

# Code of Ethical Standards

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## *AFP Code of Ethical Principles*

*Adopted 1964*

The Association of Fundraising Professionals (AFP) exists to foster the development and growth of fundraising professionals and the profession, to promote high ethical behavior in the fundraising profession and to preserve and enhance philanthropy and volunteerism.

Members of AFP are motivated by an inner drive to improve the quality of life through the causes they serve. They serve the ideal of philanthropy, are committed to the preservation and enhancement of volunteerism; and hold stewardship of these concepts as the overriding direction of their professional life. They recognize their responsibility to ensure that needed resources are vigorously and ethically sought and that the intent of the donor is honestly fulfilled.

To these ends, AFP members, both individual and business, embrace certain values that they strive to uphold in performing their responsibilities for generating philanthropic support. AFP business members strive to promote and protect the work and mission of their client organizations.

*AFP members both individual and business aspire to:*

- Practice their profession with integrity, honesty, truthfulness and adherence to the absolute obligation to safeguard the public trust;
- Act according to the highest goals and visions of their organizations, professions, clients and consciences;
- Put philanthropic mission above personal gain;
- Inspire others through their own sense of dedication and high purpose;
- Improve their professional knowledge and skills, so that their performance will better serve others;
- Demonstrate concern for the interests and well-being of individuals affected by their actions;
- Value the privacy, freedom of choice and interests of all those affected by their actions;
- Foster cultural diversity and pluralistic values and treat all people with dignity and respect;
- Affirm, through personal giving, a commitment to philanthropy and its role in society;
- Adhere to the spirit as well as the letter of all applicable laws and regulations;
- Advocate within their organizations adherence to all applicable laws and regulations
- Avoid even the appearance of any criminal offense or professional misconduct;
- Bring credit to the fundraising profession by their public demeanor

- Encourage colleagues to embrace and practice these ethical principles and standards; and
- Be aware of the codes of ethics promulgated by other professional organizations that serve philanthropy.

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## **ETHICAL STANDARDS**

***Adopted 1964; amended Oct. 2014***

The Association of Fundraising Professionals believes that ethical behavior fosters the development and growth of fundraising professionals and the fundraising profession and enhances philanthropy and volunteerism. AFP Members recognize their responsibility to ethically generate or support ethical generation of philanthropic support. Violation of the standards may subject the member to disciplinary sanctions as provided in the AFP Ethics Enforcement Procedures. AFP members, both individual and business, agree to abide (and ensure, to the best of their ability, that all members of their staff abide) by the AFP standards.

## **PUBLIC TRUST, TRANSPARENCY & CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

*Members shall:*

1. not engage in activities that harm the members' organizations, clients or profession or knowingly bring the profession into disrepute.
2. not engage in activities that conflict with their fiduciary, ethical and legal obligations to their organizations, clients or profession.
3. effectively disclose all potential and actual conflicts of interest; such disclosure does not preclude or imply ethical impropriety.
4. not exploit any relationship with a donor, prospect, volunteer, client or employee for the benefit of the members or the members' organizations.
5. comply with all applicable local, state, provincial and federal civil and criminal laws.
6. recognize their individual boundaries of professional competence
7. present and supply products and/or services honestly and without misrepresentation.
8. establish the nature and purpose of any contractual relationship at the outset and be responsive and available to parties before, during and after any sale of materials and/or services.
9. never knowingly infringe the intellectual property rights of other parties.
10. protect the confidentiality of all privileged information relating to the provider/client relationships.
11. never disparage competitors untruthfully.

## **SOLICITATION & STEWARDSHIP OF PHILANTHROPIC FUNDS**

*Members shall:*

12. ensure that all solicitation and communication materials are accurate and correctly reflect their organization's mission and use of solicited funds.

13. ensure that donors receive informed, accurate and ethical advice about the value and tax implications of contributions.
14. ensure that contributions are used in accordance with donors' intentions.
15. ensure proper stewardship of all revenue sources, including timely reports on the use and management of such funds.
16. obtain explicit consent by donors before altering the conditions of financial transactions.

#### **TREATMENT OF CONFIDENTIAL & PROPRIETARY INFORMATION**

*Members shall:*

17. not disclose privileged or confidential information to unauthorized parties.
18. adhere to the principle that all donor and prospect information created by, or on behalf of, an organization or a client is the property of that organization or client.
19. give donors and clients the opportunity to have their names removed from lists that are sold to, rented to or exchanged with other organizations.
20. when stating fundraising results, use accurate and consistent accounting methods that conform to the relevant guidelines adopted by the appropriate authority.

#### **COMPENSATION, BONUSES & FINDER'S FEES**

*Members shall:*

21. not accept compensation or enter into a contract that is based on a percentage of contributions; nor shall members accept finder's fees or contingent fees.
22. be permitted to accept performance-based compensation, such as bonuses, only if such bonuses are in accord with prevailing practices within the members' own organizations and are not based on a percentage of contributions.
23. neither offer nor accept payments or special considerations for the purpose of influencing the selection of products or services.
24. not pay finder's fees, commissions or percentage compensation based on contributions.
25. meet the legal requirements for the disbursement of funds if they receive funds on behalf of a donor or client.

[AFP Code of Ethical Standards \(Spanish\)](#)

[AFP Code of Ethical Standards \(French\)](#)