PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS BOARD
FOR THE PLANNING PROFESSION IN CANADA

Code of ethics

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Table of Contents

CIP Member Code of Professional Conduct 3
1. The Planner's Responsibility to the Public Interest 3
2. The Planner's Responsibility to Clients and Employers 3
3. The Planner's Responsibility to the Profession and Other Members 5
4. Discipline 6

CIP Member Statement of Values 7

CIP Member Code of Professional Conduct

Minimum Standards
(Examples of possible non-compliance are provided for information)

1. The Planner's Responsibility to the Public Interest

Members shall:

1.1 practice in a manner that respects the diversity, needs, values and aspirations of the public and encourages discussion on these matters

(A member unreasonably dismisses ethnic and/or religious based concerns.)

1.2 provide full, clear and accurate information on planning matters to decision-makers and members of the public, while recognizing the employer or client's right to confidentiality and the importance of timely reporting

(A member releases confidential information, when they have been specifically requested by a client, employer or another planner not to do so.)

1.3 acknowledge the inter-related nature of planning decisions and the consequences for natural and human environments

(A member recommends the elimination of an engineering requirement which they know is required to protect public safety.)

1.4 provide opportunities for meaningful participation and education in the planning process to all interested parties

(A member conducts a public hearing process without the required notice(s) or without indicating to a member of the public that their speaking time will be limited.)

2. The Planner's Responsibility to Clients and Employers

Members shall:

2.1 provide independent professional opinion to clients, employers, the public, and tribunals; perform work only within their areas of professional competence

(A member provides advice in an area of planning or another discipline where they do not have appropriate training and experience. An example is a member who does not have professional competence in transportation planning and prepares a report with recommendations in this area.)

2.2 undertake planning services with diligence and render services with appropriate preparation

(A member does not take the time and care needed to provide appropriate professional advice and presents a major report which has not been well researched and is poorly written and presented without a factual basis.)

2.3 acknowledge the values held by the client or employer in work performed, unless such values conflict with other aspects of this Code

(A member ignores the client or employer's standards or needs in the work being done and does not adhere to the agreed-upon Terms of Reference for a project.)

2.4 respect the client or employer right to confidentiality of information gathered through a professional relationship, unless such right conflicts with other aspects of this Code

(A member releases information that is confidential. This right of confidentiality does not extend to, for example, a situation where the member is required to testify before a tribunal of the member's PTIA where a complaint has been made against the member by the client or employer.)

2.5 inform the client or employer in the event of a conflict between the values or actions of the client or employer and those of this Code in a timely manner

(A member who does not immediately notify the client or employer that something they want the member to do is in conflict with the member's responsibilities under the Code. An example is a client asking a member to share with them confidential information that the member has collected in the course of conducting an assignment for another client.)

2.6 ensure timely and full disclosure to a client or employer of a possible conflict of interest arising from the member's private or professional activities

(A member who does not immediately let the client or employer know of a situation where the member believes they cannot continue to offer independent professional advice. An example is a member employed as a consultant on the side providing professional planning advice in a municipality where the member is employed full-time as a professional planner.)

2.7 not offer or accept any financial or other inducements, including prospective employment, that could, or appear to, influence or affect professional opportunities or planning advice

(A member asks for or receives a financial or other benefit, including a job, in exchange for providing professional advice that is not independent and objective. An example is a member providing biased conclusions, at the request of a client, in a report that will be received by a public regulatory body in exchange for gaining further work from the client.)

2.8 not, as an employee of a public agency, give professional planning advice for compensation to a private client or employer within the jurisdiction of the public agency without disclosure to the agency and written consent

(A member accepts a bonus payment based on a planning approval achieved)

2.9 not, as a consultant to a public agency during the period of contract with the agency, give professional planning advice for compensation to others within the jurisdiction of the agency without disclosure to the agency and written consent in situations where there is the possibility of a conflict of interest arising

(A member acts as a consultant providing professional planning advice to a developer on a project in a municipality at the same time as the member is providing professional planning advice to the municipality on matters that may affect the developer's project.)

