



Idaho Board of Alcohol/Drug Counselor Certification, INC.

## Code of Ethics

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## **Code of Ethics**

*Adopted and Revised from permission of The American Counseling Association 2014 Code of Ethics*

### ***Mission Statement***

The Idaho Board of Alcohol/Drug Counselor Certification's purpose is to provide leadership, knowledge and competency of national standardized quality of providers. This is accomplished through certified testing, ethical standards and practices, integrity of knowledge, substance use disorders providers' advocacy and the understanding and embracing of change in the field of addictions.

### ***Ethics Preamble***

The Idaho Board of Alcohol/Drug Counselor Certification (referred to herein as "the Board" or "IBADCC") provides certification for substance abuse counselors, prevention specialists and recovery coaches in the State of Idaho. The purpose of the IBADCC's voluntary certification process is to assure consumers, the public, and employers that individuals certified by IBADCC are capable and competent, have been through a certain organized set of experiences, and have been judged to be qualified.

IBADCC is dedicated to the principle that professionals in the field of alcohol and drug treatment must conform their behavior to the highest standards of ethical practice. To that end, the IBADCC has adopted the Certified Professional Code of Ethics (referred to herein as The Code of Ethics), to be applied to all professionals certified or seeking certification.

The Board is committed to investigate and sanction those certified professionals or those seeking certification who breach this Code. Certified Professionals or those seeking certification are therefore encouraged to thoroughly familiarize himself/herself with the Code to guide their behavior according to the Rules set forth within this Code.

### ***Introduction***

Substance Use Disorders (SUD) counselors facilitate client growth and development in ways that foster the interest and welfare of clients and promote formation of healthy relationships. Trust is the cornerstone of the counseling relationship, and SUD counselors or persons seeking certification have the responsibility to respect and safeguard the client's right to privacy and confidentiality. SUD counselors or persons seeking certification actively attempt to understand the diverse cultural backgrounds of the clients they serve. SUD counselors or persons seeking certification also explore their own cultural identities and how these affect their values and beliefs about the counseling process.

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## **Section A: The Counseling Relationship**

### **A.1 Client Welfare**

#### **Introduction**

Counselors facilitate client growth and development in ways that foster the interest and welfare of clients and promote formation of healthy relationships. Trust is the cornerstone of the counseling relationship, and counselors have the responsibility to respect and safeguard the client's right to privacy and confidentiality. Counselors actively attempt to understand the diverse cultural backgrounds of the clients they serve. Counselors also explore their own cultural identities and how these affect their values and beliefs about the counseling process. Additionally, counselors are encouraged to contribute to society by devoting a portion of their professional activities for little or no financial return (pro bono publico).

#### **A.1.a. Primary Responsibility**

The primary responsibility of SUD counselors or persons seeking certification is to respect the dignity and promote the welfare of clients.

#### **A.1.b. Records and Documentation**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification create, safeguard, and maintain documentation necessary for rendering professional services. Regardless of the medium, counselors include sufficient and timely documentation to facilitate the delivery and continuity of services. SUD counselors or persons seeking certification take reasonable steps to ensure that documentation accurately reflects client progress and services provided. If amendments are made to records and documentation, SUD counselors or persons seeking certification take steps to properly note the amendments according to agency or institutional policies.

#### **A.1.c. Counseling Plans**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification and their clients work jointly in devising counseling plans that offer reasonable promise of success and are consistent with the abilities, temperament, developmental level, and circumstances of clients. SUD counselors or persons seeking certification and clients regularly review and revise counseling plans to assess their continued viability and effectiveness, respecting clients' freedom of choice.

#### **A.1.d. Support Network Involvement**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification recognize that support networks hold various meanings in the lives of clients and consider enlisting the support, understanding, and involvement of others (e.g., religious/spiritual/community leaders, family members, friends) as positive resources, when appropriate, with client consent.

### **A.2. Informed Consent in the Counseling Relationship**

#### **A.2.a. Informed Consent**

Clients have the freedom to choose whether to enter into or remain in a counseling relationship and need adequate information about the counseling process and the counselor. SUD counselors or persons seeking certification have an obligation to review in writing and verbally with clients the rights and responsibilities of both counselors and clients. Informed consent is an ongoing part of the counseling process, and counselors appropriately document discussions of informed consent throughout the counseling relationship.

#### **A.2.b. Types of Information Needed**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification explicitly explain to clients the nature of all services provided. They inform clients about issues such as, but not limited to, the following: the purposes, goals, techniques, procedures, limitations, potential risks, and benefits of services; the counselor's qualifications, credentials, relevant experience, and approach to counseling; continuation of services upon the incapacitation or death of the counselor; the role of technology; and other pertinent information. SUD counselors or persons seeking certification take steps to ensure

that clients understand the implications of diagnosis and the intended use of tests and reports. Additionally, counselors inform clients about fees and billing arrangements, including procedures for nonpayment of fees. Clients have the right to confidentiality and to be provided with an explanation of its limits (including how supervisors and/or treatment or interdisciplinary team professionals are involved), to obtain information about their records, to participate in the ongoing counseling plans, and to refuse any services or modality changes and to be advised of the consequences of such refusal.

#### **A.2.c. Developmental and Cultural Sensitivity**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification communicate information in ways that are both developmentally and culturally appropriate. SUD counselors or persons seeking certification use clear and understandable language when discussing issues related to informed consent. When clients have difficulty understanding the language the counselors use, counselors provide necessary services (e.g. arranging for a qualified interpreter or translator) to ensure comprehension by clients. In collaboration with clients, counselors consider cultural implications of informed consent procedures and, where possible, counselors adjust their practices accordingly.

#### **A.2.d. Inability to Give Consent**

When counseling minors, incapacitated adults, or other persons unable to give voluntary consent, counselors seek the assent of clients to services and include them in decision making as appropriate. Counselors recognize the need to balance the ethical rights of clients to make choices, their capacity to give consent or assent to receive services, and parental or familial legal rights and responsibilities to protect these clients and make decision on their behalf.

#### **A.2.e. Mandated Clients**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification discuss the required limitations to confidentiality when working with clients who have been mandated for counseling services. Counselors also explain what type of information and with whom that information is shared prior to the beginning of counseling. The client may choose to refuse services. In this case, counselors will, to the best of their ability, discuss with the client the potential consequences of refusing counseling services.

### ***A.3. Clients Served by Others***

When SUD counselors or persons seeking certification learn that their clients are in a professional relationship with other mental health professionals, they request release from clients to inform the other professionals and strive to establish a positive and collaborative professional relationship.

### ***A.4. Avoiding Harm and Imposing Values***

#### **A.4.a. Avoiding Harm**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification act to avoid harming their clients, trainees, and research participants and to minimize or to remedy unavoidable or unanticipated harm.

#### **A.4.b. Personal Values**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification are aware of- and avoid imposing- their own values, attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors. Counselors respect the diversity of clients, trainees, and research participants and seek training in areas in which they are at risk of imposing their values onto clients, especially when the counselor's values are inconsistent with the client's goals or are discriminatory in nature.

### ***A.5. Prohibited Noncounseling Roles and Relationships***

#### **A.5.a. Sexual and/or Romantic Relationships Prohibited**

Sexual and/or romantic counselor-client interactions or relationships with current clients, their romantic partners, or their family members are prohibited. This prohibition applies to both in-person and electronic interactions or relationships.

**A.5.b. Previous Sexual and/or Romantic Relationships**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification are prohibited from engaging in counseling relationships with persons with whom they have had a previous sexual and/or romantic relationship.

