

APPENDIX 7 Private Practice

Introduction

In addition to the general provisions of the Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice, social workers in private practice are guided by the following specific ethical responsibilities. Standard 7 outlines these standards.

Relevant Code of Ethics.

Value 1: Respect for the Inherent Dignity and Worth of Persons

Social work is founded on a long-standing commitment to respect the inherent dignity and individual worth of all persons. When required by law to override a client's wishes social workers take care to use minimum coercion required. Social workers recognize and respect the diversity of Canadian society, taking into account the breadth of differences that exist among individuals, families, groups, and communities. Social workers uphold the human rights of individuals and groups as expressed in The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (1982) and the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948).

Value 4: Integrity of Professional Practice

Social workers demonstrate respect for the profession's purpose, values and ethical principles relevant to their field of practice. Social workers maintain a high level of professional conduct by acting honestly and responsibly and promoting the values of the profession. Social workers strive for impartiality in their professional practice, and refrain from imposing their personal values, views, preferences, stereotypes/assumptions on clients and seek to understand the lived experiences of those whom they serve. It is the responsibility of social workers to establish the tenor of their professional relationship with clients, and others to whom they have a professional duty, and to maintain professional boundaries. As individuals, social workers take care in their actions to not bring the reputation of the profession into disrepute. An essential element of integrity in professional practice is ethical accountability based on the CASW Code of Ethics, as amended for NSASW (1994), the CASW Code of Ethics (2005), the IFSW Ethics in Social Work, Statement of Principles (2004), and other relevant provincial standards and guidelines. Where conflicts or uncertainties exist with respect to these resources of ethical guidance or with respect to the interpretation or application, social workers are encouraged to seek advice, including consultation with their regulatory body.

Value 5: Confidentiality in Professional Practice

A cornerstone of professional social work relationships is confidentiality with respect to all matters associated with professional services to clients. Social workers demonstrate respect for the trust and confidence placed in them by clients, communities and other professionals by protecting the privacy of client information and respecting the client's right to control when or whether this information will be shared with third parties. Social workers only disclose confidential information to other parties (including family members)

with the informed consent of clients, client's legally authorized representatives or when required by law or court order. The general expectation that social workers will keep information confidential does not apply when disclosure is necessary to prevent serious, foreseeable and imminent harm to a client or others. In all instances, social workers disclose the least amount of confidential information necessary to achieve the desired purpose.

Value 6: Competence in Professional Practice

Social workers respect a client's right to competent social work services. Social workers analyze the nature of social needs and problems, and encourage innovative, effective strategies and techniques to meet both new and existing needs and, where possible, contribute to the knowledge base of the profession. Social workers have a responsibility to maintain professional proficiency, to continually strive to increase their professional knowledge and skills, and to apply new knowledge in practice commensurate with their level of professional education, skill and competency, seeking consultation and supervision as appropriate.

Concepts Related to Standard

- Examine the ethical dilemmas of working in private practice and working for a public service simultaneously.
- Examine the impact that conflicts of interest may have in a private practice setting.
- Examine ethical dilemmas that may occur around payment of fees.

Activity Examples

- 1. Formulate the possible ethical dilemmas of working in private practice and working for a public service simultaneously.**
- 2. Through a Collaborative conversation with your Mentor build on both of your understandings concerning conflicts of interest possible within private practice.**
 - Within your own practice what are the common conflict of interest encounter, explain if a private practitioner could face the same conflict.

Resources

Sturgeon, Heidi (2017) Lessons Learned; My Journey into Private Practice. Connections Magazine.

http://issuu.com/nscsw/docs/connection_october2017_online2?e=29577094/54393674

Barsky A. (2014) **Ethics in Private Practice; The New Social Worker:**
<http://www.socialworker.com/feature-articles/ethics-articles/ethics-in-private-practice/>

CASW Private Practice Portal <https://www.casw-acts.ca/en/private-practice-all>