

Preamble

The American Personnel and Guidance Association is an educational, scientific, and professional organization whose members are dedicated to the enhancement of the worth, dignity, potential, and actual performance of the individual and thus to the service of society.

The Association recognizes that the role of the professional staff of its members include a wide variety of academic disciplines, levels of academic preparation, and agency services. This diversity reflects the breadth of the Association's challenging competencies in efforts to set standards for the performance of members, desired requisite preparation or practice, and supporting social, legal, and ethical standards.

The specification of ethical standards which the Association plans to present to future members and to those served by the members' nature of ethical responsibility is to recognize the member.

The existence of such standards serves to stimulate greater concern by members for their own professional functioning and for the good of all fellow professionals such as counselors, guidance and educational personnel, and only their helping professions. As the ethical code of the Association, this document establishes principles, which define the ethical behavior of Association members.

Section A. General

1. The member influences the development of the profession by continuous efforts to improve teaching, services, and research. Professional growth is continuous throughout the member's career and is exemplified by the development of a philosophy that explains why and how a member functions in the helping relationship. Members are expected to gather data on their effectiveness and to publish their findings.

2. The member has a responsibility both to the individual who is served and to the institution within which the service is performed. The acceptance of employment in an institution implies that the professional activities of the member are also in accord with the objectives of the institution. If, despite concerned efforts, the member cannot reach agreements with the employer as to acceptable standards of conduct that allow for changes in institutional policy conducive to the positive growth and development of counselors, then terminating the affiliation should be seriously considered.

3. Ethical behavior among professional associates, members and nonmembers, is expected at all times. When information is possessed which raises serious doubt as to the ethical behavior of professional colleagues, whether Association members or not, the member is obligated to take action to terminate the relationship. Such action should utilize the institutional channels first and then utilize procedures established by the state, disease, or Association.

4. The member is expected to take action in a variety of ways: conferring with the individual in question, gathering further information as to the allegations, conferring with local or national ethics commit-

5. The member must not seek self-exoneration through expressing evaluations or comparisons that are damaging to others.

6. The member shall not make public statements regarding the qualifications of those holding similar positions.

7. In establishing fees for professional services, members should take into consideration the fees charged by other professionals delivering comparable services, as well as the ability of the counselee to pay. Members are willing to provide some services for which they receive little or no financial remuneration, or remuneration in food, lodging, and materials. When fees include charges for items other than professional services, the member should explain the charges.

8. The member shall make a careful distinction between the offering of counseling services as opposed to public information services. Counseling may be offered only in the context of a reciprocal or face-to-face relationship. Information services may be offered through the media.

9. With regard to professional employment, members are expected to accept only positions that they are prepared to assume and then to comply with established practices of the particular type of employment setting in which the member is employed in order to ensure the continuity of services.

Section B. Ethical Standards

Section 1. Counselor-Counselor Relationship

This section refers to practices involving individual and/or group counseling relationships and is not intended to be applicable to practices involving administrative relationships.

To the extent that the counselor's choice of action is not immediately self-protective or other-destructive, the counselor must retain freedom of choice. When the counselee does not have full autonomy for reasons of age, mental incompetence, criminal incapacitation, or similar legal restrictions, the counselor may work with those who exercise significant control and direction over the counselee.
Section D. Research and Publication

1. Current American Psychological Association guidelines on research with human subjects shall be adhered to (APA, revised 1973). 

2. In planning any research activity dealing with human subjects, the member is expected to be aware of and responsive to all pertinent ethical principles and to ensure that the research problem, design, and execution are in full compliance with them.

3. Responsibility for ethical research practice lies with the principal researcher, while others involved in the research activities share ethical obligation and full responsibility for their conduct.

4. In research with human subjects, researchers are responsible for their subjects' well-being throughout the research, and they must take all reasonable precautions to avoid causing injurious psychological, physical, or social effects on their subjects.

5. It is expected that all research subjects be informed of the purpose of the study, the potential risks and benefits, the freedom to withdraw at any time, and the protection of their privacy.

Section E. Consulting and Private Practice

Consulting refers to a voluntary relationship between a professional helper and a client or consumer. 

1. Members who act as consultants must have a high degree of self-awareness of their own values and needs in entering helping relationships that involve change in social units.

2. There should be understanding and agreement between consultant and client as to the task, the directions or goals, and the function of the consultant with respect to confidentiality and the information to be shared.

