

CODE OF ETHICS

OKLAHOMA SPEECH-LANGUAGE-HEARING ASSOCIATION

Preamble

The preservation of the highest standards of integrity and ethical principles is vital to the successful discharge of the professional responsibilities of all speech-language pathologists and audiologists. This Code of Ethics has been promulgated by the Association in an effort to stress the fundamental rules considered essential to this basic purpose. Any action that is in violation of the spirit and purposes of this Code shall be considered unethical. Failure to specify any particular responsibility or practice in this Code of Ethics should not be construed as denial of the existence of other responsibilities or practices.

The fundamental rules of ethical conduct are described in three categories: Principles of Ethics, Ethical Proscriptions, Matters of Professional Propriety.

Principles of Ethics: Six Principles serve as a basis for the ethical evaluation of professional conduct and form the underlying moral basis for the Code of Ethics. Individuals subscribing to this Code shall observe these principles as affirmative obligations under all conditions of professional activity.

Ethical Proscriptions: Ethical Proscriptions are formal statements of prohibitions that are derived from the Principles of Ethics.

Matters of Professional Propriety: Matters of Professional Propriety represent guidelines of conduct designed to promote the public interest and thereby better inform the public and particularly the persons in need of speech-language pathology and audiology services as to the availability and the rules regarding the delivery of those services.

Principle of Ethics I

Individuals shall hold paramount the welfare of persons served professionally.

- A. Individuals shall use every resource available, including referral to other specialists as needed to provide the best service possible.
- B. Individuals shall fully inform persons served of the nature and possible effects of the services.
- C. Individuals shall fully inform subjects participating in research or teaching activities of the nature and possible effects of these activities.
- D. Individuals' fees shall be commensurate with services rendered.
- E. Individuals shall provide appropriate access to records of persons served professionally.
- F. Individuals shall take all reasonable precautions to avoid injuring persons in the delivery of professional services.
- G. Individuals shall evaluate services rendered to determine effectiveness.

Ethical Proscriptions:

1. Individuals must not exploit persons in the delivery of professional services, including accepting persons for treatment when benefit cannot reasonably be expected or continuing treatment unnecessarily.
2. Individuals must not guarantee the results of any therapeutic procedures, directly or by implication. A reasonable statement of prognosis may be made, but caution must be exercised not to mislead persons served professionally to expect results that cannot be predicted from sound evidence.
3. Individuals must not use persons for teaching or research in a manner that constitutes invasion of privacy or fails to effort informed free choice to participate.
4. Individuals must not evaluate or treat speech, language or hearing disorders except in a professional relationship. They must not evaluate or treat solely by correspondence. This does not preclude follow-up correspondence with persons previously seen, not providing them with general information of an educational nature.
5. Individuals must not reveal to unauthorized persons any professional or personal information obtained from the person served professionally, unless required by law or unless necessary to protect the welfare of the person or the community.
6. Individuals must not discriminate in the delivery of professional services on any basis that is unjustifiable or irrelevant to the need for and potential benefit from services, including race, sex, age, religion, national origin, gender, gender identification, sexual orientation, or handicapping condition.
7. Individuals must not charge for services not rendered.

Principle of Ethics II

Individuals shall maintain high standards of professional competence.

- A. Individuals engaging in clinical practice or supervision thereof shall meet the highest minimal requirements for clinical practice as defined in the State of Oklahoma for the area(s) in which they are providing or supervising professional services.
- B. Individuals shall continue their professional development throughout their careers.
- C. Individuals shall identify competent, dependable referral sources for persons served professionally.
- D. Individuals shall maintain adequate records of professional services rendered.

Ethical Proscriptions:

1. Individuals must neither provide services nor supervision of services for which they have not been properly prepared, nor permit services to be provided by any of their staff who are not properly prepared.
2. Individuals must not provide clinical services by prescription of anyone who does not meet the highest minimal requirements for clinical practice as defined in the State of Oklahoma.
3. Individuals must not delegate any service requiring the professional competence of a certified clinician to anyone unqualified.
4. Individuals must not offer clinical services by supportive personnel for whom they do not provide appropriate supervision and assume full responsibility.
5. Individuals must not require anyone under their supervision to engage in any practice that is a violation of the Code of Ethics.

Principle of Ethics III

Individuals' statements to persons served professionally and to the public shall provide accurate information about the nature and management of communicative disorders, and about the profession and services rendered by its practitioners.

Ethical Proscriptions:

1. Individuals must not misrepresent their training or competence.
1. Individuals' public statements providing information about professional services and products must not contain representations or claims that are false, deceptive or misleading.
2. Individuals must not use professional or commercial affiliations in any way that would mislead or limit services to persons served professionally.

Matters of Professional Propriety:

1. Individuals should announce services in a manner consonant with highest professional standards in the community.

Principle of Ethics IV

Individuals shall maintain objectivity in all matters concerning the welfare of persons served professionally.

A. Individuals who dispense products to persons served professionally shall observe the following standards:

1. Products associated with professional practice must be dispensed to the person served as part of a program of comprehensive habilitative care.
2. Fees established for professional services must be independent of whether a product is dispensed.
3. Persons served must be provided freedom of choice for the sources of services and products.
4. Price information about professional services rendered and products dispensed must be disclosed by providing to or posting for persons served a complete schedule of fees and charges in advance of rendering services, which schedule differentiates between fees for professional services and charges for products dispensed.
5. Products dispensed to the person served must be evaluated to determine effectiveness.

Ethical Proscriptions:

1. Individuals must not participate in activities that constitute a conflict of professional interest.

Matters of Professional Propriety:

1. Individuals should not accept compensation for supervision or sponsorship from an individual being supervised or sponsored beyond reasonable reimbursement for direct expenses.
2. Individuals should present products they have developed to their colleagues in a manner consonant with highest professional standards.

Principle of Ethics V

Individuals shall honor their responsibilities to the public, their profession, and their relationships with colleagues and members of allied professions.

Matters of Professional Propriety:

1. Individuals should seek to provide and expand services to persons with speech, language and hearing handicaps as well as to assist in establishing such professional standards for such programs.
2. Individuals should educate the public about speech, language and hearing processes, speech, language and hearing problems, and matters related to professional competence.
3. Individuals should strive to increase knowledge with the profession and share research with colleagues.
4. Individuals should establish harmonious relations with colleagues and members of other professions, and endeavor to inform members of related professions of services provided by speech-language pathologists and audiologists, as well as seek information from them.
5. Individuals should assign credit to those who have contributed to a publication in proportion to their contribution.

Principle of Ethics VI

Individuals shall uphold the dignity of the profession and freely accept the profession's self-imposed standards.

A. Individuals shall inform the Committee on Standards and Ethics when they have reason to believe that a member or certificate holder may have violated the Code of Ethics.

B. Individuals shall cooperate fully with the Committee on Standards and Ethics concerning matters of professional conduct related to this Code of Ethics.

Ethical Proscriptions:

1. Individuals shall not engage in violations of the Principles of Ethics or in any attempt to circumvent any of them.
2. Individuals shall not engage in dishonesty, fraud, deceit, misrepresentation, or other forms of illegal conducts that adversely reflect on the profession or the individual's fitness for membership in the profession.