**A.5.c. Sexual and/or Romantic Relationships with Former Clients**

Sexual and/or romantic counselor-client interactions or relationships with former clients, their romantic partners, or their family members are prohibited for a period of five (5) years following the last professional contact. This prohibition applies to both in-person and electronic interactions or relationships. SUD counselors or persons seeking certification, before engaging in sexual and/or romantic interactions or relationships with former clients, their romantic partners, or their family members, demonstrate forethought and document (in written form) whether the interaction or relationship can be viewed as exploitive in any way and/or whether there is still potential to harm the former client; in cases of potential exploitation and/or harm, the counselor avoids entering into such an interaction or relationship.

**A.5.d. Friends or Family Members**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification are prohibited from engaging in counseling relationships with friends or family members with whom they have an inability to remain objective.

**A.5.e. Personal Virtual Relationships with Current Clients**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification are prohibited from engaging in a personal virtual relationship with individuals with whom they are a current counseling relationship (e.g. through social and other media).

***A.6. Managing and Maintaining Boundaries and Professional Relationships*****A.6.a. Previous Relationships**

SUDS counselors consider the risks and benefits of accepting as clients those with whom they have had a previous relationship. These potential clients may include individuals with whom the counselor has had a casual, distant, or past relationship. Examples include mutual or past membership in a professional association, organization, or community. When counselors accept these clients, they take appropriate professional precautions such as informed consent, consultation, supervision, and documentation to ensure that judgment is not impaired and no exploitation occurs.

**A.6.b. Extending Counseling Boundaries**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification consider the risks and benefits of extending current counseling relationships beyond conventional parameters. Examples include attending a client's formal ceremony (e.g., a wedding/commitment ceremony or graduation), purchasing a service or product provided by a client (excepting unrestricted bartering), and visiting a client's ill family member in the hospital. In extending these boundaries, counselors take appropriate professional precautions such as informed consent, consultation, supervision, and documentation to ensure that judgment is not impaired and no harm occurs.

**A.6.c. Documenting Boundary Extensions**

If SUD counselors or persons seeking certification extend boundaries as described in A.6.a. and A.6.b., they must officially document, prior to the interaction (when feasible), the rationale for such an interaction, the potential benefit, and anticipated consequences for the client or former client and other individuals significantly involved with the client or former client. When unintentional harm occurs to the client or former client, or to an individual significantly involved with the client or former client, the counselor must show evidence of an attempt to remedy such harm.

#### **A.6.d. Role Changes in the Professional Relationship**

When SUD counselors or persons seeking certification change a role from the original or most recent contracted relationship, they obtain informed consent from the client and explain the client's right to refuse services related to the change. Examples of role change include, but are not limited to:

1. Changing from an individual to relationship or family counseling, or vice versa;
2. Changing from an evaluative role to a therapeutic role, or vice versa; and
3. Changing from a counselor to a mediator role, or vice versa.

Clients must be fully informed of any anticipated consequences (e.g., financial, legal, personal, therapeutic) of counselor role changes.

#### **A.6.e. Nonprofessional Interactions or Relationships (Other than Sexual or Romantic Interactions or Relationships)**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification avoid entering into nonprofessional relationships with former clients, their romantic partners, or their family members when the interaction is potentially harmful to the client. This applies to both in-person and electronic interactions or relationships.

### ***A.7. Roles and Relationships at Individual, Group, Institutional, and Societal Levels***

#### **A.7.a. Advocacy**

When appropriate, SUD counselors or persons seeking certification advocate at individual, group, institutional, and society levels to address potential barriers and obstacles that inhibit access and/or the growth and development of clients.

#### **A.7.b. Confidentiality and Advocacy**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification obtain client consent prior to engaging in advocacy efforts on behalf of an identifiable client to improve the provision of services and to work toward removal of systemic barriers or obstacles that inhibit client access, growth, and development.

### ***A.8 Multiple Relationships***

When a SUD counselor agrees to provide counseling services to two or more persons who have a relationship, the counselor clarifies at the outset which person or persons are clients and the nature of the relationships the counselor will have with each involved person. If it becomes apparent that the counselor may be called upon to perform potentially conflicting roles, the counselor will clarify, adjust, or withdraw from roles appropriately.

### ***A.9. Group Work***

#### **A.9.a. Screening**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification screen prospective group counseling/therapy participants. To the extent possible, counselors select members whose needs and goals are compatible with the goals of the group, who will not impede the group process, and whose well-being will not be jeopardized by the group experience.

#### **A.9.b. Protecting Clients**

In a group setting, SUD counselors or persons seeking certification take reasonable precautions to protect clients from physical, emotional or psychological trauma.

### ***A.10. Fees and Business Practices***

#### **A.10.a. Self-Referral**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification working in an organization (e.g. school, agency, institution) that provides counseling services do not refer clients to their private practice unless the policies of a particular

organization make explicit provisions for self-referrals. In such instances, the clients must be informed of other options open to them should they seek private counseling services.

#### **A.10.b. Unacceptable Business Practices**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification do not participate in fee splitting, nor do they give or receive commissions, rebates, or any other form of remuneration when referring clients for professional services.

#### **A.10.c. Establishing Fees**

In establishing fees for professional counseling services, counselors consider the financial status of clients and locality. If a counselor's usual fees create undue hardship for the client, the counselor may adjust fees, when legally permissible, or assist the client in locating comparable, affordable services.

#### **A.10.d. Nonpayment of Fees**

If SUD counselors or persons seeking certification intend to use collection agencies or take legal measures to collect fees from clients who do not pay for services as agreed upon, they include such information in their informed consent documents and also inform clients in a timely fashion of intended actions and offer clients the opportunity to make payment.

#### **A.10.e. Bartering**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification may barter only if the bartering does not result in exploitation or harm, if the client requests it, and if such arrangements are an accepted practice among professionals in the community. SUD counselors or persons seeking certification consider the cultural implications of bartering and discuss relevant concerns with clients and document such agreements in a clear written contract.

#### **A.10.f. Receiving Gifts**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification understand the challenges of accepting gifts from clients and recognize that in some cultures, small gifts are a token of respect and gratitude. When determining whether to accept a gift from clients, counselors take into account the therapeutic relationship, the monetary value of the gift, the client's motivation for giving the gift, and the counselor's motivation for wanting to accept or decline the gift.

### ***A.11 Termination and Referral***

#### **A.11.a. Competence within Termination and Referral**

If SUD counselors or persons seeking certification lack the competence to be of professional assistance to clients, they avoid entering or continuing counseling relationships. SUD counselors or persons seeking certification are knowledgeable about culturally and clinically appropriate referral resources and suggest these alternatives. If clients decline the suggested referrals, counselors discontinue the relationship.

#### **A.11.b. Values within Termination and Referral**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification refrain from referring prospective and current clients based solely on the counselor's personally held values, attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors. SUD counselors or persons seeking certification respect the diversity of clients and seek training in areas in which they are at risk of imposing their values onto clients, especially when the counselor's values are inconsistent with the client's goals or are discriminatory in nature.

#### **A.11.c. Appropriate Termination**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification terminate a counseling relationship when it becomes reasonably apparent that the client no longer needs assistance, is not likely to benefit, or is being harmed by continued counseling. SUD counselors or persons seeking certification may terminate counseling when in jeopardy of harm by the client or by another person with whom the client has a relationship, or when clients do not pay fees as agreed upon. Counselors provide pre-termination counseling and recommend other service providers when necessary.

#### **A.11.d. Appropriate Transfer of Services**

When SUD counselors or persons seeking certification transfer or refer clients to other practitioners, they ensure that appropriate clinical and administrative processes are completed and open communication is maintained with both clients and practitioners.

#### **A.12 Abandonment and Client Neglect**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification do not abandon or neglect clients in counseling. SUD counselors or persons seeking certification assist in making appropriate arrangements for the continuation of treatment, when necessary, during interruptions such as vacations, illness, and following termination.

