

National Association Of Christian Counsellors Malaysia

NACC Code of Ethics

The Yr 2012 Code

APPLICABILITY OF THE CODE

The NACC Code of Ethics (Code) is adapted from the American Association of Christian Counsellors (AACC) Code of Ethics (Y2004 Final Version). This Code may inform and enlighten all Christian counsellors and ministers, but is not strictly enforceable toward non-NACC persons, nor upon NACC members in their private lives apart from professional-ministerial roles. The Code will be revised and updated from time to time. We invite your continuous feedback, ideas and suggestions for our consideration. Please email to chairman.ethics@nacc-malaysia.org.

INTRODUCTION AND MISSION

The Code is designed to assist members of the National Association of Christian Counsellors Malaysia (NACC) to better serve their clients and congregants and to improve the work of Christian counselling worldwide. It will help achieve the major goals of the NACC—to promote Christian counselling in Malaysia, bring honour to Jesus Christ and his church, promote excellence in Christian counselling, and bring unity to Christian counsellors.

A New Code for an Emerging Profession

The Code is a comprehensive, detailed, and integrative synthesis of biblical, clinical, systemic, ethical, and legal information. It was created this way because vaguely worded, content limited, and overly generalized codes are insufficient for the complexities of the modern, 21st-century counselling environment. A more comprehensive and behaviour-specific ethical code is needed for Christian counsellors (and all mental health and ministerial professions, we believe) because of:

- (1) the mounting evidence of questionable and incompetent practices among Christian counsellors, including increasing complaints of client-parishioner harm in America and elsewhere;
- (2) the largely unprotected legal status of Christian counselling, including the increasing state scrutiny, excessive litigation, and unrelenting legalization of professional ethics; and more positively
- (3) the vitality and growing maturity of Christian counselling—including its many theories and controversies—indicating the need for an overarching ethical-legal template to guide the development of biblical and empirically sound Christian counselling models.

This Code—beyond defining the boundaries of unethical practice—affirmatively educates counsellors in the direction of becoming helpers of ethical excellence, capable of more consistently securing the best counselling outcomes. This Code shows four streams of influence. These include (1) the Bible (both Old and New Testaments) and historic orthodox Christian theology; (2) accepted standards of counselling and clinical practice from Christian counselling and the established mental health disciplines; (3) codes of ethics from other Christian and mental health professions; and (4) current and developing standards derived from mental health and ministry-related law.

Mission, Uses, and Limits of the Code

The mission of this Code is to

- (1) help advance the mission of the NACC to promote Christian counselling in Malaysia and bring honour to Jesus Christ and also to promote excellence and unity in Christian counselling;
- (2) promote the welfare and protect the dignity and fundamental rights of all individuals, families, groups, churches, schools, agencies, ministries, and other organizations with whom Christian counsellors work;
- (3) provide standards of ethical conduct in Christian counselling that are to be advocated and applied by the NACC and that can be respected by other professionals and institutions.

This Code defines biblically based values and universal behavioural standards for ethical Christian counselling. We intend this Code to become a core document by which Christian counsellors, clients, and the church oversee and evaluate Christian counsellors and counselling values, goals, process, and effectiveness. Furthermore, the Code asserts a Christian counselling standard of care that invites respect and application by the courts, the regulatory bodies of church and state, insurance and managed care groups, other professions, and by society.

This Code should be seen as normative but non-exhaustive. It provides a common definition of practice, but does not presume to be a complete picture of Christian counselling nor does it necessarily cover all ethical issues. This Code outlines a foundation of preferred values and agreed professional behaviour upon which Christian counsellors can shape their identity and build their work. It defines standards upon which practice diversity is acknowledged and encouraged as well as the limits beyond which practice deviance is not allowed.

The Code consists of four major parts—Introduction and Mission, Biblical-Ethical Foundations, Ethical Standards, and Procedural Rules (which are being developed). It aspires to define, in the mission and the biblical-ethical foundations statements, the best ideals and goals of Christian counselling. The ethical standards and procedural rules are the codes of individual practice and organizational behaviour that are to guide the membership of the NACC. The mission and foundations statements are to be consulted in working out the problems and dilemmas of ethics application and procedural rules interpretation.

Concerning language, we have endeavoured to avoid pedantic, legalese, and sexist language, but we also avoid a radical inclusive that de-sexes the name of God. Unless denoted, we use the term "client" to refer to clients, patients, congregants, parishioners, or helpees. "Counselling" is usually a generic reference to clinical, psychiatric, pastoral, and lay helping.

Grace for the Task Ahead

This is a dynamic Code, one that will anchor the mission of the AACC and retain some elements without change, but one that will also live and grow with the life and growth of the Association and its membership. The Code calls us to a life-long commitment to ethical and excellent service; it challenges us to encourage ethical behaviour in our colleagues, churches, organizations, and communities. May God give us the grace to own it professionally, the strength to live it honourably, and the hope to see it as a foundation of common identity and corporate unity.

BIBLICAL-ETHICAL FOUNDATIONS OF THE NACC ETHICS CODE⁺

1st FOUNDATION: *Jesus Christ—and His revelation in the Old and New Testaments of the Bible—is the pre-eminent model for Christian counselling practice, ethics, and care giving activities.*

2nd FOUNDATION: *Christian counselling maintains a committed, intimate, and dedicated relationship with the worldwide church and individual counsellors with a local body of believers.*

3rd FOUNDATION: *Christian counselling, at its best, is a Spirit-led process of change and growth, geared to help others mature in Christ by the skilful synthesis of counsellor-assisted spiritual, psycho-social, familial, bio-medical, and environmental interventions.*

4th FOUNDATION: *Christian counsellors are dedicated to Jesus Christ as their ‘first love,’ to excellence in client service, to ethical integrity in practice, and to respect for everyone encountered.*

5th FOUNDATION: *Christian counsellors accord the highest respect to the Biblical revelation regarding the defence of human life, the dignity of human personhood, and the sanctity of marriage and family life.*

6th FOUNDATION: *The biblical and constitutional rights to Religious Freedom, Free Speech, and Free Association protects Christian counsellor public identity, and the explicit incorporation of spiritual practices into all forms of counselling and intervention.*

7th FOUNDATION: *Christian counsellors are mindful of their representation of Christ and his church and are dedicated to honour their commitments and obligations in all social and professional relations.*

+ NOTE: This statement of “biblical-ethical foundations” is not a doctrinal statement, nor is it intended to substitute for one. However, this section stands as the baseline ethics policy that will ground this code, assist the search for clear meaning and common interpretation, and guide the resolution of disputed applications of ethical standards and procedural rules.

ETHICAL STANDARDS

I. ETHICAL STANDARDS FOR CHRISTIAN COUNSELLORS

ESI-100 First, Do No Harm

Christian counsellors acknowledge that the first rule of professional-ministerial ethical conduct is: *do no harm* to those served.

1-101 Affirming the God-given Dignity of All Persons

Affirmatively, Christian counsellors recognize and uphold the inherent, God-given dignity of every human person, from the pre-born to those on death’s bed. Human beings are God’s creation—in fact, the crown of His creation—and are therefore due all the rights and respect and ordered logic that this fact of creation entails.

Therefore, regardless of how we respond to and challenge harmful attitudes and actions, Christian counsellors will express a loving care to any client, service-inquiring person, or anyone encountered in the course of practice or ministry, without regard to race, ethnicity, gender, sexual behaviour or orientation, socio-economic status, education, denomination, belief system, values, or political affiliation. God’s love is unconditional and, at this level of concern, so must that of the Christian counsellor.

1-102 No Harm or Exploitation Allowed

Prohibitively, then, Christian counsellors avoid every manner of harm, exploitation, and unjust discrimination in all client-congregant relations. Christian counsellors are also aware of their psychosocial and spiritual influence and the inherent power imbalance of helping relationships—power dynamics that can harm others even without harmful intent.

1-110 Avoidance of Client Harm, Intended or Not

Christian counsellors strictly avoid all behaviour or suggestion of practice that harms or reasonably could harm clients, client families, client social systems and representatives, students, trainees, supervisees, employees, colleagues, and third-party payors and authorizers.

1-111 Managing Client Conflicts

Christian counsellors acknowledge that client conflicts are unavoidable. In fact, conflict and resistance are often a central dynamic of the helping process. We will attempt to resolve all counselling conflicts in the client's best interest. Counsellors tempted to respond in harmful ways to clients shall seek out consultative and restorative help. If self-control is not accomplished—and client harm is not avoided—counsellors shall terminate counselling relations and make referral in the client's best interest.

1-112 Action Regarding Clients Harmed by Other Helpers

Christian counsellors take proper action against the harmful behaviour of other counsellors and pastors. We will act assertively to challenge or expose those who exploit others, and protect clients against harm wherever it is found, taking care to honour and support client decision-making regarding curative action against violators.

1-113 Managing Problems with Managed Care

Managed care has greatly expanded its influence in health and mental health service delivery. Widespread problems in client-provider-managed care relations are now being reported elsewhere: breach of confidentiality, client abandonment, failure to maintain continuity of care, incompetent care, restriction of therapist choice and access, and even infliction of emotional distress. Christian counsellors acknowledge these legal-ethical problems, and will avoid and work to correct any unethical entanglement and unintended client harm due to managed care relations.

1-120 Refusal to Participate in the Harmful Actions of Clients

Christian counsellors refuse to condone, advocate for, or assist the harmful actions of clients, especially those that imperil human life from conception to death. We agree that the protection of human life is always a priority value in any professional or ministerial intervention. We will not abandon clients who do or intend harm, will terminate helping relations only in the most compelling circumstances, and will continue to serve clients in these troubles so far as it is humanly possible.

1-121 Application to Deadly and Threatening Behaviour

Christian counsellors refuse to condone, advocate for, or assist the suicidal, homicidal, or assaultive/abusive harm done to self or others by clients, including that which is threatened by verbal or other means. In fact, we are under an affirmative ethical duty to prudently intervene for the sake of protecting life, and under certain conditions, to report deadly threats to the proper authorities and those threatened by clients (see Code sections 1-430ff).

1-122 Application to Substance Abuse and Other Addictions

Christian counsellors refuse to condone, advocate for, or assist substance abuse or other addictions and addictive behaviours by clients. We recognize and accept the distinction between drug dependence and addiction, and may support or assist clients in the use of necessary drugs—even those from which dependencies may develop for limited periods of time—when medically justified and under a physician's supervision.

1-123 Application to Abortion

Christian counsellors refuse to condone or advocate for abortion and the abortion-related activities of clients. All counsellors will consider and inform clients of alternative means to abortion and, as far as it is possible, will continue to serve clients and work compassionately with them through the abortion crisis.

1-124 Application to Divorce

Christian counsellors refuse to assume the decision for client divorce. We may assist clients in analyzing and making the decision to divorce, insofar as it is biblically permissible, as God does allow for divorce in some cases. Therefore, we may assist clients through the divorce process without being a divorce advocate, as that divorce decision must always reside in and be owned by the client.

Christian counsellors working in divorce mediation will be careful to communicate that such work is not an endorsement of divorce, but rather a decision to offer a better choice than adversarial litigation and its destructive family impact when divorce is inevitable.

