

South Carolina Radiation Quality Standards Association Code of Ethics

1. Introduction

- a. Code of ethics. These rules of conduct constitute the code of ethics as required by the Code of Laws of South Carolina.
- b. Purpose. These rules constitute the standards against which the professional conduct of a radiologic technologist is measured. Certification as a radiologic technologist in the State by the South Carolina Radiation Safety Quality Standards Association, hereafter referred to as SCRQSA, commits the certified radiologist technologist to adherence to these rules of conduct.
- c. Scope. The radiologic technologist shall be governed by these rules of conduct whenever providing radiation services in any context. The rules of conduct shall not supersede other state or federal regulations. These rules of conduct shall apply to the conduct of each certificant, and each applicant for certification, including the applicant's conduct during the period of education, training and supervision, which is required for certification. The term "radiologic technologist" as used within these rules shall be interpreted accordingly.
- d. Responsibility for own actions. The radiologic technologist shall be fully responsible for his/her own professional decisions and professional actions.
- e. Violations. A violation of these rules of conduct constitutes unprofessional conduct. The penalty for violation may include revocation of certificate, denial of certificate renewal, denial of reinstatement of a certificate, or other appropriate disciplinary action.
- f. Aid to interpretation. The Code of Ethics of radiologic technologists (See Appendix A) shall be used as an aid in resolving any ambiguities that may arise in the interpretation of the rules of conduct, except that these rules of conduct shall prevail whenever any conflict exists between these rules of conduct and the Code of Ethics of radiologic technologists.

2. Definitions.

- a. Client. "Client" means a receiver of radiation services. In the case of individuals with

legal guardians, including minors under age sixteen and legally incompetent adults, the legal guardian shall be the client for decision-making purposes.

b. Confidential information. "Confidential information" means information revealed by the client or other individual or otherwise obtained in the course of professional practice.

There is a reasonable expectation that, because of the relationship between the client and the radiologic technologist, or the circumstances under which the information was revealed or obtained, the information shall not be disclosed by the radiologic technologist without the informed consent of the client in writing, except when required by law or to protect the welfare of the client or the community.

c. Certified. "Certified" means certified by the SCRQSA when such term identifies a person whose professional behavior is subject to regulation by the Board.

d. Radiation service. "Radiation service" means all actions of the radiologic technologists to deliver ionizing radiation as prescribed by a physician or other practitioner qualified to prescribe such procedures or treatments in the context of a professional relationship with a client.

e. Supervisee. "Supervisee" means any person who functions under the extended authority of the radiologic technologist or physician to provide, or while in training to provide, radiation services.

3. Competence

a. Limits on practice. A radiologic technologist shall limit practice and supervision to the area(s) of competence in which proficiency has been gained through education, training and experience as demonstrated to the Board, and as reflected in the certificate granted by the Board, including any specialty designation(s) granted by the Board to the radiologic technologist.

b. Accurate representation. A radiologic technologist shall accurately represent areas of competence, education, training, experience and professional affiliations of the radiologic technologist to the Board, the public and colleagues. A radiologic technologist shall include on all public statements the specialty designation granted by the Board.

c. Maintaining competency. A radiologic technologist shall maintain current competency in the area(s) in which he/she practices through continuing education and

professional activities in conformance with current standards of scientific and professional knowledge.

d. Patient information. The radiologic technologist observes and communicates with the patient to obtain accurate information that is pertinent to provision of quality radiation services to aid in the diagnosis and/or treatment of the patient.

e. Scope of practice. The radiologic technologist recognizes that interpretation, prescription, and diagnosis are outside of the scope of practice of the technologist.

f. Practice. The radiologic technologist conducts himself/herself in a professional manner and practices technology founded upon theoretical knowledge and concepts, uses equipment and accessories consistent with the purposes for which they were designed and employs procedures and techniques appropriately in accordance with the accepted standard of practice and expertise while minimizing radiation exposure to the patient, self and other members of the health care team.

g. Professional judgment. A radiologic technologist assesses situations; exercises care, discretion, and judgment; assumes responsibility for professional decisions, and acts in the best interest of the patient.

h. Discrimination. A radiologic technologist responds to patient needs and delivers quality patient care regardless of the nature of the disease or illness, and without discrimination on the basis of sex, race, nationality, creed, religion, socioeconomic status or disability, and treats all patients with dignity and respect.