3. Members are expected to accept only those consulting roles for which they possess or have access to the necessary skills and resources for giving the kind of help that is needed.

4. The consulting relationship is defined as being one in which the client's adaptability and growth toward self-direction are encouraged and cultivated.

5. For this reason, the consultant is obligated to maintain consistently the role of helper and not to become a decision maker for the client.

6. In announcing one's availability for professional services as a consultant, the member follows professional rather than commercial standards. In either event, the consultant's services should reflect accuracy, dignity, and caution.

7. For private practice in counseling, consulting, or all ethical principles enunciated in this document are pertinent. In addition, any individual, agency, or institutional offering educational, vocational, or vocational counseling should meet the standards of the American Association of Counseling Services, Inc.

8. The consultant is expected to refuse a private fee or other remuneration for consultation with persons who are entitled to these services through the member's employing institution or agency.

9. The policies of a particular agency may make explicit provisions for private practice with agency counselors by members of its staff. In such instances, the consultant be open to other options, to either them should they seek private counseling services.

10. It is unethical to use one's institutional affiliation to recruit counsellors for one's private practice.

Section F. Personnel Administration

It is most common that members are employed in public or quasi-public institutions. The consultant member within an institution must contribute to the goals of the institution and vice versa, if either is to accomplish their respective goals or objectives. It is therefore essential that the member and the institution function in ways to: (a) make the institution's goals explicit and public; (b) make the consultant's contribution to institutional goals specific; and (c) foster mutual accountability for goal achievement.

To accomplish these objectives it is recommended that the member must share responsibilities in the formulation and implementation of personnel policies.

1. Members should define and describe the parameters and levels of their professional competency.

2. Members should establish interpersonal relations and working agreements with supervisors and subordinates regarding counseling, consultation, relationship, confidentiality, distinction between public and private material, maintenance and dissemination of information, work load, and accountability. Working agreements in each instance should be specified and made known to those concerned.

3. Members are responsible for alerting their employers to conditions that may be potentially disruptive or damaging.

4. Members are responsible for informing employers of conditions that may limit their effectiveness.

5. Members are expected to submit regularly to review and evaluation.

6. Members are responsible for inservice development of self and/or staff.

7. Members are responsible for informing their staffs of goals and programs.

8. Members are responsible for providing personnel practices that guarantee and enhance the rights and welfare of the recipient of help.

9. Members are expected to select consultant personnel and services that are culturally and educationally compatible with their skills and experiences.

Section G. Preparation Standards

Members who are responsible for training and supervision of paraprofessionals and paraprofessionals shall prepare standards that meet the preparation standards of the American Psychological Association and other relevant division(s).

1. Members are expected to orient trainees to program expectations, basic skills development, and employment prospects prior to admission to the program.

2. Members in charge of training are expected to establish programs that integrate academic study and supervised practice.

3. Members are expected to establish a program directed toward developing the skills and self-understanding, stated whenever possible in competency or performance terms.

4. Members are expected to provide a program that includes in training commensurate with levels of role functions. Paraprofessional and technician-level personnel should be trained as consumers of research. In addition, these personnel should learn how to evaluate their own programs and their own performance and to provide competent service, especially at the doctoral level, should include preparation for original research by the member.

5. Members are expected to make trainees aware of the ethical responsibilities and standards of the profession.

6. Training programs are expected to encourage trainees to value the ideal of service to individuals and to society. In this regard, direct financial remuneration or lack thereof should not influence the quality of service rendered. Mone­ tary considerations should be allowed to overshadow professional and humanistic considerations.

9. Members responsible for training are expected to be skilled as teachers and counselors.

10. Members are expected to present themselves to their trainees and to select trainees in a manner and form that allowtrainees to make comparisons and have the opportunity to select a position.

11. Members are obligated to develop clear policies within their training institution regarding the roles and responsibilities of the trainer and the trainer in such placements.

12. Members are expected to ensure that forms of training focusing on self-understanding or generalization of voluntary, if or if required as part of the training program, are made known to prospective students before entering the program. When the training program offers a growth experience with an emphasis on supervision, the consultant member must be aware of the experience's purpose and must participate. In addition, the consultant member is expected to conduct a training program in keeping with the standards of the American Personnel and Guidance Association and its various divisions.

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