1-125 Application to Premarital and Extramarital Sexual Behaviour

Christian counsellors refuse to condone or advocate for the pursuit of or active involvement in pre-marital and extra-marital sexual behaviour by clients—promoting an affair is never proper counsel as a solution to marital problems. We acknowledge that sex is God’s good creation and a delightful gift when confined to one man and one woman in marriage. We may agree to and support the wish to work out issues of sexual behaviour, identity, and attractions, but will encourage sexual celibacy or biblically proscribed sexual behaviour while such issues are being addressed.

1-126 Application to Homosexual and Transgendered Behaviour

Christian counsellors refuse to condone or advocate for the pursuit of or active involvement in homosexual, transgendered, and cross-dressing behaviour, and in the adoption gay & lesbian & transgendered lifestyles by clients. We may agree to and support the wish to work out issues of homosexual and transgendered identity and attractions, but will refuse to describe or reduce human identity and nature to sexual reference or orientation, and will encourage sexual celibacy or biblically proscribed sexual behaviour while such issues are being addressed.

Christian counsellors differ, on biblical, ethical, and legal grounds, with groups who abhor and condemn reparative therapy, willingly offering it to those who come into counselling with a genuine desire to be set free of homosexual attractions and leave homosexual behaviour and lifestyles behind. Either goal of heterosexual relations and marriage or lifelong sexual celibacy is legitimate and a function of client choice in reparative therapy.

It is acknowledged that some persons engaged in same-sex change or reparative therapy will be able to change and become free of all homo-erotic behaviour and attraction, some will change but will still struggle with homosexual attraction from time to time, and some will not change away from homosexual practices.

1-127 Application to Euthanasia and Assisted Suicide

Christian counsellors refuse to condone or advocate for active forms of euthanasia and assisted suicide. We may agree to and support the wish not to prolong life by artificial means, and will often advocate for hospice care, more effective application of medicine, and other reasonable means to reduce pain and suffering.

Regarding patients or clients who wish to die, we will not deliver, nor advocate for, nor support the use of drugs or devices to be utilized for the purpose of ending a patient’s life. We recognize that the death of a patient may occur as the unintended and secondary result of aggressive action to alleviate a terminally ill patient’s extreme pain and suffering.

So long as there are no other reasonable methods to alleviate such pain and suffering, the Christian counsellor is free to support, advocate for, and participate in such aggressive pain management in accordance with sound medical practice, and with the informed consent of the patient or the patient’s authorized representative.

1-130 Sexual Misconduct Forbidden

All forms of sexual misconduct in pastoral, professional, or lay relationships are unethical. This includes every kind of sexual exploitation, deception, manipulation, abuse, harassment, relations where the sexual involvement is invited, and relations where informed consent presumably exists. Due to the inherent power imbalance of helping relationships and the immoral nature of sexual behaviour outside of marriage, such apparent consent is illusory and illegitimate.

Forbidden sexual activities and deceptions include, but are not limited to, direct sexual touch or contact; seductive sexual speech or non-verbal behaviour; solicitation of sexual or romantic relations; erotic contact or behaviour as a response to the sexual invitation or seductive behaviour of clients; unnecessary questioning and/or excessive probing into the client’s sexual history and practices; inappropriate counsellor disclosures of client attractiveness, sexual opinions, or sexual humour; advocacy of the healing value of counsellor-client sexual relations; secretive sexual communications and anonymous virtual interaction via the Internet or other electronic and informational means; sexual

harassment by comments, touch, or promises/threats of special action; and sexual misconduct as defined by all applicable laws, ethics, and church, organizational, or practice policies.

1-131 Sexual Relations with Former Clients Forbidden

All sexual relations as defined in 1-130 above with former clients are unethical. Furthermore, we do not terminate and refer clients or parishioners, even at first contact, in order to pursue sexual or romantic relations.

1-132 Counselling with Marital/Sexual Partners

Christian counsellors do not counsel, but make appropriate referral, with current or former sexual and/or marital partners.

1-133 Marriage with Former Clients/Patients

Since marriage is honourable before God, the lone exception to this rule against marriage to a former client, is a case anticipating marriage, so long as (1) counselling relations were properly terminated, and not for the purpose of pursuing marriage or romantic relations, (2) the client is fully informed that any further counselling must be done by another, (3) there is no harm or exploitation of the client or the client's family as a result of different relations with the counsellor, and (4) the marriage takes place two years or more after the conclusion of a counselling or helping relationship.

1-140 Dual and Multiple Relationships

Dual relationships involve the breakdown of proper professional or ministerial *boundaries*. A dual relationship is where two or more roles are mixed in a manner that can harm the counselling relationship. Examples include counselling plus personal, fraternal, business, financial, or sexual and romantic relations.

Some dual relationships are not unethical—it is client exploitation that is wrong, not the dual relationship itself. Based on an absolute application that harms membership bonds in the Body of Christ, we oppose the ethical-legal view that all dual relationships are per se harmful and therefore invalid on their face. Many dual relations are wrong and indefensible, but some dual relationships are worthwhile and defensible (per section 1-142 below).

1-141 The Rule of Dual Relationships

While in therapy, or when counselling relations are imminent, or for an appropriate time after termination of counselling, Christian counsellors do not engage in dual relations with counselees. Some dual relationships are always avoided—sexual or romantic relations, and counselling close friends, family members, employees, or supervisees. Other dual relationships should be presumed troublesome and avoided wherever possible.

1-142 Proving an Exception to the Rule

The Christian counsellor has the burden of proving a justified dual relationship by showing (1) informed consent, including discussion of how the counselling relationship might be harmed as other relations proceed, and (2) lack of harm or exploitation to the client.

As a general rule, all close relations are unethical if they become counsellor-client or formal lay helping relations. Dual relations may be allowable, requiring justification by the foregoing rule, if the client is an arms-length acquaintance—if the relationship is not a close one. This distinction is crucial in the applications below.

1-143 Counselling with Family, Friends, and Acquaintances

Christian counsellors do not provide counselling to close family or friends. We presume that dual relations with other family members, acquaintances, and fraternal, club, association, or group members are potentially troublesome and best avoided, otherwise requiring justification.

1-144 Business and Economic Relations

Christian counsellors avoid partnerships, employment relations, and close business associations with clients. Barter relations are normally avoided as potentially troublesome, and require justification; therefore if done, barter is a rare and not a common occurrence. Unless justified by compelling necessity, customer relations with clients are normally avoided.

1-145 Counselling with Fellow Church Members

Christian counsellors do not provide counselling to fellow church members with whom they have close personal, business, or shared ministry relations. We presume that dual relations with any other church members who are clients are potentially troublesome and best avoided, otherwise requiring

justification. Pastors and church staff helpers will take all reasonable precautions to limit the adverse impact of any dual relationships.

1-146 Termination to Engage in Dual Relations Prohibited

Christian counsellors do not terminate counselling to engage in dual relationships of any kind. Some counsellors and their former clients will agree that any future counselling will be done by someone else if, after legitimate termination, they decide to pursue another form of relationship.

ESI-200 Competence in Christian Counselling

1-210 Honouring the Call to Competent Christian Counselling

Christian counsellors maintain the highest standards of competence with integrity. We know and respect the boundaries of competence in ourselves and others, especially those under our supervision. We make only truthful, realistic statements about our identity, education, experience, credentials, and about counselling goals and process, avoiding exaggerated and sensational claims. We do not offer services or work beyond the limits of our competence and do not aid or abet the work of Christian counselling by untrained, unqualified, or unethical helpers.

1-220 Duties to Consult and/or Refer

Christian counsellors consult with and/or refer to more competent colleagues or supervisors when these limits of counselling competence are reached: (1) when facing issues not dealt with before or not experienced in handling, (2) when clients need further help outside the scope of our training and practice, (3) when either counsellor or clients are feeling stuck or confused about counselling and neither is clear what to do about it, or (4) when counselees are deteriorating or making no realistic gain over a number of sessions. Christian counsellors shall honour the client's goals and confidential privacy interests in all consultations and referrals.

1-221 Consultation Practice

When counselling help is needed, and with client consent, consultation may be attempted first, when in the client's best interest and to improve helper's knowledge and skill where some competence exists. Counsellors shall take all reasonable action to apply consultative help to the case in order to gain/maintain ground toward client objectives. The consultant shall maintain a balanced concern for the client discussed and the practice/education needs of the consultee, directing the counsellor-consultee to further training or special resources, if needed.

1-222 Referral Practice

Referral shall be made in situations where client need is beyond the counsellor's ability or scope of practice or when consultation is inappropriate, unavailable, or unsuccessful. Referrals should be done only after the client is provided with informed choices among referral sources. As much as possible, counsellors referred to shall honour prior commitments between client and referring counsellor or church.

1-223 Seek Christian Help, If Available

When consulting or referring, Christian counsellors seek out the best Christian help at a higher level of knowledge, skill, and expertise. If Christian help is not available, or when professional skill is more important than the professional's beliefs, Christian counsellors shall use the entire network of professional services available.

1-224 Avoid Counsel Against Professional Treatment

Christian counsellors do not counsel or advice against professional counselling, medical or psychiatric treatment, the use of medications, legal counsel, or other forms of professional service merely because we believe such practice is per se wrong or because the provider may not be a Christian.

1-230 Duties to Study and Maintain Expertise

Christian counsellors keep abreast of and, whenever possible, contribute to new knowledge, issues, and resources in Christian counselling and our respective fields. We maintain an active program of study, continuing education, and personal/professional growth to improve helping effectiveness and

ethical practice. We seek out specialized training, supervision, and/or advanced certification if we choose to gain expertise and before we practice and advertise in recognized specialty areas of counselling and clinical practice.

1-240 Maintaining Integrity in Work, Reports, and Relationships

Christian counsellors maintain the highest standards of integrity in all their work, in professional reports, and in all professional relationships. We delegate to employees, supervisees, and other subordinates only that work these persons can competently perform, meeting the client's best interest and done with appropriate supervision.

1-250 Protective Action When Personal Problems Interfere

Christian counsellors acknowledge that sin, illnesses, mental disorders, interpersonal crises, distress, and self-deception still influence us personally—and that these problems can adversely affect our clients and parishioners. When personal problems flare to a level that harm to one's clients is realized or is highly likely, the Christian counsellor will refrain from or reduce those particular professional-ministerial activities that are or could be harmful. During such times, the counsellor will seek out and use those reparative resources that will allow for problem resolution and a return to a fully functioning ministry, if possible.

ES1-300 Informed Consent in Christian Counselling

1-310 Securing Informed Consent

Christian counsellors secure client consent for all counselling and related services. This includes the video/audio-taping of client sessions, the use of supervisory and consultative help, the application of special procedures and evaluations, and the communication of client data with other professionals and institutions.

Christian counsellors take care that (1) the client has the *capacity* to give consent; (2) we have discussed counselling together and the client *reasonably understands* the nature and process of counselling; the costs, time, and work required; the limits of counselling; and any appropriate alternatives; and (3) the client *freely gives consent* to counselling, without coercion or undue influence.

1-320 Consent for the Structure and Process of Counselling

Christian counsellors respect the need for informed consent regarding the structure and process of counselling. Early in counselling, counsellor and client should discuss and agree upon these issues: the nature of and course of therapy; client issues and goals; potential problems and reasonable alternatives to counselling; counsellor status and credentials; confidentiality and its limits; fees and financial procedures; limitations about time and access to the counsellor, including directions in emergency situations; and procedures for resolution of disputes and misunderstandings. If the counsellor is supervised, that fact shall be disclosed and the supervisor's name and role indicated to the client.

