

# Code of Ethics

## I. SERVICES TO PERSONS SERVED

*posAbilities'* Charter of Rights will guide all our dealings with the individuals we support. Above all, we will place their interests first. Our services to persons served will be characterized by the following:

a) *Respect*

The individuals we support are persons of inherent value and fully worthy of our respect. We will respect each person's rights and freedoms, and assist them to fulfill their responsibilities. We will treat them as persons with dignity, and we will do our best to make sure others see them and treat them the same way. We will not stigmatize the individuals we support. We will never disparage, demean or humiliate persons served.

b) *Choices*

We will see in persons served their capacity and competence before limitation. Therefore, we will seek to expand their choices and opportunities, and to provide them with the information they want and need. We will also assist them to understand information to the best of our abilities. In all that we do, we will promote choice, decision-making and personal empowerment.

c) *Advocacy*

Persons served are entitled to all the rights and privileges that are accorded to them as citizens of Canada. We will assist and encourage persons served to lead meaningful lives as full citizens of their community. This includes helping them achieve their right to belong, to be valued, to participate, to assume responsibilities and to make meaningful contributions. We will never conduct ourselves in a way that undermines this effort. We will advocate for the rights and interests of persons served within the Association, within external systems and within the community at large.

d) *Personal service*

We will seek to understand and accommodate the complex person we are supporting; this includes considering such things as language, culture, ethnicity, sexuality, religion, values and beliefs. We will be sensitive to differences and celebrate diversity. We will treat each individual as an individual and, as far as possible, we will tailor our services to meet their needs and expectations.

e) *Safety*

We will take reasonable measures to protect the health, safety and emotional well-being of persons served; at the same time, we will recognize their right to take measured risks and to make mistakes.

**II. PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT**

Our Association will be accountable for maintaining the highest possible standards of professional practice. This will include all undertakings by the Association as well as undertakings by individuals working for or on behalf of the Association (including the board of directors, managers, employees and contracted support services).

a) *Interpersonal relationships*

We will treat all persons with whom we interact with dignity and respect. Especially, we will honour the important role of families, friends and advocates in the lives of persons served. We will be honest and straightforward, and genuine in all our dealings with people. We will be sensitive to diversity and difference; we will resolve interpersonal conflicts in a timely and respectful manner.

b) *Criticism and mutual support*

We will accept constructive criticism from one another. We will welcome complaints from stakeholders and respond in a respectful, timely, and effective manner. We will accept credit only for the work we have done and acknowledge the work and contributions of others. We will support one another to perform to the best of all our abilities, and to avoid conduct that diminishes quality of service or that erodes morale.

c) *Collaboration*

We will promote and contribute to professional collaborations. In the interest of maximizing our service, we will consult with stakeholders, with outside expertise, and with one another, as often as needed.

We will work with other service providers, organizations, and caregivers in a spirit of mutual and collegial respect. We will invite their feedback and contribution, even as we offer our own. Our influence will be a positive one, characterized by cooperation and encouragement. We will not act with malice, discourtesy, or enmity.

d) *Stewardship*

We will respectfully maintain and preserve the property, assets and resources made available to us for the performance of our duties and commitments.

e) *Excellence*

We will be earnest in all our efforts, thoughtful in all our undertakings. We will strive to find more efficient and more effective ways of conducting business. We will provide the individuals we support with the highest possible standards of service.

*f) Integrity*

We will accept responsibility for our actions. We will not operate beyond the scope of our competencies, nor misrepresent our qualifications, experience and/or expertise. We will act quickly to correct any misinformation or misrepresentation concerning our services, activities, outcomes, or credentials. We will not withhold evidence that might disconfirm our findings or views, and will acknowledge alternative positions, explanations, or hypotheses.

*g) Community citizenship*

We are a member of the communities in which we work and serve. This comes with responsibilities such as being a good neighbour, a good employer, and an overall positive influence. We will be mindful of our communities' needs and interests, and we will be supportive of its charitable, cultural, and educational institutions. We will not be politically complacent, but will maintain a presence that befits our responsibility.

