

## IAAP Code of Ethics

### Preamble

Addiction Professionals have unique positions of trust and responsibility. We must be cognizant, at all times, of the ethical requirements imposed upon us as a result of that special position. The Indiana Association of Addiction Professionals (IAAP) strives to honor the public trust in the provision of addiction services by setting forth standards for ethical practice and conduct of its members in this Code of Ethics. This Code represents standards of ethical behavior for addiction counselors in professional relationships with clients, with colleagues, with employers, with other professions, with the community, and with our society as a whole. It also embodies standards of ethical behavior governing individual conduct, to the extent that such conduct is associated with an individual's status and identity as an Addiction Professional. The ethical standards codified herein define professional expectations and are enforced by the IAAP Ethics Committee. This Code is intended to serve as a guide for the daily conduct of Addiction Professionals. In subscribing to and abiding by this Code of Ethics, all Addiction Professionals are expected to take into consideration all of the principles in this Code that have a bearing upon any situation in which ethical judgment is to be exercised and professional intervention or conduct is planned. The course of any action chosen by an Addiction Professional is to be consistent with the spirit as well as the letter of this Code.

This Code does not, in itself, represent a set of rules that will prescribe all of the behaviors of addiction counselors in all the complexities of professional practice. Rather, it offers general (and some specific) principles to guide conduct in situations that have ethical implications. The following principles are intended to guide Addiction Professionals in the various roles and relationships and levels of responsibility in which they function as professional counselors. In subscribing to this Code, IAAP members are required to cooperate in its implementation and abide by any disciplinary rulings based on it. All IAAP members are required to take adequate measures to prevent, discourage, expose, and correct the unethical conduct of colleagues. At the same time, this Code is not intended to be used as an instrument to deprive any Addiction Professional of the opportunity or freedom to practice with complete professional integrity; nor will any disciplinary action be taken on the basis of this Code without maximum provision for safeguarding the rights of the person affected. All IAAP members should be ready to vigorously defend and assist any colleague unjustly accused of unethical conduct.

The following principles also serve as a basis for the adjudication of ethical issues when the conduct of an Addiction Professional is alleged to deviate from the standards expressed or implied in this Code. The standards set forth herein are not exhaustive, nor all-inclusive, and the absence of an explicit reference to a specific behavior or situation in the Code does not mean that the behavior is ethical or unethical, nor outside the jurisdiction of the Ethics Committee. Addiction Professionals who are uncertain or unclear about the ethics of a particular situation or course of action are encouraged to seek advice and counsel from supervisors, colleagues, Ethics Committee members, or attorneys. The Ethics Committee serves in an advisory capacity for Addiction Professionals who have questions regarding ethical dilemmas, as well as in a disciplinary capacity when a counselor's behavior deviates from ethical norms. We recognize, that the ethical behavior of Addictions Professionals results not from edict, but from the personal commitment of individuals to ethical principles and behavior, and this Code is offered to affirm the will and zeal of all IAAP members to act ethically in all that they do as Addiction Professionals.

### ETHICAL STANDARDS FOR PROFESSIONAL ADDICTIONS COUNSELORS

#### Principal 1: Responsibility to Clients

- A. IAAP members will not practice, condone, facilitate, or collaborate with any form of discrimination against clients or other professionals on the basis of race, color, religion, age, gender, national origin, sexual orientation, religion, marital status, political belief, physical or mental handicap, or economic condition.
- B. IAAP members will not engage in any activity that violates or diminishes the civil or legal rights of clients.
- C. IAAP members will serve clients with loyalty, devotion, determination, and maximum application of professional skill and competence, treat each client with dignity, honor, and respect, provide the highest quality of care, act in the best interest of each client, and assist each client in discovering the internal and external resources to help themselves.

