

# Professional Ethics -

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- ▶ ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF REHABILITATION SERVICES
- ▶ ADULT VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICE
- ▶ MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

I certify that I have read and understand the Code of Professional Ethics for Rehabilitation Counselors as adopted by the Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification. I also certify that I understand that the Code of Professional Ethics applies to me in my work for the Adult Vocational Rehabilitation Service program as a policy contained within the VR Policy Manual. I also certify that I will adhere to all applicable provisions of the Code of Professional Ethics as adopted by the CRCC in my work providing services to consumers.

I understand that a violation on my part of any applicable provision of the Code of Professional Ethics or a refusal to sign this acknowledgement could result in disciplinary action against me.

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Signature

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Date

- Note: Staff required to sign this form include:
- ▶ Field Supervisors
  - ▶ Senior Rehabilitation Counselors
  - ▶ Professional Rehabilitation Counselors
  - ▶ Business Relations Consultants(BRCs)
  - ▶ Rehabilitation Assistants
  - ▶ Deaf Support Specialists (DSS)

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▶ *Morals – concerned with principles or rules of right conduct or the distinction between right and wrong.*



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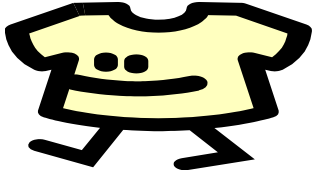
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- ▶ *Morals define personal character.*



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- ▶ *Ethics - The body of moral principles of values governing a particular culture or group.*



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- ▶ *Ethics stress a social system in which those morals are applied.*



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▶ Autonomy – Supporting clients’ independence, freedom and self-determination; professionals practice this principle ethic by respecting clients’ values, facilitating clients’ independence and supporting clients’ rights to make choices about their own life.



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▶ Beneficence – The obligation to do good; professionals apply this principle ethic through their commitment to helping others and by promoting what is in the best interest of the client.



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▶ Justice – Providing equal and fair treatment; professionals practice this principle ethic when they provide the same quality of treatment to all clients without discrimination.



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▶ Obedience – Observing laws and regulations which govern individuals and the profession; professionals apply this principle ethic by following licensure and certification regulations, agency policies and legal mandates.



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▶ Competence – Being educated, trained and prepared to provide related services; professionals practice this virtue ethic when they pursue appropriate credentials, training, experience and supervision and operate within their scope of practice.



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▶ Fidelity – Exercising honesty and trust; professionals promote this principle ethic by being trustworthy with clients and the general public, as well as following through with commitments to clients and others.



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▶ *Why do we need ethics and why are they important ?*



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▶ *Reputation - personal and professional*



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▶ *What do people say about you and your agency and why?*



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*Relationship roles*



- ▶ *Customer Service.*
- ▶ *Do what you say you are going to do when you say you are going to do it.*
- ▶ *Appointments and meetings – Be there and be there on time.*

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- ▶ *Contacts – phone, e-mails, and mail*
- ▶ *Paper work– Releases, plans, and case notes*
- ▶ *Don't ask what consumer can not give.*
- ▶ *Treat consumers with respect and dignity .*

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*Professional Responsibilities*

- ▶ *Provide safe and professional environment*
- ▶ *Qualified for the job.*
- ▶ *Qualified for specialty areas.*
- ▶ *Continuing Education*
- ▶ *Practice sound credible counseling techniques.*

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- ▶ Seek Consultation and appropriate referrals.

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- ▶ Multicultural competence – only use techniques based on established theory.

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*Relationship Boundaries*

- ▶ *Keep relationships at a professional level*



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▶ *Current clients– sexual or romantic counselor – client interactions or relationships with current clients, their romantic partners, or their family members are prohibited*

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▶ *Former clients – sexual or romantic counselor–client interaction or relationship with former clients, their romantic partners, or their family members are prohibited for a period of 5 years, following last professional contact.*

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▶ Field placement or clinical supervisors shall not engage in sexual or romantic intimacy with current students or supervisees. They shall not engage in any form of sexual or romantic intimacy with former students or supervisees for two years from the date of last supervision contact.