### **Section B: Confidentiality and Privacy**

#### **Introduction**

Counselors recognize that trust is a cornerstone of the counseling relationship. Counselors aspire to earn the trust of clients by creating an ongoing partnership, establishing and upholding appropriate boundaries, and maintaining confidentiality. Counselors communicate the parameters of confidentiality in a culturally competent manner.

#### **B.1. Respecting Clients Rights**

##### **B.1.a. Multicultural/Diversity Considerations**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification maintain awareness and sensitivity regarding cultural meanings of confidentiality and privacy. SUD counselors or persons seeking certification respect differing views toward disclosure of information. SUD counselors or persons seeking certification hold ongoing discussions with clients as to how, when, and with whom information is to be shared.

##### **B.1.b. Respect for Privacy**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification respect the privacy of prospective and current clients. SUD counselors or persons seeking certification request private information from clients only when it is beneficial to the counseling process.

##### **B.1.c. Respect for Confidentiality**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification protect the confidential information of prospective and current clients. SUD counselors or persons seeking certification disclose information only with appropriate consent or with sound legal or ethical justification.

##### **B.1.d. Explanation of Limitations**

At initiation and throughout the counseling process, SUD counselors or persons seeking certification inform clients of the limitations of confidentiality and seek to identify situations in which confidentiality must be breached.

#### **B.2. Exceptions**

##### **B.2.a. Serious and Foreseeable Harm and Legal Requirements**

The general requirement that SUD counselors or persons seeking certification keep information confidential does not apply when disclosure is required to protect clients or identified others from serious and foreseeable harm or when legal requirements demand that confidential information must be revealed. SUD counselors or persons seeking certification consult with other professionals when in doubt as to the validity of an exception. Additional considerations apply when addressing end-of-life issues.

##### **B.2.b. Confidentiality Regarding End-of-Life Decisions**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification who provide services to terminally ill individuals who are considering hastening their own deaths have the option to maintain confidentiality, depending on applicable laws



and the specific circumstances of the situation and after seeking consultation or supervision from appropriate professional and legal parties.

**B.2.c. Contagious, Life-Threatening Diseases**

When clients disclose that they have a disease commonly known to be both communicable and life threatening, SUD counselors or persons seeking certification may be justified in disclosing information to identifiable third parties, if the parties are known to be at serious and foreseeable risk of contracting the disease. Prior to making a disclosure, counselors assist the intent of clients to inform the third parties about their disease or to engage in any behaviors that may be harmful to an indefinable third party. SUD counselors or persons seeking certification adhere to relevant state laws concerning disclosure about disease status.

**B.2.d. Court-ordered Disclosure**

When ordered by a court to release confidential or privileged information without a client’s permission, SUD counselors or persons seeking certification seek to obtain written, informed consent from the client or take steps to prohibit the disclosure or have it limited as narrowly as possible because of potential harm to the client or counseling relationship.

**B.2.e. Minimal Disclosure**

To the extent possible, clients are informed before confidential information is disclosed and are involved in the disclosure decision-making process. When circumstances require the disclosure of confidential information, only essential information is revealed.

***B.3. Information Shared with Others***

**B.3.a. Subordinates**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification make every effort to ensure that privacy and confidentiality of clients are maintained by subordinates, including employees, supervisees, students, clerical assistants, and volunteers.

**B.3.b. Interdisciplinary Teams**

When services provided to the client involve participation by an interdisciplinary or treatment team, the client will be informed of the team’s existence and composition, information being shared, and the purposes of sharing such information.

**B.3.c. Confidential Setting**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification discuss confidential information only in settings in which they can reasonably ensure client privacy.

**B.3.d. Third-Party Payers**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification disclose information to third-party payers only when clients have authorized such disclosure.

**B.3.e. Transmitting Confidential Information**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification take precautions to ensure the confidentiality of all information transmitted through the use of any medium.

**B.3.f. Deceased Clients**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification protect the confidentiality of deceased clients, consistent with legal requirements and the documented preferences of the client.

#### ***B.4. Groups and Families***

##### **B.4.a. Group Work**

In group work, SUD counselors or persons seeking certification clearly explain the importance and parameters of confidentiality for the specific group.

##### **B.4.b. Couples and Family Counseling**

In couples and family counseling, SUD counselors or persons seeking certification clearly define who is considered “the client” and discuss expectations and limitations of confidentiality. SUD counselors or persons seeking certification seek agreement and document in writing such agreement among all involved parties regarding the confidentiality of information. In the absence of an agreement to the contrary, the couple or family is considered to be the client.

#### ***B.5. Clients Lacking Capacity to Give Informed Consent***

##### **B.5.a. Responsibility to Clients**

When counseling minor clients or adult clients who lack the capacity to give voluntary, informed consent, counselors protect the confidentiality of information received- in any medium- in the counseling relationship as specified by federal and state laws, written policies, and applicable ethical standards.

##### **B.5.b. Responsibility to Parents and Legal Guardians**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification inform parents and legal guardians about the role of counselors and the confidential nature of the counseling relationship, consistent with current legal and custodial arrangements. SUD counselors or persons seeking certification are sensitive to the cultural diversity of families and respect the inherent rights and responsibilities of parents/guardians regarding the welfare of their children/charges according to the law. SUD counselors or persons seeking certification work to establish, as appropriate, collaborative relationships with parents/guardians to best serve clients.

##### **B.5.c. Release of Information**

When counseling minor clients or adult clients who lack the capacity to give voluntary consent to release confidential information, counselors seek permission from an appropriate third party to disclose information. In such instances, counselors inform clients consistent with their level of understanding and take appropriate measure to safeguard client confidentiality.

#### ***B.6. Records and Documentation***

##### **B.6.a. Creating and Maintaining Records and Documentation**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification create and maintain records and documentation necessary for rendering professional services.

##### **B.6.b. Confidentiality of Records and Documentation**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification ensure that records and documentation kept in any medium are secure and that only authorized persons have access to them.

##### **B.6.c. Records Management**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification shall not falsify, amend, knowingly make incorrect entries, or fail to make timely essential entries into the consumer record. Counselors shall follow all Federal and State regulations regarding consumer records.

##### **B.6.d. Permission to Record**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification obtain permission from clients prior to recording sessions through electronic or other means.

##### **B.6.e. Permission to Observe**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification obtain permission from clients prior to allowing any person to observe counseling sessions, review session transcripts, or view recordings of sessions with supervisors, faculty, peers, or others within the training environment.

**B.6.f. Client Access**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification provide reasonable access to records and copies of records when requested by competent clients. Counselors limit the access of clients to their records, or portions of their records, only when there is compelling evidence that such access would cause harm to the client. SUD counselors or persons seeking certification document the request of clients and the rationale for withholding some or all of the records in the files of clients. In situations involving multiple clients, counselors provide individual clients with only those parts of records that relate directly to them and do not include confidential information related to any other client.

**B.6.g. Assistance with Records**

When clients request access to their records, counselors provide assistance and consultation in interpreting counseling records.

**B.6.h. Disclosure or Transfer**

Unless exceptions to confidentiality exist, counselors obtain written permission from clients to disclose or transfer records to legitimate third parties. Steps are taken to ensure that receivers of counseling records are sensitive to their confidential nature.

**B.6.i. Storage and Disposal after Termination**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification store records following termination of services to ensure reasonable future access, maintain records in accordance with federal and state laws and statutes such as licensure laws and policies governing records, and dispose of client records and other sensitive materials in a manner that protects client confidentiality. SUD counselors or persons seeking certification apply careful discretion and deliberation before destroying records that may be needed by a court of law, such as notes on child abuse, suicide, sexual harassment, or violence.