- D. IAAP members recognize that each client is entitled to the physical, social, psychological, spiritual, and emotional care required to meet all of their human needs.
- E. IAAP members will avoid relationships or commitments that conflict with the interests of clients.
- F. IAAP members are aware of their influential positions with respect to clients, and will refrain from exploiting the trust and dependency of clients. Counselors will make every effort to avoid conditions or multiple relationships with clients that could impair professional judgment or increase the risk of exploitation. Such relationships include, but are not limited to, members of the counselor's immediate or extended family, business associates of the counselor, or individuals who have a close personal relationship with the counselor or the counselor's family.
- G. IAAP members will not, under any circumstances, engage in any type of sexual activity with current or former clients.
- H. IAAP members, upon agreeing to provide services to a person at the request or direction of a third party, will clarify the nature of the relationship with each party and the limits of confidentiality at the outset of services.
- I. IAAP members will respect the rights of clients to make decisions and help them to understand the consequences of their decisions.
- J. IAAP members will terminate services and professional relationships with clients when such services are no longer required or no longer serve the client's needs or interests.
- K. IAAP members will not abandon clients in treatment. Counselors who anticipate the termination or interruption of services to clients will notify clients promptly and seek the transfer, referral, or continuation of services in relation to the clients' needs and preferences.
- L. When the IAAP member must act on behalf of a client who has been judged legally incompetent, or with another individual who has been legally authorized to act on behalf of a client, the Counselor will act with the client's best interests in mind, and will inform the designated guardian or responsible person of any circumstances which may influence the relationship.

#### Principle 2: Confidentiality

- A. IAAP members will embrace the duty of protecting the privacy of each client as a primary obligation, and will not disclose confidential information in teaching, training, practice, or investigation without the expressed written consent of the client, or when appropriate steps have been taken to protect client identity and confidentiality.
- B. IAAP members will disclose the nature of confidentiality and possible limitations on confidentiality to clients and other interested parties as early as feasible in their professional contacts. Counselors will review with their clients circumstances where confidential information may be requested and where disclosure of confidential information may be legally required.
- C. IAAP members will not disclose confidential client information except by written authorization, or where mandated or permitted by state and federal law. All written information will be accompanied by a stamp identifying the Federal Regulations governing such disclosure. Verbal authorization will not be sufficient except in emergencies.
- D. IAAP members will reveal client identity or confidential information without client consent only when the client presents a clear and imminent danger to themselves or to other persons, and then only to emergency personnel who are directly involved in reducing the danger or threat.
- E. IAAP members, when consulting with colleagues or referral sources, will not share confidential information obtained in clinical or consulting relationships that could lead to the identification of a client unless they have obtained prior written consent from the client. Information may be shared only in appropriate clinical settings and only to the extent necessary to achieve the purpose of the consultation.
- F. IAAP members will use client materials in teaching, writing, consulting, research, and public presentations only when a written authorization or waiver has been obtained, or when appropriate steps have been taken to protect client identity and confidentiality.
- G. IAAP members will obtain informed consent and a written release of information before video-taping, audio recording or permitting third party observation of any client interaction or group therapy session. Exceptions to third party observations are limited to students in field placements, internships, practica, or agency trainees.
- H. IAAP members own the physical client records; the client owns the information contained therein. Counselors will afford clients reasonable access to any official records concerning them, upon client request, and only after due care is taken to protect the confidentiality of others contained in the records.
- I. IAAP members will store, safeguard, and dispose of client records in accordance with state and federal laws, accepted professional standards, and in ways which protect the confidentiality of clients.
- J. IAAP members will have policies and procedures in place for the storage, transfer, or disposal of confidential client

records prior to moving from the area, closing a practice, or in cases of premature death, in ways that will maintain client confidentiality.

K. IAAP members, when serving clients of another agency or colleague during a temporary absence or emergency, will serve those clients with the same consideration and confidentiality as that afforded the Counselor's own clients.

#### Principle 3: Remuneration

A. IAAP members, when setting fees, will ensure that they are fair, reasonable, and commensurate with the services provided and with regard for the clients' ability to pay.

B. IAAP members will truthfully represent facts to clients and third-party payers regarding services rendered, and the costs of those services.

C. IAAP members will clearly disclose and explain to clients, prior to the onset of services, (a) all costs and fees related to the provision of professional services, including any charges for cancelled or missed appointments, (b) the use of collection agencies or legal measures for nonpayment, and (c) the procedure for obtaining payment from the client if payment is denied by a third party payer.

D. IAAP members will give reasonable and written notice to clients of impending suspension of services for nonpayment.

E. IAAP members will give reasonable and written notice to clients with unpaid balances of their intent to seek collection by agency or legal recourse. When such action is taken, Counselors will not reveal clinical information.

F. IAAP members will not give nor receive from clients, gifts of substantial value or that impair the integrity of the therapeutic relationship. Bartering for professional services may be conducted only if: (a) the client requests it, (b) the relationship is not exploitative, (c) the professional relationship is not distorted, and (d) a clear written contract is established prior to the onset of services.