*h) Duty under law*

We will understand and comply with the letter and spirit of all laws, regulations, agreements, or requirements that govern us. Where such requirements negatively impact operations or those we serve, we will seek immediate remedy; where the requirements do not go far enough to advance the interests of persons served or best professional practices, we will exceed them.

### **III. HUMAN RESOURCES**

We will clearly and effectively communicate the qualifications, roles and responsibilities relating to all positions within the Association.

*a) Treatment of our employees*

We commit to treating our employees with dignity and respect and to ensuring that they are not subjected to any form of discrimination, nor to sexual or personal harassment. Our evaluative processes will be just and fair. We will encourage them in their professional development and assist them to learn and apply best practices.

We will strive to create a place of work where employees feel welcomed, appreciated, and comfortable. To this end, we will promote safe and healthy working conditions, positive working relationships, and a spirit of collegiality. We will endeavour to foster in our employees a sense of personal satisfaction, purpose, and accomplishment.

We will represent our employees' interests within the larger political and professional spheres within which we operate.

*b) Recruiting Practices*

We will utilize recruitment practices that are consistent with Association needs and objectives, and that are fair, effective, and free from all forms of discrimination.

#### **IV. BUSINESS & FINANCIAL PRACTICES**

All of our business and financial practices will be in accordance with applicable legislation, requirements, and standards, and will be subjected to annual independent review by external auditors, including accrediting bodies. We will be transparent in our undertakings, exercise integrity in all our financial practices, and be held accountable to our membership, funding bodies, and other stakeholders.

##### *a) Financial Practices*

All our financial practices will comply with generally accepted Canadian accounting principles and practices. Financial matters that fall within the purview of our financial management policies will conform with these policies; financial matters covered by the Association's bylaws will be handled in accordance with those bylaws.

##### *b) Fund Development & Communications*

We will represent those receiving services in a respectful manner. We will never use representations of persons served that are demeaning or that are designed to elicit pity or sympathy. Our solicitation of funds and our promotional practices will be ethical, legal and respectful. All corrupt practices, such as inducing "guilt" or obligation, personal gain, bribery or collusive transactions, are prohibited. We will abide by all applicable laws, regulations, standards, and ethical practices. We will ensure all written communication meets or exceeds current professional standards.

We will provide the financial community and, where possible, the community at large, with information regarding the needs and achievements of the Association. We will accurately represent the Association and its stakeholders.

#### **V. INFORMATION MANAGEMENT**

We will collect personal information by lawful and ethical means. We will limit the collection and use of personal information to that which is necessary to establish and manage the employment relationship and to fulfill our obligations to persons served and funders. We will maintain information that is accurate, current and managed (i.e. organized, secured, archived and destroyed) in accordance with applicable regulations and contractual obligations.

We will exercise discretion in sharing personal information and will only share information on a need-to-know basis. We will protect personal and proprietary information from improper or inadvertent disclosure. This includes information about stakeholders (including, but not limited to individuals, families, employees, donors and members). Especially, we will keep in confidence information about persons served.

We will not use or disclose personal information to third parties without the individual's prior consent, except in circumstances where our contractual and legal obligations require or permit it.

When we are presented with a legitimate request for information, and/or when we are required to make disclosures, we will provide accurate and complete information in a timely manner

## **VI. CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

A conflict of interest arises when direct or indirect personal gain is a factor in a decision that impacts the people we serve and/or the Association. We will strive to avoid conflicts of interest. Should any instance of real, potential, or apparent conflict exist, we will disclose it so that a remedy might be sought.

## **VII. COMPLAINTS**

*posAbilities is a safe place for persons served, families or other stakeholders, to express any concerns or complaints they have about our service. We will not retaliate, harass or create barriers to service as a result of a complaint. We will work diligently with all parties involved, to understand and resolve any issues or conflicts raised through our complaints resolution process.*

## **VIII. REPORTING BREACHES TO THE CODE OF ETHICS**

Any person may report an alleged breach to the Code of Ethics to the Complaints Resolution Officer, 604 299-4001 or [complaintsresolutionofficer@posabilities.ca](mailto:complaintsresolutionofficer@posabilities.ca)