**B.6.j. Reasonable Precautions**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification take reasonable precautions to protect client confidentiality in the event of the counselor's termination of practice, incapacity, or death and appoint a records custodian when identified as appropriate.

***B.7. Case Consultation***

**B.7.a. Respect for Privacy**

Information shared in a consulting relationship is discussed for professional purposes only. Written and oral reports present only data germane to the purposes of the consultation, and every effort is made to protect client identity and to avoid undue invasion of privacy.

**B.7.b. Disclosure of Confidential Information**

When consulting with colleagues, SUD counselors or persons seeking certification do not disclose confidential information that reasonably could lead to the identification of a client or other person or organization with whom they have a confidential relationship unless they have obtained the prior consent of the person or organization or disclosure cannot be avoided. They disclose information only to the extent necessary to achieve the purposes of the consultation.

## **Section C: Professional Responsibility**

### **Introduction**

Counselors aspire to open, honest, and accurate communication in dealing with the public and other professionals. Counselors facilitate access to counseling services, and they practice in a nondiscriminatory manner within the boundaries of professional and personal competence; they also have a responsibility to abide by the ACA Code of Ethics. Counselors actively participate in local, state, and national associations that foster the development and improvement of counseling. Counselors are expected to advocate and promote changes at the individual, group, institutional, and societal levels that improve the quality of life for individuals and groups and remove potential barriers to the provision or access of appropriate services being offered. Counselors have a responsibility to the public to engage in counseling practices that are based on rigorous research methodologies. Counselors are encouraged to contribute to society by devoting a portion of their professional activity to services for which there is little or no financial return (*pro bono publico*). In addition, counselors engage in self-care activities to maintain and promote their own emotional, physical, mental, and spiritual well-being to best meet their professional responsibilities.

### ***C.1. Knowledge of and Compliance with Standards***

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification have a responsibility to read, understand and follow the *IBADCC Code of Ethics* and adhere to applicable laws and regulations.

### ***C.2. Professional Competence***

#### **C.2.a. Boundaries of Competence**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification practice only within the boundaries of their competence, based on their education, training, supervised experience, state and national professional credentials, and appropriate professional experience. Whereas multicultural counseling competency is required across all counseling specialties, counselors gain knowledge, personal awareness, sensitivity, dispositions, and skills pertinent to being a culturally competent counselor in working with a diverse client population.

#### **C.2.b. New Specialty Areas of Practice**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification practice in specialty areas new to them only after appropriate education, training, and supervised experience. While developing skills in new specialty areas, counselors take steps to ensure the competence of their work and protect others from possible harm.

#### **C.2.c. Qualified for Employment**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification accept employment only for positions for which they are qualified given their education, training, supervised experience, state and national professional credentials, and appropriate professional experience. SUD counselors or persons seeking certification hire for professional counseling positions only individuals who are qualified and competent for those positions.

#### **C.2.d. Monitor Effectiveness**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification continually monitor their effectiveness as professionals and take steps to improve when necessary. SUD counselors or persons seeking certification take reasonable steps to seek peer supervision to evaluate their efficacy as SUD counselors or persons seeking certification.

#### **C.2.e. Consultations on Ethical Obligations**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification take reasonable steps to consult with other counselors, the IBADCC Ethics Committee, or related professionals when they have questions regarding their ethical obligations or professional practice.

### **C.2.f. Continuing Education**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification recognize the need for continuing education to acquire and maintain a reasonable level of awareness of current scientific and professional information in their fields of activity. SUD counselors or persons seeking certification maintain their competence in the skills they use, are open to new procedures, and remain informed regarding best practices for working with diverse populations.

### **C.2.g. Impairment**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification monitor themselves for signs of impairment from their own physical, mental, or emotional problems and refrain from offering or providing professional services when impaired. They seek assistance for problems that reach the level of professional impairment, and, if necessary, they limit, suspend, or terminate their professional responsibilities until it is determined that they may safely resume their work. SUD counselors or persons seeking certification assist colleagues or supervisors in recognizing their own professional impairment and provide consultation and assistance when warranted with colleagues or supervisors showing signs of impairment and intervene as appropriate to prevent imminent harm to clients.

### **C.2.h. Psychoactive Substance Abuse or Medical/Emotional Impairment**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification shall seek therapy for any psychoactive substance use disorders, psychiatric or psychological impairment, emotional distress, or for any other physical health related adversity that interferes with their professional functioning, and where any such conditions exist and impede their ability to function competently, a SUD counselor or person seeking certification shall require inactive status for medical reasons for so long as is necessary.

### **C.2.i. Counselor Incapacitation, Death, Retirement, or Termination of Practice**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification prepare a plan for the transfer of clients and the dissemination of records to an identified colleague or records custodian in the case of the SUD counselor's incapacitation, death, retirement, or termination of practice.

## **C.3. Advertising and Soliciting Clients**

### **C.3.a. Accurate Advertising**

When advertising or otherwise representing their services to the public, SUD counselors or persons seeking certification identify their credentials in an accurate manner that is not false, misleading, deceptive, or fraudulent.

### **C.3.b. Testimonials**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification who use testimonials do not solicit from current clients, former clients, or any other persons who may be vulnerable to undue influence. SUD counselors or persons seeking certification discuss with clients the implications of and obtain permission for the use of any testimonials.

### **C.3.c. Statements By Others**

When feasible, SUD counselors or persons seeking certification make reasonable efforts to ensure that statements made by others about them or about the counseling profession are accurate.

### **C.3.d. Recruiting Through Employment**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification do not use their places of employment or institutional affiliation to recruit clients, supervisors or consultees for their private practices.

### **C.3.e. Products and Training Advertisements**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification who develop products related to their profession or conduct workshops or training events ensure that the advertisements concerning these products or events are accurate and disclose adequate information for consumers to make informed choices.

### **C.3.f. Promoting to Those Served**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification do not use counseling, teaching, training, or supervisory relationships to promote their products or training events in a manner that is deceptive or would exert undue influence on individuals who may be vulnerable. However, counselor educators may adopt textbooks they have authored for instructional purposes.

## **C.4. Professional Qualifications**

### **C.4.a. Accurate Representation**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification claim or imply only professional qualifications actually completed and correct any known misrepresentations of their qualifications by others. SUD counselors or persons seeking certification truthfully represent the qualifications of their professional colleagues. SUD counselors or persons seeking certification clearly distinguish between paid and volunteer work experience and accurately describe their continuing education and specialized training.

### **C.4.b. Credentials**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification claim only licenses or certifications that are current and in good standing.

### **C.4.c. Educational Degrees**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification clearly differentiate between earned degrees and honorary degrees.

### **C.4.d. Implying Doctoral-Level Competence**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification clearly state their highest earned degree in counseling or a closely related field. SUD counselors or persons seeking certification do not imply doctoral-level competence when possessing a bachelor's or master's degree by referring to themselves as "Dr." in a counseling context when their doctorate is not in counseling or a related field. SUD counselors or persons seeking certification do not use "ABD" (all but dissertation) or other such terms to imply competency.

### **C.4.e. Accreditation Status**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification accurately represent the accreditation status of their degree program and college/university.

### **C.4.f. Professional Membership**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification clearly differentiate between current, active memberships and former memberships in associations.

## **C.5. Nondiscrimination**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification do not condone or engage in discrimination against prospective or current clients, students, employees, supervisees, or research participants based on age, culture, disability, ethnicity, race, religion/spirituality, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital/partnership status, language preference, socioeconomic status, immigration status, or any basis prescribed by law.