D. Conduct

a. Confidentiality. The radiologic technologist shall not reveal confidential information of a client without informed consent of the client except when required by law or to protect the welfare of the client or the community.

b. Management of patient records. A radiologic technologist shall not engage in improper management of client records, including failure to maintain adequate records, failure to furnish a record or report required by law. The technologist shall not make, cause or permit anyone else to make false, deceptive or misleading entries or alter the information in any document or record pertaining to a client.

c. Compromising professional relationships. The radiologic technologist shall not undertake or continue a professional relationship with a client when the objectivity or competency of the technologist is, or may reasonably be considered to be, impaired or compromised. Such situations may occur due to the technologist's present or previous familial, social, sexual, emotional, financial, supervisory, political, administrative or legal relationship with the client or a relevant person associated with or related to the client. If such relationship develops or is discovered after the professional relationship has been initiated, the radiologic technologist shall terminate the professional relationship in an appropriate manner.

d. Public safety. The radiologic technologist shall not depart from applicable federal, state, or local governmental rules regarding technology practice nor shall they practice the technology in such a way that would create an unnecessary danger to any person's life, health, or safety.

e. Impaired radiologic technologist. No radiologic technologist shall practice radiation services if there is a failure or inability to perform radiation services with reasonable skill and safety according to acceptable standards of practice by reason of illness, use of alcohol, drugs, chemicals or any other material or as a result of any mental or physical condition that would jeopardize the safety of an individual or the public.

f. Fraud or deceit. The radiologic technologist shall not employ fraud or deceit in procuring or attempting to procure, maintain or renew certification by the SCRQSA by altering any official document.

g. Subversion of examination process. Individuals shall not subvert or attempt to subvert the SCRQSA's examination process in any way that would compromise the integrity of a future, current, or previously administered examination. Certified technologists or those attempting to become certified who commit any of the following violations will be reviewed for revocation of certification or rejection of application for certification.

1. Violation of the examination security. Removing, disclosing, or having unauthorized possession of any portion of the information concerning the examination other than that information provided by SCRQSA.

2. Conduct during examinations. During the administration of the

examinations, communicating with other examinees, copying answers from another examinee, permitting another examinee to copy one's answers or possessing unauthorized materials within the examination room.

3. Impersonation. Impersonating an examinee or permitting an impersonator to take the examination on one's behalf.

h. Conviction of a crime. Certificants or applicants for certification must report to SCRQSA any personal conviction of any crime except speeding or parking violations. "Conviction" includes any conviction by entry of a plea of guilty or nolo contendere, conviction after trial, a finding of guilty but mentally ill, or a finding of not guilty by reason of insanity. Conviction as used in this provision also includes a criminal proceeding where a finding or verdict of guilt is made or returned but the adjudication of guilt is either withheld or not entered.

i. Aiding unauthorized practice. A radiologic technologist shall not aid or abet another person in misrepresenting his/her professional credentials or in illegally engaging in the practice of radiation services.

j. Delegating professional authority. A radiologic technologist shall not delegate responsibilities to a person not appropriately credentialed or otherwise appropriately qualified to provide such services.

k. Providing supervision. A radiologic technologist shall exercise appropriate supervision over supervisees, as set forth in the rules and regulations of the Board.

l. Reporting of violations to Board. The radiologic technologist who has substantial reason to believe that there has been a violation of the State statutes or rules of the Board shall so inform the Board in writing on forms provided by the Board. Nothing in this code shall relieve a radiologic technologist of the duty to file any report required by applicable statutes.

