



## **CODE OF ETHICS AND DECORUM FOR COUNCIL AND RESOURCE MEMBERS OF THE FLORIDA DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES COUNCIL, INC.**

The Florida Developmental Disabilities Council, Inc. (Council) has adopted the following guidelines for conduct by all Council and Resource members. These guidelines offer a set of values, principals and standards to guide members in personal conduct and decision-making.

1. Members shall respect the unique needs, values and choices of persons with disabilities and their families.
2. Members shall communicate fully and honestly in the performance of all their responsibilities and shall provide sufficient information to enable informed decision-making.
3. Members shall be alert to and fully disclose situations that may cause a conflicting interest or have the appearance of a conflict. When a conflict of interest arises, the member shall act in accordance with Council By-Laws and policies.
4. Members shall abstain from disruptive, disrespectful and abusive behavior towards others and will at all times act with courtesy, dignity, and decorum.
5. Members shall fulfill their duties in a manner that is sensitive to cultural differences and shall not discriminate against individuals on the basis of disability, race, ethnicity, creed, religion, color, gender, age, sexual orientation, or national origin.
6. Members shall, in all circumstances when representing the Council, conduct themselves in a manner that preserves the credibility and reputation of the Council.
7. Members shall not speak for the full Council or act for the Council unless specifically authorized to do so in accordance with the Council's Guide for Representing the Council policy.
8. Members have a public duty to carry out the charge of the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act and the Council's State Plan Goals and Objectives. As such, members shall take their decision-making responsibility seriously, by making fully informed, prepared and thoughtful decisions.
9. Members shall respect the differing opinions of other members and, when representing the Council, shall respect and support the decisions of the Council as a whole.

### **Responsibility**

Members of the Florida Developmental Disabilities Council (FDDC) uphold professional standards of conduct, accept appropriate responsibility for their dress, personal hygiene, and behavior, and adapt their methods to the needs of the organization. They consult with, refer to, or cooperate with other members to the extent needed to serve the best interests of the Council. They are concerned about the ethical compliance of their colleagues' conduct as well. When appropriate, they consult with colleagues in order to prevent or avoid unethical conduct.

**Integrity in Performance of Duties**

The FDDC Council Members seek to promote integrity in the performance of their duties. In describing or reporting their services or products, they do not make statements that are false, misleading or deceptive. Each Council Member strives to be aware of his/her own belief systems, values, needs and limitations and the effect of these on his/her service. Each Council Member avoids improper and potentially harmful relationships.

**Respect for the Rights and Dignity of Those Served**

Council Members respect the fundamental right, dignity, and worth of all people. They respect the rights of individuals to privacy, confidentiality, self-determination, and autonomy, mindful that legal and other obligations may lead to inconsistency and conflict with the exercise of these rights. They are aware of cultural, individual, and role differences, including those due to age, gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, disability, language, and socioeconomic status. They try to eliminate the effects of biases based on those factors, and they do not knowingly participate in or condone unfair discriminatory practices.

**Social Responsibility**

Council Members are aware of their responsibilities to the community and the society in which they work and live. They comply with the law and encourage the development of laws and social policy that serve the interest of those served.

**Relationships with Colleagues**

Council Members refrain from entering into another personal, professional, financial, or other relationship which reasonably might impair their objectivity or otherwise interfere with their ability to effectively perform Council related duties, or might harm or exploit the other party.

**FDDC Public Statements**

Council Members do not make public statements that are false, deceptive, misleading, or fraudulent, either because of what they state, convey, or suggest or because of what they omit.

**Maintaining Confidentiality and Disclosures**

Council Members have a primary obligation to respect the confidentiality rights of those served. They only disclose confidential information with the appropriate consent of the individual being served or other legally authorized person on behalf of the individual being served.

**Confronting Ethical Issues**

When anyone is uncertain whether a particular situation or course of action would violate this Ethics and Decorum Policy, the individual consults with the Executive Director or Chair of the Council who is knowledgeable about ethical issues.

When Council members believe that there may have been an ethical violation by another Council Member, they attempt to resolve the issue by bringing it to the attention of the Chair or Executive Director. They cooperate in ethics investigations, and resulting requirements, findings and resolutions of the committee investigation. Failure to cooperate is itself an ethics violation.

Council members do not file or encourage the filing of ethics complaints that are frivolous and are intended to harm the respondent rather than to protect the public.

**Violations of the Code of Decorum**

If an issue arises that is believed to be a violation of the Code of Decorum, his/her membership will be reviewed by the Executive Committee at a regular or specially called Executive Committee meeting. The issue shall be placed on the agenda of the Executive Committee meeting by the Chairperson after at least ten (10) working days prior

written notice is given to the Council member, assuring appropriate accommodations are made, if needed. The affected member shall be given the opportunity to address the issue with the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee will determine the action to be taken, if any, up to and including recommending termination of the membership. If after an Executive Committee ruling, the affected member has ongoing concerns regarding the issue, the matter may be brought to the full Council for consideration.