1-321 Consent from Parent or Client Representative

Christian counsellors obtain consent from parents or the client's legally authorized representative when clients are minors or adults who are legally incapable of giving consent.

1-322 Documentation of Consent

Christian counsellors will document client consent in writing by professional service contract or consent form, the standard now required in most professional therapy relations, or by case note at the very least.

1-330 Consent for Biblical-Spiritual Practices in Counselling

Christian counsellors do not presume that all clients want or will be receptive to explicit spiritual interventions in counselling. We obtain consent that honours client choice, receptivity to these practices, and the timing and manner in which these things are introduced: prayer for and with clients, Bible reading and reference, spiritual meditation, the use of biblical and religious imagery, assistance with spiritual formation and discipline, and other common spiritual practices.

1-331 Special Consent for More Difficult Interventions

Close or special consent is obtained for more difficult and controversial practices. These include, but are not limited to: deliverance and spiritual warfare activities; cult de-programming work; recovering memories and treatment of past abuse or trauma; use of hypnosis and any kind of induction of altered states; authorizing (by MDs) medications, electro-convulsive therapy, or patient restraints; use of aversive, involuntary, or experimental therapies; engaging in reparative therapy with homosexual persons; and counselling around abortion and end-of-life issues. These interventions require a more detailed discussion with patient-clients or client representatives of the procedures, risks, and treatment alternatives, and we secure detailed written agreement for the procedure.

ES1-400 Confidentiality, Privacy, and Privileged Communication

1-410 Maintaining Client Confidentiality

Christian counsellors maintain client confidentiality to the fullest extent allowed by law, professional ethics, and church or organizational rules. Confidential client communications include all verbal, written, telephonic, audio or videotaped, or electronic communications arising within the helping relationship. Apart from the exceptions below, Christian counsellors shall not disclose confidential client communications without first discussing the intended disclosure and securing written consent from the client or client representative.

1-411 Discussing the Limits of Confidentiality and Privilege

Clients should be informed about both the counsellor's commitment to confidentiality and its limits before engaging in counselling. Christian counsellors avoid stating or implying that confidentiality is guaranteed or absolute. We will discuss the limits of confidentiality and privacy with clients at the outset of counselling.

1-420 Asserting Confidentiality or Privilege Following Demands for Disclosure

Protecting confidential communications, including the assertion of privilege in the face of legal or court demands, shall be the first response of counsellors to demands or requests for client communications and records.

1-421 Disclosure of Confidential Client Communications

Christian counsellors disclose only that client information they have written permission from the client to disclose or that which is required by legal or ethical mandates. The counsellor shall maintain confidentiality of client information outside the bounds of that narrowly required to fulfil the disclosure and shall limit disclosures only to those people having a direct professional interest in the case. In the face of a subpoena, counsellors shall neither deny nor immediately comply with disclosure demands, but will assert privilege in order to give the client time to consult with a lawyer to direct disclosures.

1-430 Protecting Persons from Deadly Harm: The Rule of Mandatory Disclosure

Christian counsellors accept the limits of confidentiality when human life is imperilled or abused. We will take appropriate action, including necessary disclosures of confidential information, to protect life in the face of client threats of suicide, homicide, and/or the abuse of children, elders, and dependent persons.

1-431 The Duty to Protect Others

The duty to take protective action is triggered when the counsellor (1) has reasonable suspicion, that a minor child (under 18 years), elder person (65 years and older), or dependent adult (regardless of age) has been harmed by the client; or (2) has direct client admissions of serious and imminent suicidal threats; or (3) has direct client admissions of harmful acts or threatened action that is serious, imminent, and attainable against a clearly identified third person or group of persons.

1-432 Guidelines to Ethical Disclosure and Protective Action

Action to protect life, whether you're a client or a third-person, shall be that which is reasonably necessary to stop or forestall deadly or harmful action in the present situation. This could involve hospitalizing the client, intensifying clinical intervention to the degree necessary to reasonably protect

against harmful action, consultation and referral with other professionals, or disclosure of harm or threats to law enforcement, protective services, identifiable third-persons, and/or family members able to help with protective action.

1-433 Special Guidelines When Violence is Threatened Against Others

Action to protect third persons from client violence may involve or require disclosure of imminent harm to the intended victim, to their family or close friends, and to law enforcement. When child abuse or elder abuse or abuse of dependent adults exists, as defined by state law, Christian counsellors shall report to child or elder protective services, or to any designated agency established for protective services. We shall also attempt to defuse the situation and/or take preventive action by whatever means are available and appropriate.

When clients threaten serious and imminent homicide or violence against an identifiable third-person, the Christian counsellor shall inform appropriate law enforcement, and/or medical-crisis personnel, and the at-risk person or close family member of the threat, except when precluded by compelling circumstances or by state law.

When the client threat is serious but not imminent, the Christian counsellor shall take preventive clinical action that seeks to forestall any further escalation of threat toward violent behaviour.

1-440 Disclosures in Cases of Third-party Payment and Managed Care

Christian counsellors are diligent to protect client confidences in relations with insurance and third party payors, employee assistance programs, and managed care groups. We are cautious about demands for confidential client information that exceed the need for validation of services rendered or continued care. We do not disclose or submit session notes and details of client admissions solely on demand of third-party payors. We will narrowly disclose information that the client has given written authorization only after we have discussed and are assured that the client understands the full implications of authorizations signed or contemplated to sign.

1-450 Disclosures for Supervision, Consultation, Teaching, Preaching, and Publication

Christian counsellors do not disclose confidential client communications in any supervisory, consultation, teaching, preaching, publishing, or other activity without written or other legal authorization by the client. Counsellors under supervision will disclose that fact to their clients. We will adequately disguise client identifiers by various means when presenting cases in group or in public forums. We will not presume that disguise alone is sufficient client protection, but will consider seeking client authorization when client identity is hard to conceal.

1-460 Maintaining Privacy and Preserving Written Records

Christian counsellors will preserve, store, and transfer written records of client communications in a way that protects client confidentiality and privacy rights. This requires, at minimum, keeping records files in locked storage with access given only to those persons with a direct professional interest in the materials.

1-461 Maintaining Privacy in Electronic Databases

Christian counsellors take special precautions to protect client privacy rights with records stored and transferred by electronic means. This requires, at minimum, use of password entry into all electronic client files and/or coded files that do not use client names or easy identifiers. Client information transferred electronically—FAX, E-mail, or other computerized network transfer—shall be done only after the counsellor determines that the process of transmission and reception of data is reasonably protected from interception and unauthorized disclosures.

1-470 Advocacy for Privacy Rights Against Intrusive Powers

Christian counsellors hear the most private and sensitive details of client lives—information that must be zealously guarded from public disclosure. Rapidly expanding and interlocking electronic information networks are increasingly threatening client privacy rights. Though federal and state laws exist to protect client privacy, these laws are weak, are routinely violated at many levels, and the record of privacy right enforcement is dismal. Accordingly, Christian counsellors are called to wisely protect

and assertively advocate for privacy protection on behalf of our clients against the pervasive intrusion of personal, corporate, governmental, even religious powers.

ESI-500 Ethical Practice in Christian Counselling and Evaluation

1-510 Fees and Financial Relationships in Christian Counselling

Professional Christian counsellors will set fees for services that are fair and reasonable, according to the services contracted and time performed, and with due regard for the client's ability to pay. We avoid all deception, confusion, and misrepresentation about fees and in our financial relationships with clients and client systems.

1-511 Disclosure of Fees and Payment History

Fee schedules and rules for payment shall be outlined clearly for client review at the outset of counselling. Moreover, agreement about fees and payment schedules will be made as early as possible in the course of professional relations. We will provide clients or their representatives with a full and accurate account of previous and current charges upon request.

1-512 Sliding Fee Scales Encouraged

Christian counsellors are free, within the bounds of biblical, professional, and community standards, to set their own fees. Clinicians are encouraged, however, to use sliding fee schedules, scaled to client's ability to pay, and other reduced payment methods to increase counselling accessibility to those of lesser financial means.

1-513 Pro Bono Work

Christian counsellors are encouraged, beyond their fee schedule, to make a portion of their time and services available without cost or at a greatly reduced fee to those unable to pay.

1-514 Avoiding Self-serving Financial Relations

Christian counsellors avoid financial practices that result or appear to result in greedy and self-serving outcomes. We do not select clients or prolong therapy based on their ability to pay high fees, nor do we quickly terminate counselling with low-fee clients. When making referrals, we do not divide fees with other professionals nor accept or give anything of value for making the referral. We do not exaggerate problems nor refer exclusively for specialized services to get clients into special programs or institutions in which we have a proprietary interest.

1-515 Financial Integrity with Insurance and Third-party Payors

Christian counsellors maintain financial integrity with client insurers and other third-party payors. We do not charge third-party payors for services not rendered, nor for missed or cancelled appointments, unless specially authorized to do so. We do not distort or change diagnoses to fit restricted reimbursement categories. Any special benefits or reductions in client fees must also be extended in full to third-party payors.

1-520 Case notes and Proper Record-keeping

Christian counsellors maintain appropriate documentation of their counselling activities, adequate for competent recall of prior sessions and the provision of later services by oneself or others. Records used in legal and other official capacities will show the quality, detail, objectivity, and timeliness of production expected by professionals who practice in these arenas.

1-521 Records Maintenance and Ownership

Records of professional activities will be created, maintained, stored, and disposed of in accordance with the law and the ethical duties of the counsellor, especially maintaining client confidentiality. Ordinarily, client records belong to the employing organization or to the therapist in a private or group practice. However, in view of the expanding right of client record access and the ethic of continuity of care, clients' records should follow the client. Therefore, in any dispute about record access or ownership at the termination of professional employment, the records will stay with the employer if the therapist is leaving the area and his or her clients, or they should go with the therapist if he or she is staying in the area and the clients are staying with the therapist.

1-530 Ethics in Testing, Assessment, and Clinical Evaluation

Christian counsellors do clinical evaluations of clients only in the context of professional relations, in the best interests of clients, and with the proper training and supervision. Christian counsellors avoid (1) incompetent and inaccurate evaluations, (2) clinically unnecessary and excessively expensive testing, and (3) unauthorized practice of testing and evaluation that is the province of another clinical or counselling discipline. Referral and consultation are used when evaluation is desired or necessary beyond the competence and/or role of the counsellor.

1-531 Use of Appropriate Assessments

Christian counsellors use tests and assessment techniques that are appropriate to the needs, resources, capabilities, and understanding of the client. We apply tests skilfully and administer tests properly and safely. We substantiate our findings, with knowledge of the reliability, validity, outcome results, and limits of the tests used. We avoid both the misuse of testing procedures and the creation of confusion or misunderstanding by clients about testing purposes, procedures, and findings.

1-532 Reporting and Interpreting Assessment Results

Christian counsellors report testing results in a fair, understandable, and objective manner. We avoid undue testing bias and honour the limits of test results, ensuring verifiable means to substantiate conclusions and recommendations. We recognize the limits of test interpretation, and avoid exaggeration and absolute statements about the certainty of client diagnoses, behaviour predictions, clinical judgments, and recommendations. Due regard is given to the unique history, values, family dynamics, sociocultural influences, economic realities, and spiritual maturity of the client. Christian counsellors will state any and all reservations about the validity of test results and present reports and recommendations in tentative language and with alternative possibilities.

