

Professional Code of Ethics

Preamble

These principles are intended to aid those achieving professional certification from the American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences individually and collectively in maintaining a high level of ethical conduct. They are guidelines by which individuals may determine the propriety of conduct in relationships with students, clients, colleagues, members of allied professions, and with various publics.

An individual obtaining professional certification from the American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences shall:

- Maintain the highest responsible standard of professional performance, upholding confidentiality and acting with intelligence, commitment, and enthusiasm.
- Fulfill the obligation to continually upgrade and broaden personal professional competence.
- Share professional competence with colleagues and clients, to enlarge and continue development of the profession.
- Advance public awareness and understanding of the professional field of practice.
- Maintain a dedication of enhancing individual and family potential as a focus for professional efforts.

Statement of Principles of Professional Practice

The following Principles of Professional Practice provide those who have achieved professional certification from the American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences with guidelines and with descriptions of the actions required for ethical professional practice.

Professional Competence

AAFCS-certified professionals base their competence on educational degrees earned from regionally accredited institutions and from training, experience, and certification programs recognized by AAFCS.

AAFCS-certified professionals seek continuing education reflecting new expectations, procedures, and values.

AAFCS-certified professionals assure accurate presentation of their work by organizations with whom they are affiliated.

AAFCS-certified professionals identify themselves as with the name and designation of the specific AAFCS certification achieved in a manner consistent with the procedures and guidelines of the AAFCS Council for Certification. Certified professionals may use the designation acronym in this identification for the duration of time in which their certification is maintained in good standing.

AAFCS-certified professionals claim competence only in an area or areas for which they have education, training, and experience.

AAFCS-certified professionals accurately present competencies of students, supervisors, colleagues, and others with whom they work.

AAFCS-certified professionals practice within the law and within the recognized boundaries of their education, training, and experience.

AAFCS-certified professionals verify the credentials of their employees and supervisors.

AAFCS-certified professionals refrain from professional practice when impairment due to mental or physical causes, including chemical and alcohol abuse, affects professional competence. Individuals seek appropriate professional help for such impairments.

AAFCS-certified professionals respect the rights and responsibilities of peers.

Respect for Diversity

AAFCS-certified professionals respect differences in the abilities and needs of the people with whom they work.

AAFCS-certified professionals recognize that differences exist among individuals and families and do not discriminate against or patronize others.

AAFCS-certified professionals obtain education, training, and experience to provide competent services to persons of diverse backgrounds or persuasions.

AAFCS-certified professionals conduct research relating to the uniqueness of individuals and families.

AAFCS-certified professionals utilize and present subject matter in such a way as to recognize and develop appreciation of diversity.

Scholarship and Research

AAFCS-certified professionals conduct, utilize, and report research using recognized research procedures and facilitate professional standards for the respective research endeavors.

AAFCS-certified professionals secure review and approval of research designs by knowledgeable professionals consistent with standards used by institutional review boards.

AAFCS-certified professionals, as part of research efforts, secure review of research designs by knowledgeable professionals not directly involved in the investigation.

AAFCS-certified professionals secure the informed consent of research participants based on disclosure of the research design and potentially harmful effects of participation. Investigators are especially sensitive to consent among at-risk and protected populations.

AAFCS-certified professionals honor individuals' choice to decline participation or withdraw at any time from research studies.

AAFCS-certified professionals acknowledge through publication credit and other avenues the efforts and contributions of others to research activities.

AAFCS-certified professionals are obliged to take steps to ensure that their research findings are accurately and clearly understood by consumers.

Confidentiality

AAFCS-certified professionals maintain and guard the confidentiality of persons with whom they have professional relationships.

Conflict of Interest

AAFCS-certified professionals avoid conflicting roles and take active steps to prevent and avoid exploitation of the individuals with whom they work.

AAFCS-certified professionals assume responsibility for fair treatment of consumers, other professionals, and individuals and/or families.

AAFCS-certified professionals make financial arrangements with clients, third-party payers, and supervisors that conform to commonly accepted professional practices and that are easily understood by all populations served.

AAFCS-certified professionals report truthfully all professional services rendered.