## **C.6. Public Responsibility**

### **C.6.a. Sexual Harassment**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification do not engage in or condone sexual harassment. Sexual harassment can consist of a single intense or severe act, or multiple persistent or pervasive acts.

### **C.6.b. Reports to Third Parties**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification are accurate, honest, and objective in reporting their professional activities and judgments to appropriate third parties, including courts, health insurance companies, those who are the recipients of evaluation reports and others.

### **C.6.c. Media Presentations**

When SUD counselors or persons seeking certification provide advice or comment by means of public lectures, demonstrations, radio or television programs, recordings, technology-based applications, printed articles, mailed material, or other media, they take reasonable precautions to ensure that:

1. The statements are based on appropriate professional substance use disorders or counseling literature and practice;
2. The statements are otherwise consistent with the *IBADCC Code of Ethics*, and
3. The recipients of the information are not encouraged to infer that a professional counseling relationship has been established.

### **C.6.d. Exploitation of Others**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification do not exploit others in their professional relationships.

### **C.6.e. Contributing to the Public Good**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification make a reasonable effort to provide services to the public for which there is little or no financial return (e.g. speaking to groups, sharing professional information, offering reduced fees).

## ***C.7. Treatment Modalities***

### **C.7.a. Scientific Basis for Treatment**

When providing services, SUD counselors or persons seeking certification use techniques/procedures/modalities that are grounded in theory and/or have an empirical and scientific foundation.

### **C.7.b. Development and Innovation**

When SUD counselors or persons seeking certification use developing or innovative techniques/procedures/modalities, they explain the potential risks, benefits, and ethical considerations of using such techniques/procedures/modalities. SUD counselors or persons seeking certification work to minimize any potential risks or harm when using these techniques/procedures/modalities.

### **C.7.c. Harmful Practices**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification do not use techniques/procedures/modalities when substantial evidence suggests harm, even if services are requested.

## ***C.8. Responsibility to Other Professionals***

### **C.8.a. Personal Public Statements**

When making personal statements in a public context, SUD counselors or persons seeking certification clarify that they are speaking from their personal perspective and that they are not speaking on behalf of all SUD counselors or persons seeking certification or the profession.

## **Section D: Relationship with Other Professionals**

### **Introduction**

Professional counselors recognize that the quality of their interactions with colleagues can influence the quality of services provided to clients. They work to become knowledgeable about colleagues within and outside the field of counseling. Counselors develop positive working relationships and systems of communication with colleagues to enhance services to clients.

## ***D.1. Relationships with Colleagues, Employers, and Employees***

### **D.1.a. Different Approaches**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification are respectful of approaches that are grounded in theory and/or have an empirical or scientific foundation but may differ from their own. SUD counselors or persons seeking certification acknowledge the expertise of other professional groups and are respectful of their practices.

### **D.1.b. Forming Relationships**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification work to develop and strengthen relationships with colleagues from other disciplines to best serve clients.

### **D.1.c. Interdisciplinary Teamwork**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification who are members of interdisciplinary teams delivering multifaceted services to clients remain focused on how to best serve clients. They participate in and contribute to decisions that affect the well-being of clients by drawing on the perspectives, values, and experiences of the counseling profession and those of colleagues from other disciplines.

### **D.1.d. Establishing Professional and Ethical Obligations**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification who are members of interdisciplinary teams work together with team members to clarify professional and ethical obligations of the team as a whole and of its individual members. When a team decision raises ethical concerns, counselors first attempt to resolve the concern within the team. If they cannot reach resolution among team members, counselors pursue other avenues to address their concerns consistent with client well-being.

### **D.1.e. Confidentiality**

When SUD counselors or persons seeking certification are required by law, institutional policy, or extraordinary circumstances to serve in more than one role in judicial or administrative proceedings, they clarify role expectations and the parameters of confidentiality with their colleagues.

### **D.1.f. Personnel Selection and Assignment**

When SUD counselors or persons seeking certification are in a position requiring personnel selection and/or assigning of responsibilities to others, they select competent staff and assign responsibilities compatible with their skills and experience.

### **D.1.g. Employer Policies**

The acceptance of employment in an agency or institution implies that counselors are in agreement with its general policies and principles. SUD counselors or persons seeking certification strive to reach agreement with employers regarding acceptable standards of client care and professional conduct that allow for changes in institutional policy conducive to the growth and development of clients.

### **D.1.h. Negative Conditions**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification alert their employers of inappropriate policies and practices. They attempt to effect changes in such policies or procedures through constructive action within the organization. When such policies are potentially disruptive or damaging to clients or may limit the effectiveness of services provided and change cannot be affected, counselors take appropriate further action. Such action may include referral to appropriate certification, accreditation, or state licensure organizations or voluntary termination of employment.



#### **D.1.i. Protection from Punitive Action**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification do not harass a colleague or employee or dismiss an employee who has acted in a responsible and ethical manner to expose inappropriate employer policies or practices.

#### ***D.2. Provision of Consultation Services***

##### **D.2.a. Consultant Competency**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification take reasonable steps to ensure that they have the appropriate resources and competencies when providing consultation services. Counselors provide appropriate referral resources when requested or needed.

##### **D.2.b. Informed Consent in Formal Consultation**

When providing formal consultation services, SUD counselors or persons seeking certification have an obligation to review, in writing and verbally, the rights and responsibilities of both counselors and consultees. SUD counselors or persons seeking certification use clear and understandable language to inform all parties involved about the purpose of the services to be provided, relevant costs, potential risks and benefits, and the limits of confidentiality.

#### **Section E: Evaluation, Assessment and Interpretation**

##### **Introduction**

Counselors use assessment as one component of the counseling process, taking into account the clients' personal and cultural context. Counselors promote the well-being of individual clients or groups of clients by developing and using appropriate educational, mental health, psychological, and career assessments.

##### ***E.1. General***

###### **E.1.a. Assessment**

The primary purpose of educational, mental health, psychological, and career assessment is to gather information regarding the client for a variety of purposes, including, but not limited to, client decision making, treatment planning and forensic proceedings. Assessment may include both qualitative and quantitative methodologies.

###### **E.1.b. Client Welfare**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification do not misuse assessment result and interpretations, and they take reasonable steps to prevent others from misusing the information provided. They respect the client's right to know the results, the interpretations made, and the bases for counselors' conclusions and recommendations.

##### ***E.2. Competence to Use and Interpret Assessment Instruments***

###### **E.2.a. Limits of Competence**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification use only those testing and assessment services for which they have been trained and are competent. SUD counselors or persons seeking certification using technology-assisted test interpretations are trained in the construct being measured and the specific instrument being used prior to using its technology-based application. Counselors take reasonable measures to ensure the proper use of assessment techniques by persons under their supervision.

###### **E.2.b. Appropriate Use**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification are responsible for the appropriate application, scoring, interpretation, and use of assessment instruments relevant to the needs of the client, whether they score and interpret such assessments themselves or use technology or other services.

###### **E.2.c. Decisions Based on Results**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification responsible for decisions involving individuals or policies that are based on assessment results have a thorough understanding of psychometrics.

### **E.3 Informed Consent**

#### **E.3.a. Explanation to Clients**

Prior to assessment, SUD counselors or persons seeking certification explain the nature and purposes of assessment and the specific use of results by potential recipients. The explanation will be given in terms and language that the client (or other legally authorized person on behalf of the client) can understand.

#### **E.3.b. Recipients of Results**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification consider the clients and/or examinee's welfare, explicit understanding, and prior agreements in determining who receives the assessment results. SUD counselors or persons seeking certification include accurate and appropriate interpretations with any release of individual or group assessment results.

### ***E.4. Release of Data to Qualified Personnel***

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification release assessment data in which the client is identified only with the consent of the client or the client's legal representative. Such data are released only to persons recognized by counselors as qualified to interpret the data.

