

# TENNESSEE CODE OF PROFESSIONAL ETHICS:

## PRINCIPLE 1: NON-DISCRIMINATION

The substance abuse professional should not discriminate against clients or professionals based on race, religion, age, sex, handicaps, national ancestry, sexual orientation or economic condition.

## PRINCIPLE 2: RESPONSIBILITY

The substance abuse professional should espouse objectivity and integrity and maintain the highest standards in the services the counselor offers.

- The substance abuse professional, as teacher, should recognize the counselor's primary obligation to help others acquire the knowledge and skill in dealing with the disease of chemical dependency.
- The substance abuse professional, as practitioner, should accept the professional challenge and responsibility deriving from the counselor's work.

## PRINCIPLE 3: COMPETENCE

The substance abuse professional should recognize that the profession is founded on national standards of competency which promote the best interests of society, of the client and of the profession. The counselor should recognize the need for ongoing education as a component of professional competency.

- The substance abuse professional should prevent the practice of substance abuse counseling by unqualified and unauthorized persons.
- The substance abuse professional who is aware of unethical conduct or of unprofessional modes of practice should report such violations to the appropriate certifying authority.
- The substance abuse professional should recognize boundaries and limitations of the counselor's competencies and not offer services or use techniques outside of these professional competencies.
- The substance abuse professional should recognize the effect of professional impairment on professional performance and should be willing to seek appropriate treatment for oneself or for a colleague. The counselor should support peer assistance programs in this respect.

## PRINCIPLE 4: LEGAL STANDARDS AND MORAL STANDARDS

The substance abuse professional should uphold the legal and accepted moral codes which pertain to professional conduct.

- The substance abuse professional should not claim either directly or by implication, professional qualifications/ affiliations that the counselor does not possess.
- The substance abuse professional should not use the affiliation with the TCB for purposes that are not consistent with the stated purposes of the board.
- The substance abuse professional should not associate with or permit the counselor's name to be used in connection with any services or products in a way that is incorrect or misleading.
- The substance abuse professional associated with the development or promotion of books or other products offered for commercial sale should be responsible for ensuring that such books or products are presented in a professional and factual way.

## **PRINCIPLE 5: PUBLIC STATEMENTS**

The substance abuse professional should respect the limits of present knowledge in public statements concerning alcoholism and other forms of drug addiction.

- The substance abuse professional who represents the field of alcoholism counseling to clients, other professionals or to the general public should report fairly and accurately the appropriate information.
- The substance abuse professional should acknowledge and document materials and techniques used.
- The substance abuse professional who conducts training in alcoholism or drug abuse counseling skills or techniques should indicate to the audience the requisite training/qualifications required to properly perform these skills and techniques.

## **PRINCIPLE 6: PUBLICATION CREDIT**

The substance abuse professional should assign credit to all who have contributed to the published material and for the work upon which the publication is based.

- The substance abuse professional should recognize joint authorship, major contributions of a professional character, made by several persons to a common project. The author who has made the principle contribution to a publication should be identified as first listed.
- The substance abuse professional should acknowledge in footnotes or an introductory statement, minor contributions of a professional character, extensive clerical or similar assistance and other minor contributions.
- The substance abuse professional should acknowledge, through specific citations, unpublished, as well as published material, that has directly influenced the research or writing.
- The substance abuse professional who compiles and edits for publication the contributions of others should list oneself as editor, along with the names of those others who have contributed.

## **PRINCIPLE 7: CLIENT WELFARE**

The substance abuse professional should respect the integrity and protect the welfare of the person or group with whom the counselor is working.

- The substance abuse professional should define for self and others the nature and direction of loyalties and responsibilities and keep all parties concerned informed of these commitments.
- The substance abuse professional, in the presence of professional conflict, should be concerned primarily with the welfare of the client.
- The substance abuse professional should terminate counseling or consulting relationship when it is reasonably clear to the counselor that the client is not benefiting from it.
- The substance abuse professional, in referral cases, should assume the responsibility for the client's welfare either by termination by mutual agreement and/or by the client becoming engaged with another professional. In situations when a client refuses treatment, referral or recommendations, the substance abuse professional should carefully consider the welfare of the client by weighing the benefits of continued treatment or termination and should act in the best interests of the client.
- The substance abuse professional who asks a client to reveal personal information from other professionals or allows information to be divulged should inform the client of the nature of such transactions. The information released or obtained with informed consent should be used for express purposes only.

