

# PRINCIPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE



*All IECA members are required to pledge adherence to these Principles when admitted to membership and annually with membership renewal.*

## INTRODUCTION

These Principles are designed to promote and maintain the highest standards of professional service and personal conduct among all IECA members (hereafter referred to as “members”).

While it is understood that ethical issues are not always clear-cut, these Principles are meant to provide guidance and to be adhered to in a manner consistent with good ethical judgment and avoidance of even the appearance of impropriety.

All members are required to pledge adherence to these Principles when admitted to membership and annually with membership renewal.

## I. COMPETENCE

**A.** Members practice within the boundaries of their competence, which derives from relevant education, training, acquired knowledge and professional experience. They are straightforward about what they are—and are not—competent to do. In cases with elements outside their competence, they either consult with or refer clients to appropriate colleagues.

**B.** Members continually update their knowledge of educational options, both in breadth and in depth, through such activities as site visits, attendance at professional conferences, continuing education and professional reading.

**C.** Members know and understand the philosophies, values, missions, goals, approaches and methods of the schools, universities, programs and therapeutic institutions (hereafter inclusively referred to as “Schools/Programs”) they recommend.

**D.** Members are familiar with and adhere to state and federal laws relevant to their practices.

**E.** Members are familiar with and strive to meet the expectations on competencies set forth in the Standards of Excellence for IECA Member Consultants, found on the IECA web site at: [www.iecaonline.com/members.html#reference](http://www.iecaonline.com/members.html#reference)

## II. MULTIPLE RELATIONSHIPS AND POTENTIAL CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

**A.** Multiple relationships exist when a member has a relationship with a School/Program that may create or appear to create a conflict of interest. Such relationships include, but are not limited to, owning or serving as a consultant to or board member or employee of a School/Program.

i. Members are expected to avoid multiple relationships that could reasonably and foreseeably give rise to actual or perceived conflicts of interest, interfere with the ability of the independent educational consultant (IEC) to provide objective service, embarrass the student or family, or compromise the confidence or trust basic to the client-consultant relationship.

**B.** When such a multiple relationship exists, the member must disclose in writing the existence, extent and nature of that relationship. This disclosure should include a consent form for clients to sign, indicating that they have been informed of this additional role and agree to proceed with the services.

**C.** When a member provides services to a client in his/her capacity as a member of another licensed profession or professional organization, he/she acts in accordance with the ethical code of that profession or organization and within its guidelines regarding multiple relationships.

**D.** Members shall avoid not only conflicts of interest but also the appearance of conflicts by being forthcoming with clients, colleagues and Schools/Programs.

## III. RELATIONSHIPS WITH STUDENTS AND FAMILIES

**A.** Members treat students and their families with respect and decency, with sensitivity to their special strengths, values and needs.

i. Members are aware of and sensitive to cultural, individual and role differences, and do not discriminate or condone discrimination based on age, race, gender, sexual orientation, language, religion, ethnicity, disability, national origin or socioeconomic status.

ii. Members shall not write application essays or any portion of an essay for students. Their role is to serve as advisors, to question, coach and encourage students to fully and honestly express the best that is within them.

**B.** A member’s primary obligation is to assess, make recommendations for, and represent each student accurately and fairly based upon a professional evaluation of the circumstances, requirements of the case, and needs of the student.

i. The member has additional obligations to the student’s parents/guardians, who are also his/her clients and involved in the placement process.

**C.** During the placement process, with appropriate consent, members may communicate with other professionals, including School/Program admissions officers, other consultants and therapists, in addition to the student’s parents/guardians.

i. Members maintain confidentiality of records, notes and client information and disclose confidential information only with written consent and on a need-to-know basis.

ii. Members provide substantially consistent information to the student, family members and all other professionals involved in the placement.

**D.** Members are clear and forthright about the nature and scope of their services.

i. Members disclose fees and financial arrangements in writing before services begin.

ii. Members neither guarantee placement nor outcomes.

iii. Members inform clients of their confidentiality policies.

**E.** Members retain their principles in all social media (Twitter, Facebook, Listservs, etc.) interactions and do not include identifiable personal client references there or in public presentations.

#### IV. RELATIONSHIPS WITH COLLEGES/PROGRAMS/SCHOOLS

**A.** Members neither solicit nor accept compensation from Schools/Programs for placing or attempting to place students with them. They scrupulously avoid behavior that might be construed as soliciting or accepting compensation.

i. Compensation includes, but is not limited to, any form of payment, in money or in kind, and any sort of favor or special treatment to reward or encourage placements, even from Schools/Programs where finder's fees are commonly considered appropriate. Expressly forbidden are quid pro quo relationships involving referral of clients tied with referrals back to members and relationships that promise the exclusive or more favorable use of a particular School/Program. Gifts received from a school or program totaling less than \$75 in a calendar year shall not be considered compensation.

ii. Expenditures by Schools/Programs to educate IECs regarding particular Schools/Programs are not considered compensation, as long as they are customary, ordinary, and reasonable. Travel, lodging and meals associated with visiting a School/Program or a working lunch when a School/Program representative visits an IEC are customary, ordinary, and reasonable expenditures.

**B.** Members must avoid words or actions that might give the appearance of applying influence regarding admissions process, decisions or other interactions.

**C.** Members must abide by the standards set forth in the Code of Conduct for IECA members on College, Program and School Tours.

i. Members accept invitations only from Colleges/Programs/Schools within the scope of their practice or evolving practice, and only when the visit would customarily be needed to assess them. Members may request invitations but not demand them.

ii. Visits are a cost of doing business for consultants. Members must not imply, demand or otherwise solicit reimbursement for these expenses.

iii. When reimbursement is offered without solicitation, members do not request the use of specific airlines, special flights, lodging accommodations or upgrades (beyond what is necessary for a disability); or reimbursement for anyone other than oneself, or for expenses not agreed to in advance.

#### V. RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER INDEPENDENT EDUCATIONAL CONSULTANTS

**A.** Our organization and members subscribe to and practice ethical, honest, and respectful behavior in all actions with our client families, the public, and other IECs. We are responsible for the integrity of our own actions and the actions of our associates and employees.

**B.** Members accept payment only for work performed. They do not receive commissions or other payments for enrollment in or referrals to programs or vendors; nor do they accept remuneration for referring clients to other consultants or other related professionals, unless such relationships involve ongoing coordination, responsibility and oversight for delivery of services. This policy should not be interpreted as interfering with formal, ongoing business relationships a consultant may have with partners, associates, or employees in which a portion of fees paid support company overhead or remuneration agreements.

**C.** Ordinarily members do not pay one another for serving as resources, although a member may make financial arrangements with colleagues on a one-time or ongoing basis to assist with placements involving aspects outside his/her competence or practice preference or, when in the judgment of the member, another member will produce a superior result.

#### VI. ADVERTISING AND OTHER PUBLIC STATEMENTS

**A.** Members will not make disparaging public remarks about any school, college, program, or other IEC, either verbally or in their print or electronic communications.

**B.** In dealings with the public, including paid or unpaid advertising, members represent themselves honestly, avoiding misrepresentation of what they say or refrain from saying. They claim special competencies only if such competencies are demonstrable. Members do not contribute to heightening anxiety surrounding admission.

**C.** Members are familiar with and strictly adhere to the IECA Logo Usage Guidelines, found on the IECA website at: [www.iecaonline.com/benefits\\_logo.html](http://www.iecaonline.com/benefits_logo.html)

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