### ***E.5. Instrument Selection***

#### **E.5.a. Appropriateness of Instruments**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification carefully consider the validity, reliability, psychometric limitations, and appropriateness of instruments when selecting assessment and, when possible, use multiple forms of assessment, data, and/or instruments in forming conclusions, diagnoses, or recommendations.

#### **E.5.b. Referral Information**

If a client is referred to a third party for assessment, the SUD counselor provides specific referral questions and sufficient objective data about the client to ensure that appropriate assessment instruments are utilized.

### ***E.6. Conditions of Assessment Administration***

#### **E.6.a. Administration Conditions**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification administer assessments under the same conditions that were established in their standardization. When assessments are not administered under standard conditions, as may be necessary to accommodate clients with disabilities, or when unusual behavior or irregularities occur during the administration, those conditions are noted in interpretations, and the results may be designated as invalid or questionable.

#### **E.6.b. Provision of Favorable Conditions**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification provide an appropriate environment for the administration of assessment (e.g. privacy, comfort, freedom from distraction).

#### **E.6.c. Technical Administration**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification ensure that technologically administered assessments function properly and provide clients with accurate results.

#### **E.6.d. Unsupervised Assessments**

Unless the assessment instrument is designed, intended, and validated for self-administration and/or scoring, counselors do not permit unsupervised use.

### ***E.7. Multicultural Issues/Diversity in Assessment***

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification select and use with caution assessment techniques normed on populations other than that of the client. SUD counselors or persons seeking certification recognize the effects of age, color, culture, disability, ethnic group, gender, race, language preference, religion, spirituality, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic status on test administration and interpretation, and they place test results in proper perspective with other relevant factors.

### ***E.8. Scoring and Interpretation***

#### **E.8.a. Reporting**

When SUD counselors or persons seeking certification report assessment results, they consider the client's personal and cultural background, the level of the client's understanding of the results, and the impact of the results on the client. In reporting assessment results, counselors indicate reservations that exist regarding validity or reliability due to circumstances of the assessment or inappropriateness of the norms for the person tested.

#### **E.8.b. Instruments with Insufficient Empirical Data**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification exercise caution when interpreting the results of instruments not having sufficient empirical data to support respondent results. The specific purposes for the use of such instruments are stated explicitly to the examinee. SUD counselors or persons seeking certification qualify any conclusions, diagnoses, or recommendations made that are based on assessments or instruments with questionable validity or reliability.

#### **E.8.c. Assessment Services**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification who provide assessment, scoring, and interpretation services to support the assessment process confirm the validity of such interpretations. They accurately describe the purpose, norms, validity, reliability, and applications of the procedures and any special qualifications applicable to their use. At all times, counselors maintain their ethical responsibility to those being assessed.

### ***E.9. Assessment Security***

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification maintain the integrity and security of tests and assessments consistent with legal and contractual obligations. SUD counselors or persons seeking certification do not appropriate, reproduce, or modify published assessments or parts thereof without acknowledgment and permission from the publisher.

### ***E.10. Obsolete Assessment and Outdated Results***

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification do not use data or results from assessments that are obsolete or outdated for the current purpose (e.g., noncurrent versions of assessments/instruments). SUD counselors or persons seeking certification make every effort to prevent the misuse of obsolete measures and assessment data by others.

### ***E.11. Assessment Construction***

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification use established scientific procedures, relevant standards, and current professional knowledge for assessment design in the development, publication, and utilization of assessment techniques.

### ***E.12. Forensic Evaluation: Evaluation for Legal Proceedings***

### **E.12.a. Primary Obligation**

When providing forensic evaluations, the primary obligation of SUD counselors or persons seeking certification is to produce objective findings that can be substantiated based on information and techniques appropriate to the evaluation, which may include examination of the individual and/or review of records. SUD counselors or persons seeking certification form professional opinions based on their professional knowledge and expertise that can be supported by the data gathered in evaluations. SUD counselors or persons seeking certification define the limits of their reports or testimony, especially when an examination of the individual has not been conducted.

### **E.12.b. Consent for Evaluation**

Individuals being evaluated are informed in writing that the relationship is for the purposes of an evaluation and is not therapeutic in nature, and entities or individuals who will receive the evaluation report are identified. SUD counselors or persons seeking certification who perform forensic evaluations obtain written consent from those being evaluated or from their legal representative unless a court orders evaluations to be conducted without the written consent of the individuals being evaluated. When children or adults who lack the capacity to give voluntary consent are being evaluated, informed written consent is obtained from a parent or guardian.

### **E.12.c. Client Evaluation Prohibited**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification do not evaluate current or former clients, clients' romantic partners, or clients' family members for forensic purposes. Counselors do not counsel clients that are evaluating.

### **E.12.d. Avoid Potentially Harmful Relationships**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification who provide forensic evaluations avoid potentially harmful professional or personal relationships with family members, romantic partners, and close friends of individuals they are evaluating or have evaluated in the past.

## **Section F: Supervision, Training and Teaching**

### ***F.1. Counselor Supervision and Client Welfare***

#### **Introduction**

Counselor supervisors, trainers, and educators aspire to foster meaningful and respectful professional relationships and to maintain appropriate boundaries with supervisees and students in both face-to-face and electronic formats. They have theoretical and pedagogical foundations for their work; have knowledge of supervision models; and aim to be fair, accurate, and honest in their assessments of counselors, students, and supervisees.

#### **F.1.a. Counselor Supervision and Client Welfare**

A primary obligation of SUD counseling supervisors is to monitor the services provided by supervisees. SUD counseling supervisors monitor client welfare and supervisee performance and professional development. To fulfill these obligations, supervisors meet regularly with supervisees to review the supervisees work and to help them become prepared to serve a range of diverse clients. Supervisees have a responsibility to understand and follow the *IBADCC Code of Ethics*.

#### **F.1.b. Counselor Credentials**

SUD counseling supervisors work to ensure that supervisees communicate their qualifications to render services to their clients.

#### **F.1.c. Informed Consent and Client Rights**

SUD supervisors make supervisees aware of client rights, including the protection of client privacy and confidentiality in the counseling relationship. Supervisees provide clients with professional disclosure information and inform them of how the supervision process influences the limits of confidentiality. Supervisees make clients aware of who will have access to records of their counseling relationship and how these records will be stored, transmitted, or otherwise reviewed.

## ***F.2. Counselor Supervision Competence***

### **F.2.a. Supervisor Preparation**

Prior to offering supervision services, SUD counselors or persons seeking certification are trained in supervision methods and techniques. SUD counselors or persons seeking certification who offer supervision services regularly pursue continuing education activities, including both counseling and supervision topics and skills.

### **F.2.b. Multicultural Issues/Diversity in Supervision**

SUD supervisors are aware of and address the role of multiculturalism/diversity in the supervisory relationship.

### ***F.2.c. Online Supervision***

When using technology in supervision, counselor supervisors are competent in the use of those technologies. Supervisors take the necessary precautions to protect the confidentiality of all information transmitted through any electronic means.

## ***F.3. Supervisory Relationship***

### **F.3.a. Extending Conventional Supervisory Relationships**

SUD counseling supervisors clearly define and maintain ethical professional, personal, and social relationships with their supervisees. Supervisors consider the risks and benefits of extending current supervisory relationships in any form beyond conventional parameters. In extending these boundaries, supervisors take appropriate professional precautions to ensure that judgment is not impaired and that no harm occurs.

### **F.3.b. Sexual Relationships**

Sexual or romantic interactions with relationships with current supervisees are prohibited. This prohibition applies to both in-person and electronic interactions or relationships.