3. The Planner's Responsibility to the Profession and Other Members

Members shall:

3.1 maintain an appropriate awareness of contemporary planning philosophy, planning theory and practice by obtaining professional education throughout their planning career, including complying with the Institute's continuing professional learning requirements

(A member ignores the PTIA requirements for continuous professional learning)

3.2 not in professional practice, extra-professional activities or private life, engage in dishonourable or questionable conduct that may cast doubt on their professional competence or integrity or that may reflect adversely on the integrity of the profession

(A member at a conference spends all of the program time outside of the conference in a disorderly and disruptive manner.)

3.3 ensure that advertising or promotional activities fairly and accurately communicate the expertise and skills offered, including professional qualifications and affiliations, education and experience

(A member provides false or misleading information on a CV or corporate brochure.)

3.4 act toward other members and colleagues in a spirit of fairness and consideration and not falsely or maliciously injure the professional reputation, prospects or practice of another member or other colleagues

(A public sector member, when asked to recommend a good planner for employment purposes by the public or developer, continuously gives a specific reference rather than referring to an approved list or the PTIA's Directory of Planning Consultants.)

3.5 respect colleagues in their professional capacity and when evaluating the work of another member, show objectivity and fairness and avoid ill-considered or uninformed criticism of the competence, conduct or advice of the member

(A member makes derogatory comments at a Public Hearing on a planning matter about the work performed by another member.)

3.6 not attempt to supplant another member once made aware that definite steps have been taken toward the other's employment

(A member offers a discount or other incentive to lure a client's business when that client is in the process of securing a contract with another planner.)

3.7 only sign or seal a final drawing, specification, plan, report or other document actually prepared or checked by the member

(A member seals a final site plan, prepared by a friend, who is a non-member, without checking the plan and thoroughly understanding the project.)

3.8 report to the Institute the behaviour of any member believed to be in breach of this Code in a timely manner

(In spite of extensive media coverage and personal knowledge, a member does not report that a fellow CIP member has vociferously criticized a planning scheme

proposed by the firm of another member.)

3.9 only make public statements on behalf of the Institute if authorized to do so

(In the media a member states that members of the Canadian Institute of Planners are opposed to the demolition of a local heritage building when no such statement has been made)

3.10 comply with any reasonable request of the Institute for information or for the co-operation of the member in pursuit of any Institute objective

(A member refuses to co-operate in an investigation by the member's PTIA of alleged professional conduct by the member)

3.11 respect the process and decision of any discipline proceeding affecting a member

(A member, who is the subject of a disciplinary matter, makes light of the procedure and does not prepare for and participate in the procedure in a professional manner.)

4. Discipline

Provincial and Territorial Institutes and Associations (PTIAs) shall establish by By-law policies and practices necessary to administer their Codes of Professional Conduct to ensure the proper handling of complaints, investigations, disciplinary reviews, sanctions, and appeals, and to reduce risk and liability. Such information shall reflect legal requirements and best practices used by professional associations.

CIP Member Statement of Values

To respect and integrate the needs of future generations

CIP members recognize that their work has cumulative and long-term implications. When addressing short-term needs, CIP members acknowledge the future needs of people, other species and their environments, and are to avoid committing resources that are irretrievable or irreplaceable.

To overcome or compensate for jurisdictional limitations

CIP members understand that their work has a potential impact on many jurisdictions and interests. They must therefore practice in a holistic manner, recognizing the need to overcome the limitations of administrative boundaries.

To value the natural and cultural environment

CIP members believe that both natural and cultural environments must be valued. They assume roles as stewards of these environments, balancing preservation with sustainable development.

To recognize and react positively to uncertainty

CIP members believe that the long-term future is unpredictable and that adaptable and flexible responses to deal positively with this uncertainty must be developed.

To respect diversity

CIP members respect and protect diversity in values, cultures, economics, ecosystems, built environments and distinct places.

To balance the needs of communities and individuals

CIP members seek to balance the interests of communities with the interests of individuals, and recognize that communities include both geographic communities and communities of interest.

To foster public participation

CIP members believe in meaningful public participation by all individuals and groups and seek to articulate the needs of those whose interests have not been represented.

To articulate and communicate values

CIP members believe in applying these values explicitly to their work and communicating their importance to clients, employers, colleagues and the public.