G. IAAP members will not accept a private fee or any other gift or gratuity for professional work with a client who is entitled to such services through an institution or agency.

H. IAAP members will not offer or accept any commissions, rebates, kickbacks, bonuses, or any other form of remuneration for referral of clients for professional services. Counselors will not engage in fee splitting.

I. An IAAP member in clinical or counseling practice will not use his or her relationship with clients to promote personal gain or the profit of any agency or commercial enterprise of any kind.

J. IAAP members will not withhold records under their control that are needed for a client's treatment solely because payment has not been received for past services.

K. IAAP members will not withhold reports to referral agencies regarding client treatment progress or completion solely because payment has not yet been received in full for services. Counselors may note in reports that payment has not yet been made, or only partially made for services rendered, particularly if those reports are to courts or probation officers who require such information.

#### Principle 4: Professional Competence and Integrity

A. IAAP members will maintain adequate knowledge of and adhere to applicable federal and state laws, ethical codes and professional standards of practice.

B. IAAP members recognize the need for ongoing education as a crucial component of professional competence. Addiction Professionals will pursue knowledge of new developments and maintain competence in addictions counseling through education, training, and/or supervised experience.

C. IAAP members recognize the effect of impairment on professional performance and will seek appropriate professional assistance for personal problems or conflicts that may impair work performance or clinical judgment.

D. IAAP members will maintain accurate clinical and financial records for each client.

E. IAAP members will not engage in sexual or other forms of harassment or exploitation of clients, students, trainees, employees, colleagues, or research subjects.

F. IAAP members recognize the boundaries and limitations of their competencies and will not offer services, use techniques, diagnose, treat, or advise on problems outside the recognized boundaries of their competencies.

G. IAAP members as presenters, teachers, supervisors, consultants and researchers are dedicated to the highest standards of scholarship, and will present accurate information, disclose potential conflicts of interest, and make every effort to prevent the distortion or misuse of their clinical and research findings.

H. IAAP members will not misrepresent professional qualifications, education, experience, member-ships, or affiliations, and will accept employment only on the basis of existing competence or explicit intent to acquire the necessary competence.

- I. IAAP members will work to prevent the practice of addiction counseling by unqualified and unauthorized persons.
- J. IAAP members will not participate in, condone, or be associated with dishonesty, fraud, deceit, or misrepresentation.
- K. IAAP members will be in violation of this Code and subject to appropriate sanctions up to, and including, permanent revocation of their membership and certification, if they are:
  - a. are convicted of any misdemeanor crime related to their qualifications or functions as an Addiction Professional, or they are convicted of any felony crime.
  - b. engage in conduct which could lead to conviction of a misdemeanor crime related to their qualifications or functions as an Addiction Professional, or any felony crime.
  - c. have their licenses or certificates suspended or revoked, or are otherwise disciplined by regulatory bodies, or are expelled from or disciplined by other professional organizations.
  - d. continue to practice as an Addiction Professional while no longer competent to do so due to physical or mental causes or the abuse of alcohol or other drugs.
  - e. continue to identify themselves as an IAAP member after being denied certification or allowing their certification to lapse.
  - f. continue to practice as an Addiction Professional after being denied certification or allowing their certification to lapse.
  - g. fail to cooperate with the IAAP Ethics Committee at any point from the inception of an ethics complaint through the completion of all procedures regarding that complaint.
- L. IAAP members will report any unethical conduct or unprofessional modes of practice by other Counselors of which they become aware to the appropriate certifying authority or regulatory body.

#### Principle 5: Responsibility to Colleagues

- A. IAAP members will treat colleagues with respect, courtesy, honesty and fairness, and will afford the same courtesies to professionals in other fields.
- B. IAAP members will not offer professional services to a client in counseling with another professional except with the knowledge of the other professional or following the termination of services with the other professional.
- C. IAAP members who conduct training in addictions counseling skills or techniques will clearly state to the audience the requisite training and/or qualifications required to properly perform the skills and techniques being taught.
- D. IAAP members will make no public comments disparaging colleagues in the addictions counseling profession, or in other professional fields. The term "public comments" shall include, but is not limited to, any and all forms of oral, written, or electronic communication which may be accessible to anyone who is not an IAAP member.
- E. IAAP members who are the authors of books, journal articles, or other materials that are published or distributed will not plagiarize or fail to cite persons for whom credit for original ideas or work is due.
- F. IAAP members who are the authors of books or other materials distributed by an agency or organization will take reasonable precautions to ensure that the organization promotes and advertises the materials accurately and factually.
- G. IAAP members will assign publication credit to those who have contributed to a publication in proportion to their contributions and in accordance with customary professional publication practices.
- H. IAAP members do not accept or require authorship credit for a publication based on research or clinical practice from a student's curriculum, field placement, internship, or practicum unless the Counselor made a substantial contribution beyond being a faculty advisor or research committee member. Co-authorship on a student project, thesis, or dissertation will be determined in accordance with established guidelines.