1-540 Working with Couples, Families, and Groups

Christian counsellors often work with multiple persons in session—marriage couples, families or parts of families, and small groups—and should know when these forms of counselling are preferred over or used as an adjunct to individual counselling. In these relationships we will identify a primary client—the group as a unit or the individual members—and will discuss with our client(s) how our differing roles, counselling goals, and confidentiality and consent issues are affected by these dynamics.

1-541 Safety and Integrity in Family and Group Counselling

Christian counsellors will maintain their role as fair, unbiased, and effective helpers in all marital, family, and group work. We will remain accessible to all persons, avoiding enmeshed alliances and taking sides unjustly. As group or family counselling leaders, Christian counsellors respect the boundary between constructive confrontation and verbal abuse, and will take reasonable precautions to protect client members from any physical, psychological, or verbal abuse from other members of a family or group.

1-542 Confidentiality in Family and Group Counselling (see also ESI-400)

Christian counsellors do not promise or guarantee confidentiality in family and group counselling, but rather explain the problems and limits of keeping confidences in these modes of therapy. We communicate the importance of confidentiality and encourage family or group members to honour it, including discussion of consequences for its breach. Christian counsellors do not share confidences by one family or group member to others without permission or prior agreement, unless maintaining the secret will likely lead to grave and serious harm to a family member or someone else.

1-543 Avoiding and Resolving Role Conflicts

If/when Christian counsellors are asked to perform conflicting roles with possible unethical consequences (i.e.: pressure to keep "secrets" or called to testify as an adverse witness in a client's divorce), we will clarify our therapeutic, neutral, and meditative role and/or decline to serve in a conflicted capacity, if possible. Some counsellors will contract for professional neutrality at the beginning of professional relations, securing client agreement not to have oneself or one's records subpoenaed or deposed in any legal proceeding.

1-550 Working with Persons of Different Faiths, Religions, and Values

Christian counsellors do not withhold services to anyone of a different faith, religion, denomination, or value system. We work to understand the client's belief system and always maintain respect for the client. We strive to understand when faith and values issues are important to the client and

foster values-informed client decision-making in counselling. We share our own faith only as a function of legitimate self-disclosure and when appropriate to client need, always maintaining a humility that exposes and never imposes the way of Christ.

1-551 Action if Value Differences Interfere with Counselling

Christian counsellors work to resolve problems—always in the client's best interest—when differences between counsellor and client values becomes too great, adversely affecting counselling. This may include discussion of the issue as a therapeutic matter, renegotiation of the counselling agreement, consultation with a supervisor or trusted colleague or, as a last resort, referral to another counsellor if the differences cannot be reduced or bridged.

1-560 Continuity of Care and Service Interruption

Christian counsellors maintain continuity of care for all patients and clients. We avoid interruptions in service to clients that are too lengthy or disruptive. Care is taken to refer clients and network to provide emergency services when faced with counsellor vacations, illnesses, job changes, financial hardships, or any other reason services are interrupted or limited.

1-570 Avoiding Abandonment and Improper Counselling Termination

Christian counsellors do not abandon clients. To the extent the counsellor is able, client services are never abruptly cut-off or ended without giving notice and adequately preparing the client for termination or referral.

1-571 Ethical Termination of Counselling

Discussion and action toward counselling termination and/or referral is indicated when (1) counselling goals have been achieved; (2) when the client no longer wants or does not return to counselling; (3) when the client is no longer benefiting from counselling; or (4) when counselling is harmful to the client. Christian counsellors shall discuss termination and/or referral with clients, offer referral if wanted or appropriate, and facilitate termination in the client's best interest. If crisis events alter, even end counselling prematurely the counsellor, if it is safe and proper, should follow-through with the client to ensure proper termination and referral.

ESI-600 Ethical Relations in the Professional Workplace

1-610 Honourable Relations Between Professional and Ministerial Colleagues

Christian counsellors respect professional and ministerial colleagues, both within and outside the church. We strive to understand and, wherever able, respect differing approaches to counselling. We strive to maintain collaborative and constructive relations with other professionals serving our client, in the client's best interest.

1-611 Solicitation of Clients Under Another's Care

Christian counsellors do not solicit clients nor do we knowingly offer professional services to those under the care of another mental health professional or pastor, except with that provider's knowledge, or when someone is in crisis. When approached by clients being served by other counsellors, due regard will be given that relationship with a commitment to encourage client resolution with the other counsellor before starting professional relations.

1-612 Maintaining Honour Toward Others When in Conflict

If a counsellor learns that a current client is receiving therapy from another pastor or mental health professional, reasonable steps will be taken to inform the other helper and resolve the situation. Professional relations in this case are to be maintained, as much as is possible, with a priority of Christian love and peace.

Any action to challenge or confront the wrongdoing of other service providers will be done with accuracy, humility, and protecting the dignity and reputation of others. Behaviour that slanders, libels, or gossips about colleagues, or uncritically accepts these things from others about other service providers, will be strictly avoided.

1-620 Maintaining Honourable Professional and Employment Relations

Christian counsellors create and preserve honourable relations in the professional workplace, whether church, counselling agency, or other setting. We maintain the utmost honesty, respect, and integrity in all employment and collegial relations. We shall contract relations that balance the best interests of clients, colleagues, and our organizations, and will honour all contractual obligations, even if it is costly for us to do so. We will avoid all actions and appearances of greed, fraud, manipulation, and self-serving action in all collegial and employment relations, and will disclose and discuss all reasonably foreseen problems to our colleagues before they enter into relations with us.

1-621 Toward Clear Role Boundaries and Work Definitions

All professional/employment relations should be mutually understood and described in sufficient detail by work agreement. Administrators and staff should reasonably understand (1) required work behaviour, expectations, and limits; (2) lines of authority and responsibility; (3) bases for and boundaries of accountability; and (4) procedures for voicing and curing disagreements and substandard work performance. When such guidelines do not exist, Christian counsellors encourage development of sound collegial and employer-employee rules and relations.

1-630 Christian Counsellors as Employers

Employers of Christian counsellors shall provide a personnel program that honours the dignity and promotes the welfare of employees. Information will be given about the mission, goals, programs, policies, and procedures of the employing person or organization. Employers should deliver regular programs of in-service training, supervision of staff, and evaluation and review of employee work performance. Employers do not coerce, manipulate, threaten, or exploit employees or colleagues.

1-631 Employers Avoid Discrimination and Promote Meritoriously

Employers hire, evaluate, and promote staff meritoriously—based on staff training, experience, credentials, competence, responsibility, integrity, and ethical excellence. We do not discriminate in hiring or promotion practices on the basis of age, race, ethnicity, gender, disability, medical status, socioeconomic status, or special relationship with employer or other staff.

1-640 Christian Counsellors as Employees

Counsellors accept employment only when they are qualified for the position—by education, supervised training, credentials, skill, and experience. We will honour and advance the mission, goals, and policies of employing organizations. Employees have duties to both employers and clients and, in the event of conflict between these duties, shall strive to resolve them in ways that harmonize the best interests of both.

1-641 Employees Serve with Integrity and Dedication

Employees serve with dedication, diligence, and honesty, maintaining high professional and ethical standards. We do not abuse our employment positions, nor presume excessive demands or rights against an employer.

1-642 Moving From An Agency to Private Practice

While employed in a counselling agency, and for a reasonable time after employment, we do not take clients from an employing organization to develop a private or group practice of a competing kind. Any part-time practice while employed must be kept strictly separate from the clients and resources of the employing agency. If we develop a full-time private practice with intent to resign employment and take current clients, each client shall be apprised of their right to choose to stay with the employing organization or go with the therapist.

ES1-700 Ethics in Advertising and Public Relations

All advertising and public communications by Christian counsellors shall be done with accuracy and humility, with a primary goal of assisting clients to make informed choices about counselling services.

1-710 Unethical Statements in Public Communications

Christian counsellors make only factual and straightforward public communications and avoid statements that: (1) are false, inaccurate, exaggerated or sensational; (2) are likely to deceive or mislead others because it is partial or taken out of context; (3) are testimonials by current clients; (4) exploit other's fears or distressing emotions; (5) note the inferiority or negative characteristics of another counsellor; and (6) express unique or unusual helping abilities outside the range of accepted Christian counselling practices.

1-720 Communication of Association with the NACC and Other Groups

Public communication of NACC or other professional membership should adhere to all the requirements of this section and should not express or imply that such membership confers special status, expertise, or extraordinary competence in counselling.

1-721 Communication About Professional Status and Credentials

Christian counsellors do not state that professional credentials— licenses, graduate degrees, specialized training, church, professional, or governmental certifications, or any other credentials— confer greater status or power than the credentials actually represent. Advanced credentials shall be communicated with accuracy and humility, adhering to the guidelines of the credential itself.

1-722 Communication of Unaccredited and Unrelated Credentials

Christian counsellors avoid public communication of degrees or credentials received from schools and organizations (1) not holding or maintaining a reputable and widely-known national stature, (2) not accredited by state, regional, or national authorities, or that (3) are not substantially related to counselling, pastoral counselling, or mental health services. Holders of a religious license or credential for church ministry only shall not state or imply that they are counselling professionals, or that they hold a mental health practice license.

1-730 Communication of Work Products and Training Materials

Christian counsellors ensure that advertisements about work products and training events adhere to these ethics. We take care to avoid undue influence and respect informed consumer choice in promoting our work to anyone under our professional influence or authority.

1-740 Ethical Guidelines in Public Statements by Others

Christian counsellors ensure adherence to these ethics by third parties we engage to create and make public statements about our work—employers, publishers, producers, sponsors, marketers, organizational clients, and representatives of the media. We do not pay for or compensate the news media for news items about our work. We are responsible to correct, in timely fashion, any misinformation by third parties regarding our work.

ES1-800 Ethical Relations with the State and Other Social Systems

Christian counsellors, as individual members and as an Association, will strive to maintain ethical relations with the world-wide and the local church, with the state in its various forms, with the mental health professions and associations to which some of us belong, with other professions and organizations, and with society-at-large.

1-810 Ethical Relations to Other Professions and Institutions

Christian counsellors recognize and respect that we are part of larger networks of Christian ministry and of mental health care. To borrow a metaphor, we envision church-based ministry and professional mental health care as the two tracks on which runs the Christian counselling train—tracks with different rather than opposing objectives.

Within the NACC are representatives of many different mental health and ministerial disciplines—we invite and welcome them all in the name of Christ. We will honour and preserve these relations, will challenge value differences with respect, and will build the best relations we can with all these professions and institutions that intersect with us as Christian counsellors.

1-820 Working for a Caring Church, a Just Government, and a Better Society

Christian counsellors are dedicated to build a more caring church, a more just government, and a better society in which to live. We will honour the laws and customs of our culture, and will challenge them when they threaten or abuse our freedoms, dishonour our God, or deny the rights of those most powerless. When critical, we will strive to offer better alternative — model programs to govern our ecclesiastical, socio-cultural, and governmental life.

We will support the cause of Christ and advocate for Christian counselling in the church, in our ministries and professions, and in society. We will work to shape laws and policies that encourage the acceptance and growth of Christian ministry generally and Christian counselling in particular. We will facilitate harmonious relations between church and state and will serve and advocate the best interests of our clients in church, community, and governmental relations.