### **F.3.c. Sexual Harassment**

SUD counseling supervisors do not condone or subject supervisees to sexual harassment.

### **F.3.d. Friends or Family Members**

SUD supervisors are prohibited from engaging in supervisory relationships with individuals with whom they have an inability to remain objective.

## ***F.4. Supervisor Responsibilities***

### **F.4.a. Informed Consent for Supervision**

SUD supervisors are responsible for incorporating into their supervision the principles of informed consent and participation. SUD supervisors inform supervisees of the policies and procedures to which supervisors are adhere and the mechanisms for due process appeal of individual supervisor actions. The issues unique to the use of distance supervision are to be included in the documentation as necessary.

### **F.4.b. Emergencies and Absences**

SUD supervisors establish and communicate to supervisees procedures for contacting supervisors or, in their absence, alternative on-call supervisors to assist in handling crises.

### **F.4.c. Standards for Supervisees**

SUD supervisors make their supervisees aware of professional and ethical standards and legal responsibilities.

### **F.4.d. Termination of the Supervisory Relationship**

SUD supervisors or supervisees have the right to terminate the supervisory relationship with adequate notice. Reasons for considering termination are discussed, and both parties work to resolve differences. When termination is warranted, supervisors make appropriate referrals to possible alternative supervisors.

## ***F.5 Supervisee Responsibilities***

### **F.5.a. Ethical Responsibilities**

Supervisees have a responsibility to understand and follow the *IBADCC Code of Ethics*. Supervisees have the same obligation to clients as those required of professional SUD counselors or persons seeking certification.

### **F.5.b. Impairment**

Supervisees monitor themselves for signs of impairment from their own physical, mental, or emotional problems and refrain from offering or providing professional services when such impairment is likely to harm a client or others. They notify their supervisors and seek assistance for problems that reach the level of professional impairment, and, if necessary, they limit, suspend, or terminate their professional responsibilities until it is determined that they may safely resume their work.

### **F.5.c. Professional Disclosure**

Before providing SUD counseling services, supervisees disclose their status as supervisees and explain how this status affects the limits of confidentiality. Supervisors ensure that clients are aware of the services rendered and the qualifications of the supervisees rendering those services. Supervisees obtain client permission before they use any information concerning the counseling relationship in the training process.

## ***F.6. Counseling Supervision, Evaluation, Remediation and Endorsement***

### **F.6.a. Evaluation**

SUD supervisors document and provide supervisees with ongoing feedback regarding their performance and schedule periodic formal evaluative sessions throughout the supervisory relationship.

### **F.6.b. Gatekeeping and Remediation**

Through initial and ongoing evaluation, supervisors are aware of supervisee limitations that might impede performance. Supervisors assist supervisees in securing remedial assistance when needed. They recommend dismissal from training programs, applied counseling settings, and state or voluntary professional credentialing processes when those supervisees are unable to demonstrate that they can provide competent professional services to a range of diverse clients. Supervisees seek consultation and document their decisions to dismiss or refer supervisees for assistance. They ensure that supervisees are aware of options available to them to address such decisions.

### **F.6.c. Counseling Supervisees**

If supervisees request counseling, the SUD supervisor assists the supervisee in identifying appropriate services. Supervisors do not provide counseling services to supervisees. Supervisors address interpersonal competence in terms of the impact of these issues on clients, the supervisory relationship, and professional functioning.

### **F.6.d. Endorsements**

SUD supervisors endorse supervisees for certification, employment, etc. only when they believe that supervisees are qualified for the endorsement. Regardless of qualifications, supervisors do not endorse supervisees whom they believe to be impaired in any way that would interfere with the performance of the duties associated with the endorsement.

## **Section G: Distance Counseling, Technology, and Social Media**

### **Introduction**

Counselors understand that the profession of counseling may no longer be limited to in-person, face-to-face interactions. Counselors actively attempt to understand the evolving nature of the profession with regard to distance counseling, technology, and social media and how such resources may be used to better serve their clients. Counselors strive to become knowledgeable about these resources. Counselors understand the additional

concerns related to the use of distance counseling, technology, and social media and make every attempt to protect confidentiality and meet any legal and ethical requirements for the use of such resources.

### ***G.1. Knowledge and Legal Considerations***

#### **G.1.a. Knowledge and Competency**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification who engage in the use of distance counseling, technology, and/or social media develop knowledge and skills regarding related technical, ethical, and legal considerations (e.g. special certifications, additional course work).

#### **G.1.b. Laws and Statutes**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification who engage in the use of distance counseling, technology, and social media within their counseling practice understand that they may be subject to laws and regulations of both the counselors practicing locations and the client's place of residence. SUD counselor's ensure that their clients are aware of pertinent legal rights and limitations governing the practice of counseling across state lines or international boundaries.

### ***G.2. Informed Consent and Security***

#### **G.2.a. Informed Consent and Disclosure**

Clients have the freedom to choose whether to use distance counseling, social media, and/or technology within the counseling process. In addition to the usual and customary protocol of informed consent between counselor and client for face-to-face counseling, the following issues, unique to the use of distance counseling, technology, and/or social media, are addressed in the informed consent process:

- Distance counseling credentials, physical location of practice, and contact information;
- Risks and benefits of engaging in the use of distance counseling, technology, and/or social media;
- Possibility of technology failure and alternate methods of service delivery;
- Anticipated response time;
- Emergency procedures to follow when the counselor is not available;
- Time zone differences;
- Cultural and/or language differences that may affect delivery of services;
- Possible denial of insurance benefits; and
- Social media policy

#### **G.2.b. Confidentiality Maintained by the Counselor**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification acknowledge the limitations of maintaining the confidentiality of electronic records and transmissions. They inform clients that individuals might have authorized or unauthorized access to such records or transmissions (e.g. colleagues, supervisors, employees, information technologists).

#### **G.2.c. Acknowledgement of Limitations**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification inform clients about the inherent limits of confidentiality when using technology. Counselors urge clients to be aware of authorized and/or unauthorized access to information disclosed using this medium in the counseling process.

#### **G.2.d. Security**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification use current encryption standards within their websites and/or technology-based communications that meet applicable legal requirements. SUD counselors or persons seeking certification take reasonable precautions to ensure the confidentiality of information transmitted through any electronic means.

### ***G.3. Client Verification***

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification who engage in the use of distance counseling, technology, and/or social media to interaction with clients take steps to verify the client's identity at the beginning and throughout the therapeutic process. Verification can include, but is not limited to, using code words, numbers, graphics, or other nondescript identifiers.

### ***G.4. Distance Counseling Relationship***

#### **G.4.a. Benefits and limitations**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification inform clients of the benefits and limitations of using technology applications in the provision of counseling services. Such technologies include, but are not limited to, computer hardware and/or software, telephones and applications, social medial and Internet-based applications and other audio and/or video communication, or data storage devices or media.

#### **G.4.b. Professional Boundaries in Distance Counseling**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification understand the necessity of maintaining a professional relationship with their clients. Counselors discuss and establish professional boundaries with clients regarding the appropriate use and/or application of technology and the limitations of its use within the counseling relationship (e.g. lack of confidentiality, times when not appropriate to use).

#### **G.4.c. Technology-Assisted Services**

When providing technology-assisted services, SUD counselors or persons seeking certification make reasonable efforts to determine that clients are intellectually, emotionally, physically, linguistically, and functionally capable of using the application and that the application is appropriate for the needs of the client. SUD counselors or persons seeking certification verify that clients understand the purpose and operation of technology applications and follow up with clients to correct possible misconceptions, discovery appropriate use, and assess the subsequent steps.

#### **G.4.d. Effectiveness of Services**

When distance counseling services are deemed ineffective by the SUD counselor or client, counselors consider delivering services face-to-face. If the SUD counselor is not able to provide face-to-face services (e.g. lives in another town or state), the counselor assists the client in identifying appropriate services.