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- ▶ Do not Solicit testimonials from client or family for two years.

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## Sexual Harassment

- ▶ Language
- ▶ Jokes
- ▶ Touching
- ▶ Using Position

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## Hostile Environment in the Workplace

- ▶ Bullying/Intimidation
- ▶ Co-workers vs Co-workers
- ▶ Supervisor vs Supervisor

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- ▶ *Gift - amount and motivation*
- ▶ *Bartering-fair and equal does not put counselor at unfair advantage.*




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**Bartering:**

- ▶ Generally shall not accept goods or services from clients in return for counseling services in recognition of the possible negative effects, including perceived exploitation. May not accept goods, services or other nonmonetary compensation from clients only where no referrals are possible or appropriate and if the arrangement is discussed with client in advance, is an exchange of a reasonable equivalent value, does not place the counselor in an unfair advantage, is not harmful to the client or their treatment and is documented in the counseling services agreement.

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- ▶ Abandonment- Prohibited must make appropriate arrangements for continuation of treatment.

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- ▶ Confidentiality – Assuring information will be kept secret, with access limited to only appropriate persons.

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**Discriminatory Language**

- ▶ A concerned staff member at a local hospital reports discriminatory language on a physician’s Facebook page:

*“I saw this homosexual patient who came in complaining of dysuria and wants me to help. Well... that’s what you get for being gay. I really don’t feel any compassion for these people- they don’t deserve antibiotics, they need to change their behaviors.”*

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- ▶ Recognizing the potential for harm, shall not share information that is obtained through counseling process without specific written consent by the client or legal guardian except to prevent clear imminent danger to the client or others or when required to do so by court order.

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- ▶ Discussing consumers in public
- ▶ Be aware of surroundings in and out of the office
  
- ▶ Speaker phone
  - Personal
  - In the office
  
- ▶ Consumer information on private devices.
  - Has to be protected

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**What is Confidentiality?**

- ▶ Ways that a therapist must act to protect confidential information.

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- ▶ May not be able to communicate appropriately electronically or in other ways. Cognitively, mentally, socially
- ▶ Face to face better understanding, body language

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- ▶ Written in plan any use of social media. Clients, former clients, families and personal friends.



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- ▶ Inform clients in appropriate way to communicate in initial session.



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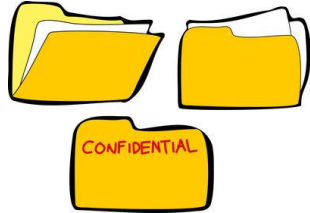
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- ▶ Release of information requirements:



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Exceptions to Confidentiality.

- ▶ Suicidal Client

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Duty to Warn

- ▶ Tarasoff V The Board of Regents of the University of California.




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Duty to Report




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▶ Disclosed information to family per information per authority.

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▶ Homicidal Client

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▶ Child Abuse or Neglect

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▶ Child maltreatment-  
Intentional harm to or  
avoidable endangerment of  
anyone under 18 years of age.



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**Child Abuse-**

▶ Deliberate action that is  
harmful to a child's physical,  
emotional, or sexual well  
being.



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**Child Neglect**

▶ Failure to meet a child's basic  
physical, educational, or  
emotional needs.



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### Record Keeping

- ▶ Keep records for 5 years.

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### Informed Consent

- ▶ Factors of legal definition of informed consent.
- ▶ Consent to treatment
- ▶ Alternatives to traditional psychotherapy may include

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- ▶ Keeping Yourself on Track



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- ▶ Do treatment plan with client
- ▶ Inform client of changes and updates



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- ▶ Sanctions for Ethical Violations.
  - Reputation
  - Suspension
  - Loss of Credentials
  - Loss of Job
  - Lawsuit
  - Jail



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- ▶ Malpractice
  - Insurance



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