STAMP & SEAL PROGRAM

CODE OF PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

Only Certified Professional Estimators may apply for the Stamp and/or Seal.
Understanding the proper uses and restrictions is the responsibility of the CPE requesting the Stamp and/or Seal.

No Stamp and/or Seal will be issued without a completed Application and User’s Agreement.

Revised August 2018
**GOVERN CPE AND THEIR SUBORDINATES**

This Code sets forth certain standards for the intended purpose of governing the professional practice of all individuals who have accepted the credentials of a Certified Professional Estimator (CPE), are ASPE members in good standing, and intend to utilize the Stamp and/or Seal as issued by ASPE. ASPE knows of no reason why it should not be entitled to claim exclusive authority to bestow the CPE credentials upon qualified individuals, and ASPE shall vigorously pursue all reasonable means to preserve its right to establish and publish this and related standards both now and in the future. Therefore, all who represent themselves as a CPE to their clients or employers by using the Stamp and/or Seal shall adhere to this Code. Those who do not wish to give their consent nor be so governed shall not be granted the use of the Stamp and/or Seal issued by the Society until such time as they are willing to comply. In addition, it shall be the responsibility of a CPE to insure that the acts of employees or staff under their responsible supervision conform to the professional standards contained here-in, or such acts may subject the supervising CPE to a professional review and possible loss of credentials. *[Use of the words “he, him, his, etc.” in this Code, shall be interpreted as signifying both genders. The terms “client” and “employer” shall be considered interchangeable for the purpose of interpreting this Code.]*

**STANDARD ESTIMATING PRACTICE (SEP)**

All CPEs requesting the Stamp and/or Seal should be familiar with ASPE's publication, Standard Estimating Practice (SEP) manual. The SEP should be a part of the reference library of a CPE. It clearly defines the Society's vision of proper estimating techniques, formats, etc. Part One, Section One, Basic Standards, Part One, Section Two, Levels of the Estimate, and Part One, Section Three, Scope of the Estimate, are included. Please review carefully.

**CODE OF ETHICS**

All members of ASPE are bound to abide by the Society's Code of Ethics, which serves as a general reference for an estimator's professional conduct. A complete copy can be located in Part Four of the Standard Estimating Practice manual. This Code of Professional Practice reinforces the Code of Ethics, and the principle that professional skills alone are not sufficient to demonstrate professionalism. Consequently, violations of the standards of professional conduct as presented in the Code of Ethics and this Code of Professional Practice could subject a CPE to disciplinary action and possible loss of the right to continued use of the professional credentials granted by the Society.

**ETHICAL CONDUCT**

A CPE shall treat all fellow CPEs, and all members of allied professions, with fairness and respect and shall not commit any malicious act, or make any false or unjust accusation, which shall directly or indirectly injure another's personal or professional reputation. This does not relieve a CPE of the moral obligation to expose illegal or unethical conduct in a manner appropriate for the offense.
 REVIEW OF ANOTHER’S WORK

Whenever a client or an employer asks a CPE to review or comment on the work performed by another, extreme care shall be taken in order to render a proper opinion. Casual and improperly researched conclusions are not within the realm of professional conduct to be expected of a CPE. If appropriate, the reviewing CPE shall discuss the issues of import with the other person whose work is being reviewed prior to releasing a written report or expressing an oral opinion. This paragraph places no restriction on the preparation of a completely independent estimate or work product which a client or employer may choose to use as the basis for their own comparison.

PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATION

No CPE shall misrepresent their professional qualifications or attempt to practice beyond the limits of their field of expertise. If called upon to do so, a CPE shall identify the Construction Estimating Discipline(s) (CEDs) in which they can demonstrate that they have acquired sufficient experience to be qualified to practice. Those CPEs that have expertise in several fields other than the ones in which they were initially certified, shall be permitted to enlarge their practice to include the additional disciplines, provided they have conducted sufficient research and study of the unique aspects of the new field to enable them to render sound judgment in their practice.

DEFINING THE SCOPE OF SERVICES

It shall be the responsibility of a CPE to maintain effective communication with each client or employer, with regard to the scope of services to be rendered, including the level of detail required, the form of the work product, and the date, or approximate date, by which the defined services will be completed. A sample contract for professional estimating services between estimator and client is available as a reference in the Standard Estimating Practice Manual, Part One. During the course of a time and expenses engagement, at the earliest moment that a CPE has reason to believe that the scope of services originally agreed upon will be insufficient to produce the desired results in a professional manner, or that any estimate of hours involved in performing an assignment will be inadequate, the client or employer should be advised. A CPE shall pursue all reasonable means to mitigate expenses by periodically seeking clarification of the client's or employer’s expectations regarding the continuation of the work and by advising the client or employer of the remaining level of effort necessary to complete a given assignment in a professional manner.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

No CPE shall perform the following.

- Accept an engagement or assignment that may result in the compromising of professional ethics or the minimum standards of excellence recommended by the Society.
- Accept an engagement or assignment to perform work for more than one client on any particular project without the consent of all parties concerned.
- Accept an engagement or assignment to perform professional services or render a professional opinion on a project or issue in dispute, if the CPE has had access to information which may
prejudice the work or opinion, or constitute a conflict of interest detrimental to the client, unless such circumstances and relevant facts have been properly disclosed in writing and accepted by the client.

- Incorporate the work of another CPE, contractor, or client, into a professional work product without proper reference, or the express permission of the party or parties that performed the original work.

**Financial Interests**

A CPE shall not accept an engagement or assignment for a client if there is a possibility the professional services to be performed may involve dealings with an organization in which the CPE, another client, or the CPE's employer has a significant financial interest, without having disclosed such interest to the client prior to performing any services.

