

**NATIONAL BOARD FOR CERTIFIED COUNSELORS (NBCC)
CODE OF ETHICS**

PREAMBLE

The National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC) provides national certification that recognizes individuals who have voluntarily met standards for general and specialty areas of counseling practice. Counselors certified by NBCC may also identify with different professional associations and are often licensed by jurisdictions that promulgate standards of behavior. Regardless of any other affiliation, the Code of Ethics is applicable to all NBCC applicants and National Certified Counselors (NCCs).

This Code establishes the minimum ethical behavior and provides an expectation of and a resource for the ethical practice for all who are the professional members of NBCC. Furthermore, it provides an effective tool of discipline and serves as a resource for those served in the case of a perceived violation.

NCCs are required to adhere to all of the directives.

Sanctions of applicants and certified members under this Code are imposed by NBCC only if the provisions of the NBCC Code of Ethics are found to have been violated.

ALL MEMBERS

NCCs take appropriate action to protect their:

1. NCCs, recognizing the potential for harm, shall not cross information that is obtained through the counseling process without specific written consent by the client or legal guardian except to protect abuse, imminent danger to the client or others or when required to do so by a court of law.
2. NCCs shall respect clients' privacy and shall collect only information that pertains to the identified counseling goals.
3. NCCs generally shall not accept gifts or services from clients to secure for counseling services in recognition of the possible negative effects, including personal exploitation. NCCs may accept gifts, services or other compensation appropriately from clients only in cases where no conflicts are present or appropriate and if the arrangement is discussed with the client in advance. In an exchange of a reasonably expected value, does not place the counselor in an undue advantage, is not harmful to the client or their treatment and is documented in the consent to provide services.
4. NCCs shall not accept gifts from clients except in cases where it is culturally appropriate or therapeutically relevant because of the potential violation that may arise. NCCs shall minimize the value of the gift and the effect on the therapeutic relationship when accepting acceptance. This consultation shall be documented in the client's record.
5. NCCs shall not engage in sexual or multiple relationships with clients. In the event that a harmful sexual relationship develops in an unforeseen manner, the NCC shall discuss the potential effects with the client and shall take immediate steps to resolve the situation, including the provision of referrals. This discussion shall be documented in the client's record.
6. NCCs shall discuss important considerations to avoid exploitation before entering into any counseling relationship with a former client. Important considerations to be discussed include amount or type of services, service termination, duration of counseling, nature and circumstances of clients' counseling. The likelihood that the client will meet in future counseling or serve time in the future circumstances of service termination and possible negative effects or outcomes.