#### **G.4.e. Access**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification provide information to clients regarding reasonable access to pertinent applications when providing technology-assisted services.

#### **G4.f. Communication Differences in Electronic Media**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification consider the differences between face-to-face and electronic communication (nonverbal and verbal cues) and how these may affect the counseling process. SUD counselors or persons seeking certification educate clients on how to prevent and address potential misunderstandings arising from the lack of visual cues and voice intonations when communication electronically.

### ***G.5. Records and Web Maintenance***

#### **G.5.a. Records**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification maintain electronic records in accordance with relevant laws and statutes. SUD counselors or persons seeking certification inform clients on how records are maintained electronically. This includes, but is not limited to, the type of encryption and security assigned to the records, and if/for how long archival storage of transaction records is maintained.



#### **G.5.b. Client Rights**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification who offer distance counseling services and/or maintain a professional website provide electronic links to relevant licensure and professional certification boards to protect consumer and client rights and address ethical concerns.

#### **G.5.c. Electronic Links**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification regularly ensure that electronic links are working and are professionally appropriate.

#### **G.5.d. Multicultural and Disability Considerations**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification who maintain websites provide accessibility to persons with disabilities. They provide translation capabilities for clients who have a different primary language, when feasible. SUD counselors or persons seeking certification acknowledge the imperfect nature of such translations and accessibilities.

### ***G.6. Social Media***

#### **G.6.a. Virtual Professional Presence**

In cases where SUD counselors or persons seeking certification wish to maintain a professional and personal presence for social media use, separate professional and personal web pages and profiles are created to clearly distinguish between the two kinds of virtual presence.

#### **G.6.b. Social Media as Part of Informed Consent**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification clearly explain to their clients, as part of the informed consent procedure, the benefits, limitations, and boundaries of the use of social media.

#### **G.6.c. Client Virtual Presence**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification respect the privacy of their clients' presence on social media unless given consent to view such information.

#### **G.6.d. Use of Public Social Media**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification take precautions to avoid disclosing confidential information through public social media.

### **Section H: Resolving Ethical Issues**

#### **Introduction**

Professional counselors behave in an ethical and legal manner. They are aware that client welfare and trust in the profession depend on a high level of professional conduct. They hold other counselors to the same standards and are willing to take appropriate action to ensure that standards are upheld. Counselors strive to resolve ethical dilemmas with direct and open communication among all parties involved and seek consultation with colleagues and supervisors when necessary. Counselors incorporate ethical practice into their daily professional work and engage in ongoing professional development regarding current topics in ethical and legal issues in counseling. Counselors become familiar with the ACA Policy and Procedures for Processing Complaints of Ethical Violations and use it as a reference for assisting in the enforcement of the IBADCC Code of Ethics.

#### ***H.1. Standards and the Law***

##### **H.1.a. Knowledge**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification know and understand the *IBADCC Code of Ethics* and other applicable ethics codes from professional organizations or certification and licensure bodies of which they are

members. Lack of knowledge or misunderstanding of an ethical responsibility is not a defense against a charge of unethical conduct.

#### **H.1.b. Ethical Decision Making**

When SUD counselors or persons seeking certification are faced with an ethical dilemma, they use and document, as appropriate, an ethical decision-making model that may include, but is not limited to, consultation; consideration; relevant ethical standards, principles, and laws; generation of potential courses of action; deliberation of risks and benefits and selection of an objective decision based on the circumstances and welfare of all involved.

#### **H.1.c. Conflicts between Ethics and Laws**

If ethical responsibilities conflict with the law, regulations, and/or other governing legal authority, SUD counselors or persons seeking certification make known their commitment to the *IBADCC Code of Ethics*, with colleagues, or with appropriate authorities, such as with the *IBADCC Board*.

#### **H.2.d. Organizational Conflicts**

If the demands of an organization with which SUD counselors or persons seeking certification are affiliated pose a conflict with the *IBADCC Code of Ethics*, SUD counselors or persons seeking certification specify the nature of such conflicts and express to their supervisors or other responsible officials their commitment to the *IBADCC Code of Ethics* and, when possible, work through the appropriate channels to address the situation.

#### **H.2.e. Unwarranted Complaints**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification do not initiate, participate in, or encourage the filing of ethics complaints that are retaliatory in nature or are made with reckless disregard or willful ignorance of facts that would disprove the allegation.

### **H.3. Unlawful Conduct**

#### **H.3.a. Conviction of a Crime**

Being convicted or found guilty, regardless of adjudication, or entering a plea of nolo contendere to any crime relating to the SUD counselor or persons seeking certification's ability to practice substance abuse counseling to include intervention, prevention and criminal justice services shall be grounds for disciplinary action.

#### **H.3.b. Crimes involving Controlled Substances**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification shall not use, possess, or sell any controlled or psychoactive substance. Being convicted or found guilty, regardless of adjudication, or entering a plea of nolo contendere to any crime which involves the use of any controlled or psychoactive substance shall be grounds for disciplinary action.

#### **H.3.c. Administrative Reprimands**

If an SUD counselor or persons seeking certification is reprimanded by any agency or organization through any administrative proceedings, this may be grounds for disciplinary action by this body.

#### **H.4.d. False or Fraudulent Claims**

An SUD counselor or persons seeking certification shall not:

- Present or cause to be presented a false or fraudulent claim, or any proof in support of such claim, to be paid under any contract or certificate of insurance;
- Prepare, make or subscribe to a false or fraudulent account, certificate, affidavit, proof of loss of other document in writing, with knowledge that the same may be presented or used in support of a claim for payment under a policy of insurance; or
- Present or cause to be presented a false or fraudulent claim or benefit application, or any false or fraudulent proof in support of such a claim or benefit application, or false or fraudulent information which would affect a future claim or benefit application, to be paid under any employee benefit program.

#### **H.4. Cooperation with Ethics Committees**

##### **H.4.a. Cooperation with Investigations**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification assist in the process of enforcing the *IBADCC Code of Ethics*. SUD counselors or persons seeking certification cooperate with investigations, proceedings, and requirements of the *IBADCC Code of Ethics Committee* or other ethics committees of other duly constituted associations or boards having jurisdiction over those charged with a violation. SUD counselors do not interfere with any investigation or disciplinary proceedings or attempt to prevent a disciplinary proceeding or other legal action from being filed, prosecuted, or completed. Interference attempts may include but are not limited to:

- The willful misrepresentation of facts before the disciplining authority or its authorized representative;
- The use of threats or harassment against, or an inducement to, any consumer or witness in an effort to prevent them from providing evidence in a disciplinary proceeding or any other legal action;
- The use of threats or harassment against, or an inducement to, any person in an effort to prevent or attempt to prevent a disciplinary proceeding or other legal action from being filed, prosecuted or completed.

##### **H.4.b. Reporting violations**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification shall report any violation of the *Code of Ethics*. Failure to report a violation may be grounds for discipline.

##### **H.4.c. Failure to Cooperate with Investigations**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification who have firsthand knowledge of the actions of a respondent or a complainant shall cooperate with an IBADCC complaint investigation or disciplinary proceeding. Failure or an unwillingness to cooperate in an IBADCC complaint investigation or disciplinary proceeding shall be grounds for disciplinary action.

##### **H.4.d. Misleading Information**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification shall not file a complaint or provide information to IBADCC which the SUD counselor or person seeking certification knows or should have known is false or misleading.

##### **H.4.e. Disclosure of Consumer Information**

SUD counselors or persons seeking certification shall comply with any requirements pertaining to the disclosure of consumer information established by the federal or state government.