1-830 Being Salt and Light in a Post-Christian Culture

Christian counsellors acknowledge that we live in a post-Christian and pluralistic culture that no longer shares a common Judeo-Christian value base. We are called by Christ to be "salt and light" throughout our culture, a call of engagement with our culture and the world-at-large. Hence, the NACC will be and our members are encouraged to engage in active and honourable relations with the world around us—relations in which the world can see the light and taste the salt of Christ.

1-831 Christ and Culture: Diversity over Conformity

We accept that there are differing views within our Association on the proper relationship of the Christian life to a modern culture that no longer substantially honours Christ. Our association includes those who are largely apolitical—acknowledging a receding religious-cultural status as Christians but dedicated to building up the church and our profession. There are also those who believe it is necessary to retain a vibrant Christian value base in society and seek to return our culture to these roots, including by political and legal action. We wish to support this diversity and encourage this ongoing debate, respecting the validity of these different views as the healthy evidence of a living church and a vibrant and growing profession.

II. ETHICAL STANDARDS FOR SUPERVISORS, EDUCATORS, RESEARCHERS, AND WRITERS

The Ministry of Christian Counselling Leaders

Some Christian counsellors serve in senior professional roles—as administrators, supervisors, teachers, consultants, researchers, and writers. They are recognized for their counselling expertise, their dedication to Christ and the ministry or profession to which they belong, and for their exemplary ethics. These leaders are responsible for the development and maturation of the Christian counselling profession, for serving as active and ethical role models, and for raising up the next generation of Christian counsellors and leaders.

ES2-100 Base Standards for Supervisors and Educators

2-110 Ethics and Excellence in Supervision and Teaching

Christian counselling supervisors and educators maintain the highest levels of clinical knowledge, professional skill, and ethical excellence in all supervision and teaching. They are knowledgeable about the latest professional and ministerial developments and responsibly transmit this knowledge to students and supervisees.

2-111 Preparation for Teaching and Supervision

Christian counselling supervisors and educators have received adequate training and experience in teaching and supervision methods before they deliver these services. Supervisors and educators are encouraged to maintain and enhance their skills through continued clinical practice, advanced training, and continuing education.

2-120 Supervisors and Educators Do Not Exploit Students and Trainees

Christian counselling supervisors and educators avoid exploitation, appearances of exploitation, and harmful dual relations with students and trainees. Students and trainees are taught by example and by explanation, with the mentor responsible to define and maintain clear, proper, and ethical professional and social boundaries.

2-121 Sexual and Romantic Relations Forbidden with Students and Supervisees

Christian counselling supervisors and educators (1) shall not engage in any form of sexual or romantic relations with their students and trainees, (2) nor subject them, by relations with others, to any form of sexual exploitation, abuse, or harassment, (3) nor pressure them to engage in any questionable social relationships. The standards of sections 1-130ff, "Sexual Misconduct Forbidden," shall apply fully here.

2-122 Dual Relationships Cautioned

Integrity and caution shall be the hallmark of dual relationships between supervisors and supervisees and between teacher and student. Those relations that harm or are likely to harm students and trainees, or that impair or are likely to distort the professional judgment of supervisors and teachers shall be avoided. The standards of sections 1-140ff, "Dual and Multiple Relationships," and those stated below shall apply here.

2-123 Supervisors and Educators Do Not Provide Psychotherapy

Christian counselling supervisors and educators do not engage in psychotherapeutic relations with supervisees or students. Personal issues can be addressed in supervision and teaching only insofar as they adversely impact counsellor supervision and training. Students and supervisees needing or wanting counselling or psychotherapy shall be referred to appropriate resources.

2-124 Acknowledgement of Professional Contributions

Christian counselling supervisors and educators shall fully acknowledge the contributions of students and trainees in any creative professional activity, scholarly work, research, or published material. This shall be done by co-authorship, assistance in speaking or project presentation, or other accepted forms of public acknowledgement.

ES2-200 Ethical Standards for Christian Counselling Supervisors

2-210 Counsellor Supervision Programs

Christian counselling supervisors ensure that supervision programs integrate theory and practice and train counsellors to respect client rights, promote client welfare, and assist clients in the acquisition of mutually agreed goals in the counselling process. Supervision programs in Christian counselling shall adhere to these ethics, to those of other applicable professional groups, and to all applicable state and federal laws.

2-211 Baseline Program Standards

Counselling programs shall only accept supervisees who are capable of professional practice, are fully informed about the program, and are committed to engage in counsellor training following (1) mutual agreement that the supervisee meets base standards of education and experience; (2) disclosure of the training goals, supervisory site policies and procedures, and theoretical orientations to be used; (3) understanding of the standards, procedures, and time of evaluations of supervisee skill, professional-ethical awareness, and clinical effectiveness; and (4) disclosure of the manner and expectations regarding remediation of professional deficiencies and substandard performance.

2-220 Supervisors to Provide a Varied Experience

Christian counselling supervisors will provide a varied counselling experience, exposing the trainee to different client populations, clinical activities, and theoretical approaches to counselling.

Supervisees should gain experience in direct counselling practice, clinical evaluation, treatment planning, record keeping, case management and consultative presentation, legal and ethical decision-making, and the development of professional identity.

2-221 Supervisors Are Responsible for Services to Clients

Christian counsellor supervisors ensure that supervisee work with clients maintains accepted professional and ministerial standards. Supervisors do not allow supervisees to work with clients or in situations where they are not adequately prepared. Supervisors retain full professional-clinical responsibility for all supervisee cases.

2-230 Supervision Evaluation and Feedback

Christian counselling supervisors meet frequently and regularly with supervisees and give timely, informative feedback about counsellor performance and effectiveness. These evaluations shall minimally require supervisor review of case notes and discussion or brief check of each client case. Evaluative feedback is given in both verbal and written forms, covering counselling content, process, and ethical-legal issues of counsellor training.

2-231 Supervisors Are Aware of Licensure and Certification Requirements

Christian counselling supervisors are aware of and honour the legal, ethical, and professional requirements of supervisees who are pursuing licensure and specialized certification standards.

ES2-300 Ethical Standards for Christian Counselling Educators

2-310 Counsellor Education and Training Programs

Counsellor education programs are dedicated to train students as competent practitioners using current theories, techniques, and ethical-legal knowledge. Christian counselling educators ensure that prospective students and trainees are fully informed, able to make responsible decisions about program involvement.

2-311 Baseline Program Standards

Christian counselling educators accept students on the basis of their educational background, professional promise, ethical integrity, and ability to reasonably complete the program. Program information should clearly disclose (1) the subject matter and coursework to be covered; (2) program relationship to national accreditation and credentialing organizations; (3) the kinds and level of counselling skills necessary to learn; (4) personal and professional growth requirements and opportunities; (5) the requirements and kinds of supervised clinical practicum and field placements offered; (6) the kinds and quality of research opportunities, including thesis/dissertation possibilities and requirements; (7) the basis for student evaluation, including appeal and dismissal policies and procedures; and (8) the latest employment prospects and program placement figures.

2-312 Student and Faculty Diversity

Christian counselling educators ensure that their programs seek and attempt to retain students and faculty of a diverse background, including representation by women, minorities, and people with special needs.

2-320 Student and Trainee Evaluation

Christian counselling educators provide students and trainees with periodic and ongoing evaluation of their progress in classroom, practice, and experimental learning settings. Policies and procedures for student evaluation, remedial training requirements, and program dismissal and appeal shall be clearly stated and delivered to student-trainees. Both the method and timing of evaluations are disclosed to students in advance of program involvement.

2-321 Overcoming Student Limitations

Educators help students overcome limitations and deficiencies that might impede performance as Christian counsellors. Student-trainees will be assisted and encouraged to secure remedial help to improve substandard professional development. Honouring student due process, supervisors and educators will retain and fairly exercise their duty to dismiss from programs student-trainees who are unable to overcome substandard performance.

2-322 Student-Trainee Endorsement

Educators and field supervisors endorse the competence of student-trainees for graduation, admission to other degree programs, employment, certification, or licensure only when they have adequate knowledge to judge that the student-trainee is qualified.

2-330 Integration Study and Training

Christian counselling educators ensure that programs include both academic and practice dimensions in counsellor training and integrate biblical-theological study with learning in the bio-psycho-social sciences, however these are emphasized. Students, if not producing research, should learn to be effective research consumers.

2-331 Exposure to Various Counselling Theories Encouraged

Educators develop programs that expose students to various accepted theoretical models for counselling, including data on their relative efficacy, and will give students opportunities to develop their own practice orientations. If a program adheres to or emphasizes one particular theoretical model, that fact should be clearly stated in all public communications without asserting that the model is superior to all others.

2-332 Teaching Law, Ethics, and the Business of Practice

Training programs should teach students about the legal, ethical, and business dimensions of Christian counselling. This includes study of these issues throughout didactic and clinical training. Students should be able to make competent ethical judgments and assess their own practice limitations, learning how to analyze and resolve ethical-legal conflicts and do consultation and referral competently.

2-340 Field Placement, Practicum, and Intern Training

Educators develop clear policies and procedures for all field experience, practicum, and intern training experiences. Roles and responsibilities are clearly delineated for student-trainees, site supervisors, and academic supervisors. Training sites shall meet required training standards, including national accreditation standards if applicable. Field supervisors shall be competent and ethical in their clinical and supervisory work. Educators do not solicit and will not accept any form of fee, service, or remuneration for the field placement of a student-trainee.

2-341 Clients of Student-Trainees

Academic and field supervisors ensure that clients of student-trainees are fully informed of trainee status, and the trainees' duty to honour all professional obligations. Trainees shall secure client permission to use, within the bounds of confidential duties, information from the counselling work to advance their counselling education.

ES2-400 Ethical Standards for Christian Counselling Researchers

2-410 Respecting Standards of Science and Research

Christian counselling researchers honour accepted scientific standards and research protocol in all research activities. Research is ethically planned and competently conducted. Researchers do not undertake nor do they let subordinates conduct research activities they are not adequately trained for or prepared to conduct.

2-420 Protecting Human Research Participants and Human Rights

Researchers maintain the highest care for human participants and respect human rights in all bio-psycho-social-spiritual research activities. Researchers plan, design, conduct, and report research projects according to all applicable state and federal laws, ethical mandates, and institutional regulations regarding human participants.

2-421 Special Precautions to Protect Persons

Researchers take special precautions and observe stringent standards when (1) a research design suggests deviation from accepted protocol, or (2) when there is any risk of pain or injury to participants,

whether of a physical, psychosocial, spiritual, reputational, or financial nature. In all such cases, we will obtain appropriate consultation that apprises participants of these risks and secures informed consent.

2-422 Minimizing Undesirable Consequences

Researchers reasonably anticipate and diligently work to minimize any adverse or undesirable consequences of the research on human participants. This includes a commitment to minimize any possible long-term research effects, including those on the participants' person, family and family life, spiritual beliefs, moral values, reputation, relationships, vocation, finances, or cultural system.

2-430 Informed Consent and Confidentiality in Research

Researchers obtain informed consent from research participants using language that the participant can understand. This consent shall disclose (1) a clear explanation of research purposes and procedures, (2) any risk of harm, injury, or discomfort that the participant might experience, (3) any benefits that the participant might experience, (4) any limitations on confidentiality, (5) a commitment to discuss all concerns of the participant about the research, and (6) instructions on the right and the way to honourably withdraw from the research project. Researchers shall honour all commitments made to research participants. Data and results shall be explained to participants in ways that are understandable and that clarify any confusion or misconceptions.

