

**Certified Prevention Specialist Code of Ethics**  
(Adapted from the International Certification & Reciprocity Consortium)

**PREAMBLE**

The Principles of Ethics are a model of standards of exemplary professional conduct. These Principles of the Code of Ethical Conduct for Prevention Professionals express the professional's recognition of his or her responsibilities to the public, to service recipients, and to colleagues. They guide members in the performance of their professional responsibilities and express the basic tenets of ethical and professional conduct. The Principles call for commitment to honorable behavior, even at the sacrifice of personal advantage. These principles should not be regarded as limitations or restrictions, but as goals toward which Prevention Professionals should constantly strive. They are guided by core values and competencies that have emerged with the development of the field.

**PRINCIPLE 1: Non-Discrimination**

Prevention Specialists shall not discriminate against service recipients or colleagues based on race, religion, national origin, sex, age, sexual orientation, economic condition, or physical, medical, or mental disability. Prevention Specialists should broaden her/his understanding and acceptance of cultural and individual differences, and, in so doing, render services and provide information sensitive to those differences.

**PRINCIPLE 2: Competence**

Prevention Specialists shall observe the profession's technical and ethical standards, strive continually to improve personal competence and quality of service delivery, and discharge professional responsibility to the best of his/her ability. Competence is derived from a synthesis of education and experience. It begins with the mastery of a body of knowledge and skill competencies. The maintenance of competence requires a commitment to learning and professional improvement that must continue throughout the professional's life.

a. Prevention Specialists should be diligent in discharging responsibilities. Diligence imposes the responsibility to render services carefully and promptly, to be thorough, and to observe applicable technical and ethical standards.

b. Due care requires a Prevention Specialist to plan and supervise adequately and evaluate, to the extent possible, any professional activity for which she/he is responsible.

c. A Prevention Specialist should recognize limitations and boundaries of competencies and not use techniques or offer services outside of his/her competencies. Each professional is responsible for assessing the adequacy of her/his own competence for the responsibility to be assumed.

d. Ideally, Certified Prevention Specialists should supervise Prevention Specialists. When this is not available, Prevention Specialists should seek peer supervision or mentoring from other competent prevention professionals.

e. When a Prevention Specialist has knowledge of unethical conduct or practice on the part of an agency or Prevention Specialist, he/she has an ethical responsibility to report the conduct or practices to appropriate funding or regulatory bodies or to the public.

f. A Prevention Specialist should recognize the effect of impairment on professional performance and should be willing to seek appropriate treatment for her/himself.

### **PRINCIPLE 3: Integrity**

To maintain and broaden public confidence, Prevention Specialists should perform all responsibilities with the highest sense of integrity. Personal gain and advantage should not subordinate service and the public trust. Integrity can accommodate the inadvertent error and the honest difference of opinion. It cannot accommodate deceit or subordination of principle.

a. All information should be presented fairly and accurately. Each Prevention Specialist should document and assign credit to all contributing sources used in published material or public statements.

b. Prevention Specialists should not misrepresent either directly or by implication professional qualifications or affiliations.

c. Where there is evidence of impairment in a colleague or a service recipient, a Prevention Specialist should be supportive of assistance or treatment.

d. A Prevention Specialist should not be associated directly or indirectly with any service, products, individuals, and organization in a way that is misleading.

### **PRINCIPLE 4: Nature of Services**

Practices shall do no harm to service recipients. Services provided by Prevention Specialists shall be respectful and non-exploitive.

a. Services should be provided in a way which preserves the protective factors inherent in each culture and individual.

b. Prevention Specialists should use formal and informal structures to receive and incorporate input from service recipients in the development, implementation, and evaluation of prevention services.

c. Where there is suspicion of abuse of children or vulnerable adults, the Prevention Specialist shall report the evidence to the appropriate agency and follow up to ensure that appropriate action has been taken.

**PRINCIPLE 5: Confidentiality**

Confidential information acquired during service delivery shall be safeguarded from disclosure, including – but not limited to – verbal disclosure, unsecured maintenance of records, or recording of an activity or presentation without appropriate releases. Prevention Professionals are responsible for knowing the confidentiality regulations relevant to their prevention specialty.

**PRINCIPLE 6: Ethical Obligations for Community and Society**

According to their consciences, Prevention Specialists should be proactive on public policy and legislative issues. The public welfare and the individual's right to services and personal wellness should guide the efforts of Prevention Specialists to educate the general public and policy makers. Prevention Specialists should adopt a personal and professional stance that promotes health.