



Association of Professional Chaplains

CODE OF ETHICS

100 Code of Ethics (Description and Aspirations of APC)

The Association of Professional Chaplains (Association) is an association of providers of pastoral care endorsed by faith groups to serve persons in physical, mental, spiritual, or social need in diverse settings. The mission of the Association is to provide excellence in pastoral care and counseling through the Association's various programs and activities and to promote public support for skilled spiritual care. The vision of the Association is to integrate professional pastoral and skilled spiritual care into the total care provided to persons in diverse settings. We seek to fulfill our vision in partnership with other organizations that share our mission.

In promoting the Mission of the Association, certain principles and values undergird all organizational efforts. The Association sets forth this Code to inform its members and those with whom they work of those principles and values and the expectations for ethical behavior they engender. This Code does not undertake to define standards of professional conduct of members for purposes of civil liability. In becoming a member of the Association, one affirms this Code and holds oneself accountable to it. Membership implies agreement to participate with integrity in any process of the Association to hold oneself or other members accountable to this Code, and to accept the Standards and judgments of the Association.

110 General Principles and Values

110.1 The Association and its Members shall demonstrate commitment to these values in relationships with members, those served, colleagues and through conduct in their professional roles.

110.11 The individual person possesses dignity and worth.

110.12 The spiritual dimension of a person is an essential part of an individual's striving for health, wholeness and meaning in life.

110.13 The spiritual care of persons is a critical aspect of the total care offered in the delivery of care for public and private institutions and organizations.

110.14 Inclusivity and diversity are foundational values in pastoral services offered to persons and are valued throughout the structures of the Association.

110.15 Public advocacy related to spiritual values and social justice concerns is promoted on behalf of persons in need.

120 Ethical Standards for the Association

- 120.1 The Association shall promote integrity, competence, respect for the dignity of all persons, and collegiality among its members.
 - 120.11 The Association shall admit to membership, employ and serve all qualified persons without discrimination regardless of race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender, age, disability, religion, or faith group.
 - 120.12 The Association shall work for the improvement and growth of pastoral care according to its mission.
 - 120.13 The Association shall, in conformity to its by-laws, provide structures and resources to maintain its Standards and promote its educational programs.
 - 120.14 The Association shall follow its by-laws, policies, and processes in holding itself and its members accountable to its standards for competency and ethical behavior.

130 Ethical Standards for Members

- 130.1 Members shall treat all persons with dignity and respect.
 - 130.11 Members shall serve all persons without discrimination regardless of religion, faith group, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender, age, or disability.
 - 130.12 Members shall demonstrate respect for the opinions, beliefs and professional endeavors of other members, their colleagues and those with whom they have contact in their professional role as chaplain.
 - 130.13 Members shall affirm the religious and spiritual freedom of all persons and refrain from imposing doctrinal positions or spiritual practices on persons whom they encounter in their professional role as chaplain.
 - 130.14 Members shall not condone or support unlawful discrimination against colleagues or others with whom they have contact in their professional role as chaplain.
 - 130.15 Members shall be accountable for maintaining the integrity of the pastoral relationship. They will not use their professional position with, or knowledge of, another for personal gain. They shall refrain from emotional, financial, sexual or any other form of exploitation.
 - 130.16 Members shall not engage in sexual misconduct. Sexual misconduct includes sexual abuse, sexual exploitation and sexual harassment. Sexual misconduct includes, but is not limited to: sexual advances; requests for sexual favors; verbal, physical or visual conduct of a sexual nature; any pattern of behavior that would be perceived as sexual misconduct.

130.2 Members shall respect the privacy of all persons.

130.21 Members shall follow the policies of their employing institution regarding patient confidentiality sharing private information about those whom they serve only according to those policies, the member's religious tradition, or as required by law.

130.22 Members shall refrain from relating experiences that expose the vulnerabilities of those served or their families to derision or ridicule.

130.23 Members shall seek to guard the identities of those served in any consultations, presentations or publications unless the person served, or their family if the person cannot give consent, has given the member written permission for disclosure of the relationship.

130.24 Members shall respect the private communications of colleagues unless to do so would violate the safety and well-being of another or be in conflict with the laws or policies of the state, an institution or the Association.

130.3 Members shall conduct themselves with integrity in all their professional relationships including those whom they serve, their colleagues and the Association.

130.31 Members shall accurately represent their professional qualifications and affiliations.

130.32 Members shall maintain accurately and currently any patient records, financial accounts or other documents required in the course of their work.

130.33 Members shall respond with honesty and timeliness to any commission or representative of the Association duly authorized to make inquiry into their work.

130.34 Members shall provide the Association immediate notice of any complaint of unethical conduct made against them in a civil, criminal, ecclesiastical, employment or another professional organization's forum. Members will provide the APC Ethics Commission, or designee, in a timely fashion the information they request regarding the investigation, adjudication, dismissal or settlement of such complaint. Failure to report or provide accurate, full and truthful information constitutes a violation of this Code. A finding of unethical conduct in one of these forums may lead to discipline within APC even if the event did not occur within the scope of the member's professional role as a chaplain or a situation over which APC would have jurisdiction.

130.4 Members shall conform to the Association's expectations of competency.

130.41 Members shall maintain an active relationship and good standing within the faith communities in which they are ordained, or commissioned or endorsed.

130.42 Members shall pursue ongoing personal growth and professional development in theology, spirituality, pastoral skills, and other areas which enhance their professional proficiency.

130.43 Members shall make referrals or obtain consultations when in the best interests of those served and maintain interdisciplinary and interprofessional relationships to foster these practices.

CODE OF ETHICS

130.44 Members shall take responsible action when they become aware that they themselves or another member is impaired or otherwise unable to maintain the Association's Code of Ethics or Standards of professional competency.

130.5 Members shall conform to the Association's expectations of professional behavior.

130.51 Members shall endeavor to enrich the mission and presence of the religious communities with which they work and are affiliated.

130.52 Members shall seek to represent the best interests of those whom they serve giving voice to the vulnerable whenever possible.

130.53 Members shall not knowingly use or permit others to use the member's services to secure unfair personal or professional advantage.

130.54 Members shall establish and maintain interprofessional relationships to foster partnerships and interdisciplinary cooperation.