2-431 Consent from Those Legally Incapable

Researchers obtain consent from parents or a participant's legal representative when the research participants are minors or adults incapable of giving consent. Researchers inform all participants about the research in understandable language, seeking the participant's understanding and assent.

2-432 Concealment and Deception in Research

When a research design requires concealment or deception, the researcher shall apply these methods most narrowly and will inform participants as soon as possible after the procedure. The research value of a deceptive practice must clearly outweigh any reasonably foreseen consequences, especially how such deception may reflect adversely on Christ and the church. Normally, we do not use methods of deception and concealment when alternative research procedures are available to accomplish the project objectives.

2-433 Protecting Confidentiality and Voluntary Participation

Researchers ensure participant confidentiality and privacy, and that subjects are participating voluntarily in the project. Any deviation from these ethics shall (1) be necessary to the project and justifiable upon panel review, (2) shall not harm the participants, and (3) shall be disclosed to the participants, ensuring their consent.

2-440 Reporting Research Results

Researchers report research results fully, accurately, and without alteration or distortion of data. Data and conclusions are reported clearly and simply, with any problems with the research design fully discussed. Researchers do not conduct fraudulent research, distort or misrepresent data, manipulate results, or bias conclusions to conform to preferred agendas or desired outcomes.

2-441 Protecting Participant Identity

Researchers are diligent to protect the identity of research participants in all research reports. Due care will be taken to disguise participant identity in the absence of consent by participants.

2-442 Reporting Challenging or Unfavourable Data

Outcomes that challenge accepted policies, programs, donor/sponsor priorities, and prevailing theory shall be reported and all variables known to have affected the outcomes shall be disclosed. Upon formal request, researchers shall provide sufficient original data to qualified others who wish to replicate the study.

ES2-500 Writing and Publication Ethics in Christian Counselling

2-510 Integrity in Writing and Publication

Christian counsellors maintain honesty and integrity in all writing and publication ventures, giving full credit to whom credit is due. Christian counsellors recognize the work of others on all

projects, avoid plagiarism of other's work, share credit by joint authorship or acknowledgement with others who have directly and substantially contributed to the work published, and honour all copyright and other laws applicable to the work.

2-520 Submission of Manuscripts

Christian counsellors honour all publication deadlines, rules of submission of manuscripts, and rules of format when submitting manuscripts or agreeing to write invited works. Articles published whole or in major part in other works shall be done only with the acknowledgement and the permission of the previous publisher.

2-521 Review of Manuscripts

Christian counsellors and editors who review manuscripts for publication shall consider the work strictly on its merits, avoiding prejudice for or against a particular author. Reviewers will diligently protect the confidential, reputational, and proprietary rights of all persons submitting materials for publication.

2-522 Encouragement to New Authors

Christian counselling editors and publishers will be diligent to call forth, encourage, and help develop new writers and materials from among the growing community of Christian counsellors.

2-530 Avoiding Ghost Writers

Christian counsellors shall resist use of ghost-writers, where the name of a prominent leader-author is attached to work substantially or wholly written by someone else. Instead, in accordance with section 2-510 above, Christian counselling authors will give due authorship credit to anyone who has substantially contributed to the published text. Order of authorship should reflect the level of substantive contribution to a work.

III. STANDARDS & EXEMPTIONS FOR ORDAINED PASTORS AND PASTORAL COUNSELLORS

ES3-100 Definitions and Roles of Pastors and Pastoral Counsellor

3-110 The Pastor and Pastoral Counsellor: Ordained Ministers of the Gospel

Pastors and pastoral counsellors have central roles in the counselling and care ministry of the church. They are normally ordained ministers, recognized by a reputable church denomination as called of God, set apart for special church ministry, and have fulfilled the education and preparatory tasks the church requires for that ministry.

3-111 The Specialized Pastoral Counsellor

Pastoral counsellors and psychotherapists have received advanced training in counselling and psychotherapy and often counsel in a church or a specialized counselling setting. Pastoral counsellors often have advanced degrees in counselling, have undergone counselling practicum training under supervision.

ES3-200 Rules of Ethics Code Application and Exemption

3-210 General Rule of Ethical Code Application and Exemption

Pastors and pastoral counsellors shall honour this Code in its entirety, except for those code sections (1) not applicable due to their clinical professional nature, or (2) because a higher duty to church or ministry rules require a narrow exemption from this Code. Anyone claiming exemption to the Code

has the burden of proving it, and the duty to draw that exemption as narrowly as possible, honouring all other Code requirements.

3-220 The Call of Christian Counselling to Gospel Fidelity

Pastors and pastoral counsellors have a special call as intermediaries between Christian counselling and the church. They can challenge Christian counsellors to hold faith to the Gospel and to apply counselling ministry to the mission and work of the church. They can mediate, explain, and refer parishioners to Christian counsellors. They can also encourage involvement for those who need help, and communicate and explain the guidelines of the Code so that parishioners can better judge the value and safety of the Christian counselling work.

IV. STANDARDS & EXEMPTIONS FOR LAY HELPERS AND OTHER MINISTERS

ES4-100 Definitions and Roles of Lay Helpers and Non-ordained Ministers

Lay helpers or non-ordained ministers have a significant role in the counselling and care ministry of the church. They are not professional clinicians nor ordained ministers, but may work as salaried staff or as volunteers in designated helping roles. These helpers often function in one-to-one helping roles and are increasingly involved in developing and leading the many small support and recovery group ministries of the contemporary church.

ES4-200 Rules of Ethics Code Application and Exemption

4-210 General Rule of Ethical Code Application and Exemption

Lay helpers and non-ordained ministers shall honour the Code in its entirety, except for those code sections (1) not applicable due to their manifestly professional or pastoral nature, or (2) because a higher duty to church or ministry rules require a narrow exemption. Anyone claiming exemption to the Code has the burden of proving it, and the duty to draw that exemption as narrowly as possible, honouring all other Code requirements.

4-220 Lay Helping Under Supervision of the Church

Lay helpers minister only under the supervision of the church or a Christian counselling organization. Lay helpers seek out and secure supervision and spiritual-ethical covering by pastors and professional clinicians. Independent, unsupervised, and solo practice or ministry by lay and unlicensed helpers and non-ordained staff shall be avoided due to its excessive risk for legal, ethical, spiritual, interpersonal, and ecclesiastical trouble.

4-221 Lay Helpers Do Not Accept Fees or Communicate False Roles

Lay helpers shall not seek or accept fees or other remuneration for ministry. Lay helpers do not state or allow helpes to believe that they are professional or pastoral counsellors. Some lay or non-ordained helpers may receive a salary as a church or ministry employee, income that should not be confused with fees for services.

4-222 Aiding and Abetting Unauthorized Practice.

Pastors and professional Christian counsellors do not aid and abet the practice of unlicensed, untrained, unqualified, or unethical counselling or lay helping by anyone. In counselling situations requiring help clearly beyond the scope, training, experience, or license required of the helper, supervising pastors and clinicians will require and assist appropriate consultation and/or referral.

V. STANDARDS FOR RESOLVING ETHICAL-LEGAL CONFLICTS

ES5-100 Base Standards for Ethical Conflict Resolution

5-110 Base Rule for Resolving Ethical-Legal Conflicts

Christian counsellors acknowledge the sometimes conflicting responsibilities to clients, to colleagues and employing organizations, to professional ethics, to the law, and to Christ. If a higher obligation to Christ or to the client's best interest suggests or requires action against legal, ethical, or organizational rules, we will act peaceably and humbly in its outworking, in a way that honours God and our role as Christian counsellors.

5-111 First, Attempt to Harmonize Conflicting Interests

When caught between legal-ethical demands and the way of Christ or the best interests of the client, we will first attempt to harmonize biblical, clinical, legal, ethical, and client interests, if possible. We will secure proper consultation and take action that defines and offers a better and harmonious standard of professional conduct.

5-112 When Conflicts Cannot Be Harmonized

Christian counsellors' fidelity to Christ sometimes calls us to respectfully decline adherence to non-Christian values and behaviour. When such conflicts cannot be harmonized, some counsellors will stand firm or act on Christian principle against the law of the state, the ethics of one's profession, or the rules of one's employing organization. Such action should be (1) defensible biblically and ethically, (2) according to the client's best interest, (3) done without self-seeking purposes, (4) done with sober consideration after consulting with informed colleagues and Christian counselling leaders, and (5) done with a willingness to pay any adverse consequences. Such action must never be done to hide wrongdoing or to justify an obscure or self-promoting position.

The NACC suggests that priority values in the resolution of these conflicts be (a) integrity to Christ and the revelation of Scripture, then (b) the client's best interests, then (c) fulfilling our legal, ethical, and organizational obligations in a way that is least harmful to Christ or our client's interest.

ES5-200 Resolving Conflicts with Employers and Colleagues

5-210 Ethical and Value Differences with Employers and Colleagues

If values and other differences with employers or colleagues become a source of conflict or influence client injustice, Christian counsellors shall take appropriate action to resolve these problems in a way that honours Christ while also serving the client's best interest.

5-211 Christian Counsellors Working in Public Agencies

Christian counsellors working in public agencies will respect fair and circumspect rules against client evangelism or communicating Christian values without client consent. However, we may also challenge unjust prohibitions against the free expression of our beliefs, grounded in our biblical and constitutional right to religious freedom. These legitimate expressions of Christian beliefs include, but are not limited to: (1) serving Christian clients from a Christian value base; (2) sharing Christian values as a legitimate part of counsellor self-disclosure; (3) responding to spiritual needs expressed by clients from a Christian frame of reference; and (4) displaying Christian symbols and literature in our office or place of work.

5-212 Conflict Resolution Process with Employers and Colleagues

Resolution of conflicts with employers or colleagues shall honour this process: (1) first attempt direct negotiations, (2) then mediation, and (3) then arbitration and/or binding arbitration. Litigation (4), when considered at all, shall be only as a last resort and only in cases of gross injustice where the offending party refuses or disdains all reasonable offers of non-litigated dispute resolution.

5-220 Law and Ethics Violations by Colleagues and Employers

Christian counsellors with credible knowledge of legal or ethical violations by colleagues and employers shall take appropriate action to cure this problem, in the best interests of clients, and according to the requirements of applicable law-ethics. Curative action might include (1) confidential

consultations (usually the first step), (2) direct communications with the violator, (3) report to one's own or the violator's supervisor, (4) assisting violated clients to take action, (5) report/complaint to the appropriate state agency or professional association, or (6) any other action appropriate to the matter.

ES5-300 Resolving Professional and Organizational Conflicts

5-310 The Higher Ethics of Jesus Christ

Christian counsellors are bound to honour the ethics and rules of one's profession, church, or employing organization in every way possible. However, when these ethics and rules are in direct opposition to God, and if unable to harmonize the mandates of Scripture with these rules, we declare and support the right of Christian counsellors to elect non-adherence to those ethics and rules that offend the way of Christ.

5-311 First, Act to Resolve Conflict with Church or Profession

Christian counsellors always first seek peaceable and biblically-defensible resolution of disputes. After proper consultation with colleagues and Christian counselling leaders, we will define and advocate for a new ethical standard as an alternative to the offensive rule—one that honours Christ, protects the client's interest, and attempts to fulfil the policy behind the ethical rule.