- The substance abuse professional should not use a client in a demonstration role in a workshop setting where such participation would potentially harm the client.
- The substance abuse professional should ensure the presence of an appropriate setting for clinical work to protect the client from harm and the counselor and the profession from censure.
- The substance abuse professional should collaborate with other health care professionals in providing a supportive environment for the client who is receiving prescribed medications.

## **PRINCIPLE 8: CONFIDENTIALITY**

The substance abuse professional should embrace, as a primary obligation, the duty of protecting the privacy of clients and should not disclose confidential information acquired, in teaching, practice or investigation.

- The substance abuse professional should inform the client and obtain agreement in areas likely to affect the client's participation including the recording of an interview, the use of interview material for training purposes and observation of an interview by another person.
- The substance abuse professional should make provisions for the maintenance of confidentiality and the ultimate disposition of confidential records.
- The substance abuse professional should reveal information received in confidence only when there is clear and imminent danger to the client or to other persons and then only to appropriate professional workers or public authorities.
- The substance abuse professional should discuss the information obtained in clinical or consulting relationships only in appropriate settings and only for professional purposes clearly concerned with the case. Written and oral reports should present only data germane to the purpose of the evaluation and every effort should be made to avoid undue invasion of privacy.
- The substance abuse professional should use clinical and other material in classroom teaching and writing only when the identity of the persons involved is adequately disguised.

## **PRINCIPLE 9: CLIENT RELATIONSHIPS**

The substance abuse professional should inform the prospective client of the important aspects of the potential relationship.

- The substance abuse professional should inform the client and obtain the client's agreement in areas likely to affect the client's participation including the recording of an interview, the use of interview material for training purposes and/or observation of an interview by another person.
- The substance abuse professional should inform the designated guardian or responsible person of the circumstances which may influence the relationship, when the client is a minor or incompetent.
- The substance abuse professional should not enter a professional relationship with members of one's own family, intimate friends or close associates or others whose welfare might be jeopardized by such a dual relationship.
- The substance abuse professional should not engage in any type of sexual activity with a client.

## **PRINCIPLE 10: INTER-PROFESSIONAL RELATIONSHIPS**

The substance abuse professional should treat colleagues with respect, courtesy and fairness and should afford the same professional courtesy to other professionals.

- The substance abuse professional should not offer professional services to a client in counseling with another professional except with the knowledge of the other professional or after the termination of the client's relationship with the other professional.
- The substance abuse professional should cooperate with duly constituted professional ethics committees and promptly supply necessary information unless constrained by the demands of confidentiality.

## **PRINCIPLE 11: REMUNERATION**

The substance abuse professional should establish financial arrangements in professional practice and in accord with the professional standards that safeguard the best interests of the client, of the counselor and of the profession.

- The substance abuse professional should consider carefully the ability of the client to meet the financial cost in establishing rates for professional services.
- The substance abuse professional should not send or receive any commission or rebate or any other form of remuneration for referral of clients for professional services. The counselor should not engage in fee splitting.
- The substance abuse professional in clinical or counseling practice should not use one's relationship with clients to promote personal gain or the profit of an agency or commercial enterprise of any kind.
- The substance abuse professional should not accept a private fee or any other gift or gratuity for professional work with a person who is entitled to such services through an institution or agency. The policy of an agency may make explicit provisions for private work with its clients by members of its staff and in such instances the client must be fully apprised of all policies affecting the client.

## **PRINCIPLE 12: SOCIETAL OBLIGATIONS**

The substance abuse professional should advocate changes in public policy and legislation to afford opportunity and choice for all persons whose lives are impaired by the disease of alcoholism or other forms of drug addiction. The counselor should inform the public through active civic and professional participation in community affairs of the effects of alcoholism and drug addiction and should act to guarantee that all persons, especially the needy and disadvantaged, have access to the necessary resources and services. The substance abuse professional should adopt a personal and professional stance which promotes the well-being of all human beings.