2. Specified admonishment
3. Reprimand
4. Dismissal from membership

2. Should a member of this Association be expelled he or she shall at once surrender his or her membership certificate to the Board of Directors. Failure to do so shall result in such action as legal counsel may recommend.

3. Should a member of this Association be expelled from another recognized professional association or his/ her state license revoked for unethical conduct, the Standing Committee on Ethics shall investigate the matter and, where appropriate, act in the manner provided above respecting charges of unethical conduct.

4. The Committee will also give due consideration to a formal complaint by a non-member.

SECTION V. PUBLIC INFORMATION AND ADVERTISING

All professional presentations to the public will be governed by the Standards on Public Information and Advertising.
PREAMBLE

Members of the AAMFC are professional counselors trained in dealing with marriage and family problems. They are conscious of their special skills and aware of their professional boundaries. They perform their professional duties on the highest levels of integrity and confidentiality and will not hesitate to recommend assistance from other professional disciplines when circumstances dictate. They are committed to protect the public against, and will not hesitate to expose, unethical, incompetent and dishonorable practices. To maintain these high standards of service, members of the AAMFC have imposed upon themselves the following rules of conduct and will earn highest public confidence.

SECTION I. CODE OF PERSONAL CONDUCT

1. A Counselor provides professional service to anyone regardless of race, religion, sex, political affiliation, social or economic status, or choice of lifestyle. When a Counselor cannot offer service for any reason, he or she will make a proper referral. Counselors are encouraged to devote a portion of their time to work for which there is little or no financial return.

2. A Counselor will not use his or her counseling relationship to further personal, religious, political, or business interests.

3. A Counselor will neither offer nor accept payment for referrals, and will actively seek all significant information from the source of referral.

4. A Counselor will not knowingly offer service to a client who is in treatment with another counseling professional without consultation among the parties involved.

5. A Counselor will not disparage the qualifications of any colleague.

6. Every member of the AAMFC has an obligation to continuing education and professional growth in all possible ways, including active participation in the meetings and affairs of the Association.

7. A Counselor will not attempt to diagnose, prescribe for, treat or advise on problems outside the recognized boundaries of the Counselor's competence.

8. The Association encourages its members to affiliate with professional groups, clinics or agencies operating in the field of marriage and family life. Similarly, interdisciplinary contact and cooperation are encouraged.

SECTION II. RELATIONS WITH CLIENTS

1. A Counselor, while offering dignified and reasonable support, is cautious in prognosis and will not exaggerate the efficacy of his or her service.

2. The Counselor recognizes the importance of clear understandings on financial matters with his or her clients. Arrangements for payments are settled at the beginning of a counseling relationship.

3. A Counselor keeps records of each case, and stores them in such a way as to insure safety and confidentiality, in accordance with the highest professional and legal standards.

a. Information shall be revealed only to professional persons concerned with the case. Written and oral reports should present only data germane to the purposes of the inquiry; every effort should be made to avoid undue invasion of privacy.

b. The Counselor is responsible for informing the client of the limits of confidentiality.

c. Written permission shall be granted by the clients involved before data may be divulged.

d. Information is not communicated to others without consent of the client unless there is clear and immediate danger to an individual or to society, and then only to the appropriate family members, professional workers or public authorities.

4. A Counselor deals with relationships at varying stages of their history. While respecting at all times the clients’ right to make their own decision, the Counselor has a duty to assess the situation according to the highest professional standards. In all circumstances, the Counselor will clearly advise a client that the decision to separate or divorce is the responsibility solely of the client. In such an event, the Counselor has the continuing responsibility to offer support and counsel during the period of readjustment.

SECTION III. RESEARCH AND PUBLICATION

1. The Counselor is obligated to protect the welfare of his or her research subjects. The conditions of the Human Subjects Experimentation shall prevail, as specified by the Department of Health, Education and Welfare guidelines.

2. Publication credit is assigned to those who have contributed to a publication, in proportion to their contribution, and in accordance with customary publication practices.

SECTION IV. IMPLEMENTATION

1. In accepting membership in the Association, each member binds himself or herself to accept the judgment of his or her fellow members as to standards of professional ethics, subject to the safeguards provided in this section. Acceptance of membership implies consent to abide by the acts of discipline herein set forth and as enumerated in the Bylaws of the Association. It is the duty of each member to safeguard these standards of ethical practice. Should a fellow member appear to violate this Code he or she may be cautioned through friendly remonstrance, colleague consultation with the party in question, or formal complaint may be filed in accordance with the following procedure:

a. Complaint of unethical practice shall be made in writing to the Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Ethics and Professional Practices and to the Executive Director. A copy of the complaint shall be furnished to the person or persons against whom it is directed.

b. Should the Standing Committee decide the complaint warrants investigation, it shall so notify the charged party(ies) in writing. When investigation is indicated, the Standing Committee shall constitute itself an Investigating Committee and shall include in its membership at least one member of the Board and at least two members (other than the charging or charged parties or any possible witnesses) from the local area involved. This Investigating Committee or representatives thereof shall make one or more local visits of investigation of the complaint. After full investigation following due process and offering the charged party(ies) opportunity to defend him or herself, the Committee shall report its findings and recommendations to the Board of Directors for action.

c. The charged party(ies) shall have free access to all charges and evidence cited against him or her, and shall have full freedom to defend him or herself before the Investigating Committee and the Board, including the right to legal counsel.

d. Recommendation made by the Committee shall be:

1. Advice that the charges be dropped as unfounded.