**Remuneration for Professional Work**

A CPE may be remunerated for his professional work by means of hourly professional fees, by payment of a lump sum fee for a specific scope of service, by payment of a bonus or other compensation on the basis of performance or valuable contribution to the successful completion of a construction project, or by compensation paid by his employer. No CPE shall testify as an expert witness in a case where compensation for professional services is based on a percentage of the judgment or settlement amount. A CPE shall be permitted to render professional services in exchange for an ownership interest in a project provided no other conflicts of interest exist.

**Influences of Others**

No CPE shall seek or accept any commission or other valuable consideration for the purpose of improperly influencing the decision of others.

**Solicitation of Work**

No CPE shall obtain or attempt to obtain professional work by offering or paying monetary or other valuable consideration to any person or persons involved in the process of selecting a CPE for an assignment, or by any other improper means. Referral service commissions are permissible provided they do not violate any laws governing such transactions.

**Comparisons**

No CPE shall obtain or attempt to obtain professional work by making an unfounded comparison with another with regard to the speed, efficiency, or competency of the other person to perform the work. A CPE may provide verbal or written details of the services believed to be required in the performance of an engagement and may make comparisons with the approaches to the accomplishment of the work proposed by another, provided such comparisons are not slanderous nor detrimental to the public reputation of the other person's professional practice.
Accuracy of Quantities and Prices

Guarantees of the accuracy of the quantities, or prices used in the preparation of a professional estimate shall be given at the discretion of the responsible CPE. A CPE may choose to limit the representation of the accuracy of the services performed by indicating that they have been or will be performed in accordance with "generally accepted professional estimating practices." Such representation shall not be interpreted as a guarantee of accuracy, but rather as an assurance that a reasonable amount of care has been, or will be exercised in the preparation of the estimate work product. This is because many factors can be involved in the professional interpretation of the scope of the construction work being quantified or priced, and because various methods and techniques for surveying or deriving estimate quantities have varying degrees of accuracy associated with them. Therefore, a CPE's obligations under this Code relative to the adequacy or accuracy of a professional estimate shall be based on a determination of what is reasonable under the circumstances of the engagement. Essentially, a CPE shall make every reasonable effort to include all items shown in the related project documents, and shall price all items utilizing appropriate quotations and published or authorized proprietary reference sources as tempered by experience and professional judgment.

Professional Estimating Practices

Whenever a CPE utilizes the phrase "prepared in accordance with generally accepted professional estimating practices," this shall be interpreted to mean that the CPE has utilized a systematic method of surveying the quantities, has applied prices to each estimate line item, and has summarized the major divisions of work in a format suitable for the level of detail agreed upon by the client and CPE. As the volume of technical material, either published or recognized by the Society increases, specific elements of the estimating process will become more standardized and commonly understood. Presently, there are a number of books and estimating standards, which set forth various estimating systems and methods. A CPE who employs one or more of these published systems may utilize the phrase "prepared in accordance with generally accepted professional estimating practices" in the manner, described in paragraph 18, below.

Confidential Information

No CPE shall divulge without authority, or use improperly, any information received in the course of any assignment or engagement.

Advertisements and Promotion

A CPE in professional practice may advertise and promote his professional services provided such marketing efforts do not detract from the dignity of the profession, and that they do not violate any other provision of this Code.
PROFESSIONAL WORK PRODUCTS IDENTIFIED

Reports, estimates, and other documents emanating from a CPE's professional practice, should be identified as the work of that practice. A cover letter or a narrative on the estimate scope, bound within a report, is one of the optional methods of advising the reader of the type of report or estimate which has been prepared. It also provides the opportunity to state that the estimate has been "prepared in accordance with generally accepted professional estimating practices." This type of letter or narrative may also be used to advise the reader of any professional reservations or limitations on the scope or completeness of the work product. Documents prepared for or in association with other consultants should show the names of both or all CPEs, individuals, and firms as appropriate.

USE OF THE STAMP AND/OR SEAL

Recommended uses of the Stamp and/or Seal include the following.

1. The Certified Professional Estimator shall use the personalized Stamp and/or Seal to mark completed estimates that they have fully prepared within their task or discipline.

2. The Certified Professional Estimator shall clearly identify the level of the estimate he is preparing prior to placing his stamp or seal on the finished product.

3. The Stamp and/or Seal shall be used only on items referring to estimating. They shall not be used on a report that does not reflect or affect an estimate.

4. The use of the Stamp and/or Seal on an estimate prepared by others indicates the CPE using the Stamp or Seal has fully reviewed the estimate and concurs with the contents thereof.

PROFESSIONAL REVIEW

Cases involving charges of unprofessional conduct against a CPE, whether specially defined by this Code or not, shall be dealt with as the circumstances dictate by an impartial panel of no fewer than three (3) Certified Members, one to be appointed by the CPE under review, one to be appointed by the President of the Society, and the third to be selected by other two. The CPE under review shall be entitled to the rights of "due process" including, but not limited to, the rights to hear all the evidence, cross-examination, etcetera. The decision of the panel shall be written, and shall state the basis for action. The decision may be appealed to the National Board of Directors, which shall not review any new evidence in the matter, but shall determine whether appropriate procedures were followed and whether the matter warrants another hearing by the same or a new panel of Certified Members. Should the CPE under review disagree with the final decision, the matter shall be submitted to binding arbitration in accordance with the rules of the American Arbitration Association.

The American Society of Professional Estimators’ Code of Ethics is available at www.ASPEnational.org (Home Tab)

For further assistance, direct inquiries to the Certification Team at Certification@ASPEnational.org.