4. Adverse action procedures.

These Procedures provide a guideline for handling all disciplinary actions or any action which is adverse to an applicant or certificant.

a. Ethics Committee. The President, with the approval of the Board of Trustees, appoints

at least three (3) Trustees to serve as members of the Ethics Committee. Each appointed person will serve on the Committee until removed and replaced by the President, with the approval of the Boards of Trustees. The Ethics Committee is responsible for: (1) investigating each alleged violation of the Rules of Ethics and determining whether the certificant or applicant has failed to observe the Rules of Ethics in the Standards, and determining an appropriate disciplinary action; and (2) reviewing the Code of Ethics, Rules of Ethics and Administrative Procedures in the Standards annually and recommending any changes to the Board of Trustees.

b. Hearings. Whenever any disciplinary or adverse action is taken against an applicant or certificant, written notice to the individual specifying the reasons for the proposed action shall be given. The certificant or applicant shall be given 30 days from the postmark date of the notice to make a written request for a hearing before the Ethics Committee. Failure to make a written request for a hearing within such period shall constitute a consent to the action taken by the Ethics Committee pursuant to such notice.

The certificant or applicant shall be given at least thirty days notice of the date, time, and place of the hearing. Failure to appear at the hearing or to supply a written submission in response to the charges, shall be deemed a default on the merits and shall be deemed consent on whatever action taken by the Ethics Committee. The Ethics Committee may be represented by counsel. The certificant or applicant has the right to be assisted by legal counsel at his or her own expense, shall have the right to call witnesses, present testimony and evidence, be heard in his or her own defense, hear the testimony of and cross-examine any witnesses appearing at such hearing, and to present such other evidence or testimony as the Ethics Committee shall deem appropriate. The Ethics Committee shall not be bound by any state or federal rules of evidence. A transcript of an audio recording of the hearing will be made and kept on file for three years from the date of the decision of the the Ethis Committee.

c. Disciplinary actions include: denial of renewal or reinstatement of certification with the SCRQSA, revocation or suspension of a certificate or any other appropriate disciplinary action. Unless a timely and documented appeal is made to the Board of Trustees, the Ethics Committee's findings are final and binding upon all parties.

5. Appeals.

Within thirty (30) days after the decision of the Ethics Committee is postmarked, the certificant or applicant may appeal to the Board of Trustees. In the event of an appeal, members of the Ethics Committee shall not participate in the appeal. At least a quorum of the Board of Trustees shall hear the appeal. The appeal will be limited to a fifteen minute presentation by the certificant or applicant and a fifteen minute response by a representative of the Ethics Committee. In addition to the written decision of the Ethics Committee the certificant or applicant may also submit a written memorandum for consideration by the Board. The Board shall determine whether to affirm or overrule the decision of the Ethics Committee. All hearings and appeals shall be private unless otherwise requested by the certificant or applicant and client confidentiality can be maintained.

Appendix A

Revised and adopted by the ASRT and ARRT, August 1997

- .. The radiologic technologist conducts himself or herself in a professional manner, responds to patient needs and supports colleagues and associates in providing quality patient care.
- .. The radiologic technologist acts to advance the principal objective of the profession to provide services to humanity with full respect for the dignity of mankind.
- .. The radiologic technologist delivers patient care and service unrestricted by concerns of personal attributes or the nature of the disease or illness, and without discrimination on the basis of sex, race, creed, religion or socio-economic status.
- .. The radiologic technologist practices technology founded upon theoretical knowledge and concepts, uses equipment and accessories consistent with the purpose for which they were designed and employs procedures and techniques appropriately.
- .. The radiologic technologist assesses situations; exercises care, discretion and judgment; assumes responsibility for professional decisions; and acts in the best interest of the patient.
- .. The radiologic technologist acts as an agent through observation and communication to obtain pertinent information for the physician to aid in the diagnosis and treatment of the patient and recognizes that interpretation and diagnosis are outside the scope of practice for the profession.
- .. The radiologic technologist uses equipment and accessories, employs techniques and procedures, performs services in accordance with an accepted standard of practice and demonstrates expertise in minimizing radiation exposure to the patient, self and other

members of the health care team.

- .. The radiologic technologist practices ethical conduct appropriate to the profession and protects the patient's right to quality radiologic technology care.
- .. The radiologic technologist respects confidences entrusted in the course of professional practice, respects the patient's right to privacy and reveals confidential information only as required by law or to protect the welfare of the individual or the community.
- The radiologic technologist continually strives to improve knowledge and skills by participating in continuing education and professional activities, sharing knowledge with colleagues and investigating new aspects of professional practice.

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