

Code of Ethical Conduct

The *Code of Ethical Conduct* has been adopted for the benefit of all ConneXions stakeholders. It is used to define that which constitutes acceptable and ethical behaviour, promote high standards, and guide day-to-day practice. Stakeholders include supported individuals and their families, employees, contractors, volunteers and other community partners.

The main ethical principles endorsed by ConneXions are as follows:

- respect for the dignity and individuality of each person and their support network
- responsible service provision that reflects the best interests of each person
- integrity in professional relationships
- commitment and responsibility to the community through the promotion of inclusion and acceptance
- commitment to creative and innovative practice that enhances the quality of service to individuals and their families
- in areas of fundraising and marketing ConneXions adheres to the ethical principles and standards of the Association of Fundraising Professionals
- in areas of business ConneXions is committed to fairness, honesty and ethical practices as outlined by the Better Business Bureau of British Columbia
- in areas of human resources ConneXions adheres to all applicable federal and provincial legislation

Dilemmas often arise when there is a conflict between the interests or needs of different parties. The following decision-making steps will assist members of the ConneXions support team who are confronted with an ethical dilemma:

1. Identify the individuals and groups potentially affected by the decision.
2. Identify the ethically troubling issues, considering the interests of persons who will be affected as well as the circumstances in which the dilemma arose.
3. Consider how your personal biases, stresses or self-interest may influence your decision or course of action.
4. Develop a list of possible solutions to the problem. Where necessary, consult with other resources, including interdisciplinary team members, individuals, families and other professionals.
5. Analyse the likely risks and benefits of each course of action on the persons likely to be affected and choose the most appropriate course of action. Conscientiously apply the Society's philosophical and ethical principles to ensure consistency.
6. Act, with commitment, to assume responsibility for the consequences of the action.
7. Establish a plan to evaluate the results of your action, including taking responsibility for correcting any negative consequences.
8. Take appropriate action to prevent future occurrences of the problem.

GUIDELINES

All employees, volunteers, and contractors of ConneXions shall comply with the following *Code of Ethical Conduct* and shall acknowledge, in writing, that they have an understanding of this expectation:

1. All employees, volunteers, and contractors of ConneXions will deliver services in accordance with the *Organizational Philosophies* on programs, client support, family support, and client access.
2. All employees, volunteers, and contractors will interact with various ConneXions stakeholders in accordance with the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms* as it relates to the individual's race, ethnicity, language, religion, marital status, gender, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, age, disabilities, economic status, political affiliation, or national ancestry.
3. All employees, volunteers, and contractors will treat all stakeholders and their property in such a way as to preserve their dignity and communicate respect and fairness. This involves:
 - providing information a truthful, empathic, compassionate, understandable, and sensitive way.
 - being aware of the individual's needs, gifts, strengths, potentials, interests, and values.
 - applying appropriate, unbiased, consistent, and equitable principles to the circumstances.
4. All employees, volunteers, and contractors will protect the confidentiality of all information, records, and material acquired professionally or otherwise throughout the course of their working relationship with ConneXions by understanding and adhering to the agency's *Confidentiality Agreement*, the *Federal Privacy Act*, the *Personal Information Protection Act*, and any other government acts and regulations.
5. All employees, volunteers, and contractors are prohibited from behaving in ways that pose a real or perceived conflict of interest during their working relationship with ConneXions. This includes but is not limited to personal fundraising and the witnessing of documents.
6. All employees, volunteers, and contractors will provide services using an inclusive, collaborative approach with natural supports and community resources available and / or necessary to the client. This approach also recognizes that employees, volunteers, and contractors may have limitations in some areas and, when they do not possess the necessary expertise to address a particular issue, they will consult with or refer to an appropriate professional.
7. All employees, volunteers, and contractors will clearly understand and respect the differences between professional and personal relationships with clients and will behave in ways appropriate to these differences.
8. All employees, volunteers, and contractors will decline to act on behalf of clients outside of the service mandate and will be consistently aware of managing their personal boundaries in their interactions with clients, stakeholders, and co-workers so as to avoid using undue or unhealthy influence, exert position, and / or inappropriate use of power. Employees, volunteers, and contractors will not accept gifts from or trade or barter with clients.
9. All employees, volunteers, and contractors will promote and maintain continuous quality improvement approaches to upgrade their service-delivery methods and knowledge, skills, education, and training relevant to their area of practice.

10. All employees, volunteers, and contractors will be responsive and open to the needs and desires of consumers and potential customers through formal and informal means of input to program planning, service-delivery, and advocacy.
11. All employees, volunteers, and contractors will perform services in a manner that promotes integrity and ethical decision-making with the primary purpose being professional responsibility, not personal preference. When a conflict exists, priority is always given to the needs and rights of the client.
12. All employees, volunteers, and contractors are willing to accept full and complete accountability for their own acts and omissions, exhibiting self-discipline and the pursuit of excellence in all activities.
13. All employees, volunteers, and contractors will participate and co-operate in expressing and resolving their own grievances.
14. All employees, volunteers, and contractors are prohibited from giving or receiving preferential treatment for the organization's services.
15. All employees, volunteers, and contractors will respect professional work or ideas created by others giving full credit and citations when reproduced in any form.
16. All employees, volunteers, and contractors will inclusively adhere to the *Code of Ethics* of their respective professions and to *Connexions Code of Ethical Conduct* in all other areas.
17. All employees, volunteers, and contractors will familiarize themselves with and adhere to the Society's policies.
18. All contractual relationships will be in writing and signed by the Society's Executive Director.

Connexions assumes a consistent no-reprisal approach towards those who report known or suspected ethical violations.

This document is signed by all employees upon hiring and is reviewed by all members of Connexions support team (i.e. employees, volunteers, contractors) at least once each year.

AGREEMENT

I confirm that I have reviewed and understand the Society's *Code of Ethical Conduct*. I agree to adhere to all requirements contained within this document or as may be otherwise directed to me in writing by my supervisor.

Name (Print)

Signature

Date