#### Principle 6: Responsibility to the Profession

- A. IAAP members remain accountable to the standards of the profession when acting as members or employees of agencies or organizations. If the mandates of an agency organization through which the Counselor is employed, contracted, or otherwise affiliated conflict with the IAAP Code of Ethics, the counselor will make known to the organization their commitment to the IAAP Code of Ethics and attempt to resolve the conflict in such a way as to allow fullest adherence to the IAAP Code of Ethics.
- B. IAAP members will work to protect and enhance the dignity and integrity of the addictions counseling field, and will be responsible and vigorous in their discussion and critique of the profession.
- C. IAAP members will contribute time and expertise to activities that promote respect for the integrity and competence of the addictions counseling profession.
- D. IAAP members will respect the limits of present knowledge in public statements concerning addictions treatment,

and will report that knowledge accurately and without distortion or misrepresentation to the public and other professional persons and organizations.

E. IAAP members will distinguish clearly between statements and actions made as a private individual and those made as a representative of an agency, group, organization, or the addictions counseling profession.

F. IAAP members will make no public comments disparaging the IAAP, the addictions profession, or other professional fields. The term "public comments" shall include, but is not limited to, any and all forms of oral, written, and electronic communication which may be accessible to anyone who is not an IAAP member.

#### Principle 7: Responsibility to Society

A. IAAP members will support the formulation, development, enactment, and implementation of public policy and legislation concerning the addictions counseling profession.

B. IAAP members will advocate for changes in public policy and legislation to improve opportunities and choices for all persons whose lives are impaired by the disease of addiction.

C. IAAP members will inform the public of the impact of all forms of addiction through active participation in civic affairs and community organizations, and will act to guarantee that all persons, especially the needy and the disadvantaged, have access to the opportunities, resources, and services required to treat and manage their disease.

D. IAAP members will educate the public about the disease of addiction while working to dispel negative myths, stereotypes, and misconceptions about addictive diseases and the people who have them.

E. IAAP members will work to educate medical professionals about addictive diseases, the need for primary treatment of these diseases, and the need to limit the use of mood altering chemicals for persons in recovery.

F. IAAP members recognize the need for the use of mood altering chemicals in limited medical situations, and will work to educate medical professionals to limit, monitor, and closely supervise the administration of such chemicals when their use is necessary.

G. IAAP members will collaborate with other health care professionals in providing a supportive environment for the client who is receiving prescribed medications.

H. IAAP members will work for parity in insurance coverage for alcoholism and drug addiction as primary medical diseases.

I. IAAP members will make no public comments disparaging persons who have addictive diseases. The term "public comments" shall include, but is not limited to, all forms of oral, written, and electronic communication which may be accessible to anyone who is not an IAAP member.

J. IAAP members will make no public comments disparaging the legislative process, or any person involved in the legislative process. The term "public comments" shall include, but is not limited to, all forms of oral, written, and electronic communication which may be accessible to anyone who is not an IAAP member.

#### PRINCIPLE 8: Violation of Ethical Principles.

A. IAAP members are required to cooperate with the implementation of the Code of Ethics, and to participate in, and abide by, any disciplinary actions and rulings based on the code. Failure to participate or cooperate is, itself, a serious violation of the Code of Ethics.

B. The IAAP Ethics Committee has jurisdiction for all complaints filed against any person holding or applying for IAAP licensure or certification and, therefore, has authority to conduct investigations into any instance of alleged misconduct by an addictions counselor.

C. No member of the IAAP Ethics Committee, Hearing Panels, Board of Directors, Membership Committee, Certification Board, Officers, or Staff can be named as a respondent under these policies and procedures as the result of a decision, action, or exercise of discretion arising directly from their conduct or involvement in carrying out adjudication responsibilities.