seek appropriate professional assistance for personal problems or conflicts that may impair work performance or judgement.
6. Counsellors must not engage in behavior that is harassing (sexual in nature or otherwise) or demeaning to person with whom they interact in their work and counseling sessions.
7. Counsellor must guard against any personal, financial, social, organizational, or political factors that might lead to misuse of their influence on their clients.

B. Counselling Relationship

1. Counsellor should inform the clients of the purpose and nature of the counseling sessions in a clear and understandable language. In an event that a client is legally not capable of giving informed consent, counselor must obtain informed permission from a legally authorized person.
2. If the counselor is unable to be of professional assistance to the client, counselor must either avoid initiating the counseling relationship or immediately terminate that relationship.
3. Any information obtained during the counseling session must remain confidential otherwise deem important.
4. Breach of confidentiality must only take place, when the client's condition indicates that there is a clear and imminent danger to clients or other. Counselor must make reasonable personal action or inform responsible authorities or consultation with other professionals.
5. Counsellors must avoid establishing dual relationships with clients that could affect their professional judgment and may potentially lead to exploitation of the clients.
6. Records of clients related to counseling sessions such as interview notes, test data, correspondence, video and tape recordings, and other documents, are to be considered professional information for use in counseling. Use of such information for purposes of counselors training or research shall be confined to content that can be disguised to ensure full protection of the identity of the client.
7. Counselors terminate the counseling relationship when no longer needs the service, is not benefiting, or is being harmed by continued service.

C. Assessments, Research and Publication

1. Counselors must inform the client the purpose and nature of the test to be given so that the results of testing may be placed in proper perspective taking into consideration the effect of socio-economic, race, ethnic and cultural factors on test scores.
2. Counsellor must explain the results of the test(s) using language that is understandable to the client assessed or to another legally authorized person on behalf of the client. The interpretation of test data must be related to the client's particular concerns.
3. Counsellor must safe guard the publication of test materials by non-reproduction and non-modification of the test or parts thereof without acknowledgement and permission from the previous publisher.
4. Counsellor must inform all research participants of the purpose of the study except when withholding information or providing misinformation to them is essential to the research. Participant may decline participation in or withdraw from a research at any time.
5. Counsellor must report result of the research including the variables and conditions known to the researcher that might affect the outcome of the research or the interpretation of the data.

D. Integrity

1. Counsellors do not make public statements that are deceptive or misleading concerning their work and those of persons or organization with which they are affiliated.
2. Counsellors do not make false or deceptive statement concerning their training, experience or competence, their academic degrees, their credentials, their institutional or association and affiliations, and their services.

E. Education and Training

1. Counsellor must ensure that any education or training programs for which they are responsible have accurate descriptions of the program content, training goals, objectives, and requirements that must be met for satisfactory admission to and completion of the program.
2. Counsellor engaged in teaching or training must present pertinent information accurately and objectively and must provide feedback to the students and supervisees.
3. Educators must be able to present adequate credentials that reflect that their teaching is within their scope of learning and expertise.

Sections of this Code of Ethics are influenced by or adapted from the following:

1. **CODE OF ETHICS, Singapore Association for Counseling,**
2. **CODE OF CONDUCT, Australian Counseling Association (2008)**
3. **ETHICS GUIDELINES, The United States Association for Body Psychotherapy (2007 Revision).**
4. **CODE OF ETHICS, A FRAMEWORK FOR ETHICAL PRACTICE, New Zealand Association of Counselors (2002).**