5-312 When Ethical Harmony Is Not Reached

If ethical harmony is not possible, and after all attempts at resolution have been exhausted, Christian counsellors may elect to violate the offending rule for the sake of Christ or the client. The violative action should be defensible biblically, logically, and clinically and, if possible, in accordance with the ethics intent.

Counsellors shall (1) define the rule that cannot be respected in the narrowest form possible, (2) declare to honour all other ethical mandates, (3) consult with other colleagues and soberly count the cost of such action and (4) be prepared to face any consequences for breach of ethics or rules.

ES5-400 Resolving Conflicts with the State and Its Laws

5-410 The Higher Law of Jesus Christ

Christian counsellors are bound to honour the law in every way possible. However, when the law is in direct opposition to God, and if unable to harmonize the mandates of Scripture and the law, we declare and support the right of Christian counsellors to elect non-adherence to those laws that offend the way of Christ.

5-411 First, Act to Resolve Legal Conflict

Christian counsellors always seek first the peaceable and biblically-defensible resolution of disputes with the state and its laws. After proper consultation, including consulting with an attorney and with Christian counselling colleagues and leaders, we will attempt to define and advocate for a new and harmonious legal standard as an alternative to the law-offending rule at issue. This newly proposed standard will honour Christ, protect the client's best interest, and show how the action of the new rule fulfils the intent or policy behind the law.

5-412 When Legal Harmony Is Not Reached

If harmony is not possible with the state and its laws, and after all attempts to resolve the issue have been exhausted, Christian counsellor may elect action that violates the law for the sake of Christ or the client. The violative action should be defensible biblically, logically, clinically and, if possible, by the law's intent or policy.

Counsellors shall (1) define the law that cannot be respected in the narrowest form possible, (2) declare to honour all other legal mandates, (3) consult with other colleagues, including lawyers, and soberly count the cost of such action, and (4) be prepared to face any consequences that may be imposed for violation of the law.

PROCEDURAL RULES

In order to fulfil its professional and ethical mission the NACC adopts these procedural rules for accurate assessment and the fair hearing and resolution of ethical complaints against its members. These rules purpose to (1) show society, the church, our related professions, and our multitude of clients and parishioners that *the NACC has a serious commitment to live by and enforce these ethics*, and (2) show our members that *we are serious about protecting their ministries and reputations by honouring their right to justice and due process*. In any action under these rules, the NACC shall consider this ethics code, - its constitution and the mandates of Scripture in the resolution of any problems in rule interpretation.

VI. AUTHORITY, JURISDICTION, AND OPERATION OF NACC ETHICS COMMITTEE (EC)

PR6-100 Mission, Authority, and Jurisdiction of EC

6-110 EC Mission

A major objective of NACC EC is to educate, encourage, and help maintain the highest levels of ethical conduct, practice excellence, and ministerial integrity among Christian counsellors. This includes protecting clients and society-at-large from unethical conduct, educating and advocating this code to the NACC and the larger church and society, and to aid the NACC in its mission to promote Christian counselling in Malaysia and bring unity and excellence to the Christian counselling field.

6-120 EC Authority

EC is authorized to formulate and promulgate ethical standards for Christian counselling that are to be honoured by NACC members particularly, and the church and larger society more generally. EC, or any committee it shall designate, shall investigate, hear, and act to justly resolve ethical complaints against NACC members. EC shall also have authority to adopt rules and procedures, as needed, to govern the conduct of EC and any person or matter within its jurisdiction. EC shall also have authority to publish and publicly communicate its official actions, including disciplinary actions toward its members.

6-130 EC Jurisdiction

EC has personal jurisdiction with any member of the NACC. EC also has subject matter jurisdiction regarding the ethical behaviour and rules defined in this Code. EC may, by NACC's direction, address any issue or matter that affects the Association's integrity and ethical achievement of its mission.

6-200 General Orientation to Ethical Enforcement

6-210 Attitude and Action Toward Ethical Complaints

Neither EC nor any member of the NACC shall refuse to hear nor uncritically accept a complaint against another member of the Association. Any EC or Association member hearing a complaint individually shall take whatever action deemed appropriate to address and resolve the matter. When appropriate and feasible, this shall be done by direct consultation with violators or by working through local or regional collegial networks, taking care to honour the confidential and reputational rights of all those concerned in the matter.

6-211 Reporting Violations to EC

If resolution attempts are unsuccessful by a member, or if the matter is more serious, or cannot be resolved by personal intervention, the member may direct the complainant to EC.

6-220 Respecting Fundamental Rights of All Parties Involved

When EC must act against a NACC member, it shall take care to maintain respect for the member's rights and reputation. The entire membership shall support EC in this process, both to honour its ruling and to check and warn it when it might begin to stray from these values and purposes. Whenever possible, EC shall balance and protect the multiple interests of client and community protection, Association integrity, and the legal and ethical rights and professional reputations of both complainants and complainees.

6-230 EC Duties Toward the Complainant

Toward the complainant, EC will honour his or her concerns, invite a full hearing of the complaint if needed, will seek to separate fact from rumour, and will take appropriate action to resolve the matter to the best of its ability to honour Christ and the complainant.

6-240 EC Duties Toward the Complainee

Toward the complainee, EC will honour his or her right to be heard and defend against allegations, will protect the complainee's professional reputation and due process rights, will invite and give reasonable time to fairly respond to a complaint, and will narrow the issue(s) to that which is reasonably beyond dispute. EC will always pursue the most just result, avoiding the extremes of minimized justice or excessive sanction.

PR6-300 Membership Response to EC Action

6-310 Commitment to Cooperate with Ethics Process

NACC members shall assist the Association to honour and help enforce these ethical standards and rules. All members of the NACC shall cooperate fully and in a timely way with EC and the entire ethics mission to assure the best achievement of our core commitment to excellence and unity in Christian counselling.

6-311 Failure to Cooperate with Ethics Process

Failure to cooperate with EC or the ethics process in any manner shall not stop EC from executing its duty. Failure to cooperate is itself a code violation and can result in ethical sanction.

**VII. PROCEDURES FOR THE ADJUDICATION OF COMPLAINTS
AGAINST NACC MEMBERS**

PR7-100 General Rules of EC Operation

7-110 Making and Amending Rules and Procedures

EC may adopt and amend rules and procedures to govern the conduct of any matter within its jurisdiction. Any new or amended rule must be approved by a two-thirds vote of the Committee and also be ratified by a majority of the NACC Board. No new or amended rule shall adversely affect the rights of a member under investigation by EC at the time of the rules adoption.

7-111 Choice of Procedures and Action

Except as otherwise denoted in these ethics and rules, EC reserves the right to choose the appropriate procedures to resolve matters justly and efficiently, balancing the interests of the general public, affected clients, the NACC, and its members.

7-120 EC Meetings and Officers

7-121 Frequency of Meeting and Quorum

EC shall meet at regular intervals, as needed. Conference calls can substitute for face-to-face meetings. A quorum shall consist of the majority of EC members and official actions may be authorized by EC when its members respond in person, by phone, by fax, by letter, or any other agreed means of action.

7-122 Selection of EC members, Officers and Sub-committees

The NACC President, Secretary and Treasurer plus four appointed Board members shall form the EC. Other officers and Sub-committees may be appointed by EC and/or NACC Board action to serve terms and engage issues as are agreed among EC members and the NACC Board.

7-123 Duties of the Chairperson and the Vice-chair

The Chairperson of EC is responsible for the executive leadership of the Committee. He or she shall direct, in person or through appropriate designees, the work and process of EC in all its responsibilities to the NACC. The Vice-chair shall be empowered to perform all the duties of Chair when s/he is not able to perform them, and shall perform other duties as are assigned by the Chair.

7-124 Majority Rule

Unless otherwise directed by these rules (see section 7-110 above), all official actions of EC shall be authorized by a majority vote of its members present, or by any other authorized means of voting (see 7-121).

7-130 Open vs. Confidential EC Process

EC meetings and activities shall be either open to the membership or closed and confidential, with access in closed meetings given only to those designated parties with an interest in the particular matter. Closed meetings shall be done in ethical adjudications where the privacy interests of members or others deserve confidential process. All other EC meetings may be open to any interested member.

7-131 Access to Closed Meetings

EC and the NACC reserve the right to invite the Advisory Council members or other desired personnel, experts, or consultants into confidential meetings, as may be necessary or desired to assist the adjudicatory process.

7-132 Open vs. Confidential Records

Except to inform the membership of final official disposition of a formal case and to assist the information/disclosure needs of the Association and the parties to the matter, all information and records of ethical adjudication against a member shall held in confidence by EC. This may be further accepted in cases where client-parishioner risk or risk to the public welfare is judged by EC to be significant. All other proceedings and records of EC action shall be open to the membership.

PR7-200 Ethical Complaint Procedures

7-210 Reception of a Complaint.

Proceedings against a member are initiated by the reception of a formal complaint, in written form, by EC. Complaints may be received from members or non-members of NACC.

7-211 EC) Action.

EC may initiate proceedings on its own when it has sufficient evidence to do so, or as a response against a member who files a frivolous complaint, or if the complainant has a primary intention to harm another member.

7-220 Procedure for Making a Complaint

Members shall contact EC or NACC to present their complaint. The complaint should be outlined in writing, in no more than one page initially, and note both the alleged violation of the NACC ethics and any direct and other evidence the complainant has to support it.

7-221 Unacceptable Complaints.

EC will not initiate proceedings in situations of anonymous complaints, complaints against non-members, or in counter complaints. In the latter case, EC may consider whether a counter complaint has cause to proceed further only after the initial complaint is fully resolved.

7-222 Multiple Complaints

When numerous complaints against a member are received simultaneously, EC may elect to combine them into one action or deal with them separately. When consecutive complaints are heard, EC may elect to consider the disposition of any previous case against the member in its resolution of a current complaint.

7-230 Warning Against Frivolous and Vindictive Complaints

NACC members shall not make frivolous reports, without substantiation, or that are primarily motivated by anger or vindictiveness, or with intent to harm the alleged violator. The primary motivations in reporting ethical misconduct are to protect clients and parishioners, to maintain the honour of Christ and the church, the honour of our professions, and to assist the cure and restoration of violators to ethical and effective ministry, if possible.

PR7-300 Complaint Assessment and Initial Action by EC

7-310 Inability to Take Further Action

Failure of any one of the following standards shall render EC unable to take further action against an NACC member. If it is dismissed, EC shall so rule, the complainant notified of EC's decision, and the matter closed.

7-311 Lack of Jurisdiction

EC shall first determine whether it has jurisdiction. Personal jurisdiction is met if the complaint is directed toward a member in good standing of the NACC. Subject matter jurisdiction is met when the alleged wrongdoing of a member, acting in a professional-ministerial capacity, intersects the standards of this code.

7-312 Insufficient Information to Act Further

EC shall then determine whether it has sufficient information to take further action. There must be (a) a clear violation of the Association's ethics, policies, or procedural rules, and (b) the information supporting the violation must be of sufficient weight and quality that, in EC's judgment, it cannot be dismissed.

7-313 Failure of Procedure or Time Limits

Finally, EC shall determine that proper procedures and time limits have been honoured in the complaint process, as defined by this code.

7-320 Cause for Further Action.

If, in EC's judgment, the standard of section 7-310 and following are satisfied, then it shall rule that cause for further action exists. It shall then review and decide the steps necessary to seek the most just, restorative, and least costly resolution. It shall gather the most reputable evidence that applies to the matter at hand, rejecting evidence that is speculative, incredible, and unsupportable.

7-321 EC May Seek Informal Resolution of the Matter.

EC may empower the Chair or a committee to address the matter directly with the complainee to seek a just resolution. The intervener may then recommend to EC whether or not to close the matter at this stage and the reasons for its recommendation, and EC may elect whether or not to accept the recommendation of the committee or pursue further action.

7-330 Initial Notification to Complainee.

If informal resolution is not elected or does not work, the violations and evidence supporting it shall be simply and clearly outlined in a query letter signed by the Chair and Vice-chair of EC. This letter and a copy of the applicable ethics and rules shall be delivered to the complainee by mail or in person by EC.

7-331 Requests for Additional Information.

EC may request additional information from the complainant, the complaine, or any appropriate source to assist resolution of the matter.

7-332 Time for and Response from Complaine—Complaint Stage.

Within 30 days of reception of the letter, the complaine may respond in writing to the allegations. The complaine must respond personally and not through a third-party. The EC Chairman may waive or adjust the time requirement if good cause is shown.

7-340 Case Closure for Insufficient Evidence.

If it becomes clear that insufficient or competing evidence raises substantial doubt about the occurrence of ethical violation, then EC will close the case. If this action is taken, EC shall promptly notify both complainant and complaine of its decision and reasoning.

7-341 Reopening a Closed Case

A case closed for insufficient evidence may be reopened upon the receipt of new evidence significant enough (as defined by section 7-310 ff. above) to justify reopening the matter within a reasonable time from the reception of the original complaint.

7-342 Alternative/Supplementary Action May Be Recommended

EC reserves the right, whether a case is closed or stays open, to recommend alternative or supplementary action—referral to any relevant professional association, denomination, state licensure board, administrative agency, or any other appropriate body to hear the complaint.

7-350 Case Resolution by Mutual Agreement.

EC may pursue case closure through a pre-formal agreement with the complaine that is restorative and corrective. By discussion, prayer, reasoning together, and negotiation, EC will seek to resolve the matter in a way that serves the best interests of both the NACC and its members.

7-351 Structure of Agreement

Such agreement will usually clarify misunderstandings, direct corrective action, establish a time-frame for renewal of ethical relations and proper trust, define a fair assessment of these objectives, or any combination of these things. This agreement shall be signed by the EC Chair and the complaine and shall be disclosed to the complainant, the complaine, and anyone else agreed to by the signatories.

7-360 Cause for Formal Case Review

If the matter cannot be closed or resolved as defined above and in the judgment of EC sufficient cause exists to pursue the matter further, EC shall then decide that "cause for formal case review" exists, so shall rule, will notify the applicable parties, and then move prayerfully to the next level of adjudication.

PR7-400 Formal Case Review Procedures

7-410 Selection and Operation of Case Review Sub-committee

EC shall form a three-person sub-committee (sub-com), chaired by the Chair or Vice-chair, to hear and resolve a formal ethics complaint. This sub-com shall be given sufficient authority and the necessary resources to resolve the matter, consistent with these ethics and rules, in a just and timely manner. Sub-com recommendations shall be forwarded to and accepted by EC when 2 votes of the sub-com exist.

7-411 Presentation of a Charge Letter

The complaine shall receive a formal charge letter from EC, detailing the alleged wrongdoing, the specific code sections implicated, and the supporting evidence. The letter shall instruct the complaine as to the manner and time for response to allegations. Any supporting materials that EC will use to assist its review shall be copied and sent with the letter.

7-412 Time for and Response from Complaine—Review Stage

The complaine has 30 days from the letter date to respond to the allegations, either in person or in writing. The complaine must follow all charge letter instructions and rules. Any waiver of time and

action requirements must be made, in person or in writing, within the 30-day time frame. Legal counsel or other help may be consulted and can attend the case hearing for consultation but cannot speak directly for his or her client at the hearing—this representation must be done directly by the complainee.

7-420 Documentation, Review of the Evidence, and Recommendations

Additional documentation may be sent to EC by the complainee within the 30-day period. EC will, within this 30-day period, forward any additional information it receives to the complainee. EC will review the case and render a judgment no later than 120 days from the date of the charge letter. One of four recommendations will be made to EC by the sub-com and the appropriate parties notified of this decision.

7-421 Recommendation to Dismiss Charges

If the sub-com finds (1) no evidence or very weak evidence of violation, or (2) has insufficient evidence to render an informed judgment, or (3) finds a slight violation that has been or is in process of being corrected, it shall recommend that EC dismiss the charge(s).

7-422 Recommendation to Educate and Repair

If the sub-com finds a more weighty violation, or a pattern of violation that is not too serious, and there is evidence of some correction, it may elect to recommend the complainee educate him or herself and repair the violation. Notification of such action will be communicated to the complainee and complainant only.

7-423 Recommendation to Reprimand and Suspend

If the sub-com finds a more serious violation, or a pattern of continuing violations with no repair started, but the likelihood of correction and restored practice is significant, it may recommend that EC reprimand and suspend the member, with instructions for possible reinstatement. Such action, and the violations related to it, will be communicated to NACC members in official publications.

7-424 Recommendation to Terminate Membership

If the sub-com finds a very serious violation, or a pattern of continuing serious violations, especially after being challenged to change, and the likelihood of correction or value of it is slight (compared to the harm done), it may recommend to EC that membership in the NACC be terminated. Such action, and the violations related to it, will be communicated to NACC members in official publications.

7-425 Agreed Resignation of Member

A member of the NACC may elect to resign his or her membership, or EC may elect to offer such resignation to the member prior to termination of membership. Such action, and the violations related to it, will be communicated to NACC members in official publications.

7-430 Final Ruling of the Law and Ethics Committee

Recommendations for case disposition from the sub-com shall be heard and accepted by EC. EC rulings, tracking the recommendations of the sub-com, shall include sufficient information and instruction to satisfactorily achieve the stated objectives of the EC ruling. Except in the case of termination of membership, all rulings by EC at this stage shall be final, with no consequent appeal.

7-431 Limited Discretion to Modify Sub-committee Recommendations

EC shall retain limited discretion to modify the recommendations of the sub-com if there is good reason to find that such change will yield a more just and restorative outcome. This discretion shall be used sparingly, and only in cases where there is a general consensus for such change among EC members.

PR7-500 Formal Appeal Hearing Procedures

7-510 Complainee Election of Formal Appeal—Termination Cases Only

Appeal of rulings by EC shall be allowed only in case of termination of NACC membership.

7-511 Time and Documentation

Both EC and the complainee shall receive and argue from the same materials that formed the original judgment, plus any additional materials that are deemed necessary to support the appellate challenge. No hearing will take place within 30 days of the receipt of all relevant documents by both LEC and the complainee.

7-512 EC Represented by the Chair or Vice-chair

EC shall be represented by the Chair or Vice-chair of EC (the other will sit on the appeals panel). They shall be responsible for arguing the case to the appeals panel to support the EC ruling.

7-520 Standards and Conduct of the Formal Appeal Hearing

There shall one appeals hearing only, on a date and at a place that is most convenient for the appeals panel, whose ruling shall be final as to all matters concerning the case. The appeals panel will review the appeal and render a judgment no later than 30 days from the date of the appeals hearing.

7-521 The Appeals Panel

Appeals shall be heard by a five-person panel, consisting of the EC Chair or Vice-chair (whoever is not representing EC in the appeal) and at least two other EC members (not those hearing the original action). Other panel members, if needed, shall be invited from the Advisory Council.

7-522 The Appeals Standard—Unjust Result

The appellate panel must rule against the termination of membership if the complainee can show substantial evidence that (1) the sub-com panel or a member of it showed a clear intent to harm the complainee, or (2) that findings of fact or application of the ethics code were clearly erroneous, or (3) the application of termination was a clearly excessive and punitive sanction.

7-523 Representation by Self or with Legal Counsel

The complainee shall represent and speak for him or herself in all appellate actions, though they may choose to retain legal or other counsel who may help the complainee before and during the hearing.

7-524 Retention of Legal Counsel by the NACC

EC may elect to retain legal counsel, or any other expert help it deems necessary.

7-530 Final Order of the Appeals Panel

The appeals panel shall rule, by at least 3 votes, either to uphold the prior EC ruling or to reverse it. Upholding the rule will end the matter for the NACC. A reversal will lead to a dismissal of the prior ruling and an order for a new case review hearing with at least 2 new panel members on the sub-committee.

VIII. PROCEDURES FOLLOWING ACTION BY CHURCHES, COURTS, AND OTHER BODIES

PR8-100 EC Authorized to Act Independently or With Others

8-110 Litigation, License Revocation, or Other Disciplinary Action Not a Bar to Action by EC

EC reserves the right to proceed with an ethics action even if the member is engaged in litigation, license revocation, or other disciplinary action for the same or similar issues.

8-111 EC Election to Stay Process Pending Resolution

EC reserves the right to suspend an ethics action until case disposition in another legal or disciplinary forum is completed. Any delay in action by EC shall not waive jurisdiction and any time constraints shall be suspended until the action is begun or resumed.

8-112 Retention and Referral of Jurisdiction to Other Bodies

EC reserves the right to refer a case to another recognized body for action, and to cooperate or work jointly with another tribunal. Any referral to another body shall not constitute waiver of jurisdiction by EC, nor shall EC be barred from acting on its own following referral.

PR8-200 Bases for and Procedure of a Show Cause Hearing

8-210 Five Bases for a Show Cause Hearing

A NACC member may be directed by EC to show cause why official action by EC should not be taken if the member is sanctioned for misbehaviour substantially related to his or her professional or ministerial tasks, in the form of (1) conviction of a criminal offense, (2) a malpractice judgment, (3) a malpractice settlement of RM25,000 or more, (4) a license revocation or suspension action, or (5) any church, denominational, or any other official organizational act of expulsion, suspension, or de-ordination.

8-220 Notice by EC and Response of Member

Upon receipt from EC of a show cause letter, the member will have 30 days from the letter date in which to respond. The member may show cause based on either the unjust result standard (see section 7-522 above), or the lack of due process in the other proceeding.

8-230 Review of Prior Action and Recommendation

The EC Chair or Vice-chair will review the evidence and prior proceeding and determine whether just cause exists to challenge its rule. If so, a recommendation will be made to start a formal case review on the merits according to the procedures of this code. If cause is not shown, a recommendation of termination of membership will be made based of the finding of the prior proceeding.

8-231 Stipulated Resignations

The NACC and the member may stipulate and agree on the resignation of the member. Whether termination or resignation, the result will be published in official NACC publications.

8-240 Final Order of Ethics Committee

Recommendations for case disposition shall be heard and accepted by EC. EC rulings, tracking these recommendations, shall include sufficient information and instruction to satisfactorily achieve the stated objectives of the EC ruling. All rulings by EC in a show cause hearing shall be final, with no consequent appeal.

FINAL ENCOURAGEMENT

May God be exalted, the Holy Spirit invited, and Jesus Christ be seen in all of our counselling and helping endeavours. If done, our clients and parishioners will be blessed and not harmed, their wounds will be healed, their sins forgiven, and they will be given hope for the future. If done, we will participate in a wonderful adventure—one that will likely never grow old or stale—and we will fulfil our call to excellence and ethical integrity in Christian counselling.