

FIVE RULES OF CONDUCT REFERENCE GUIDE



This reference guide provides an overview of the five Rules of Conduct that make up the Code of Ethics. For more information, refer to the *Ethical Practice* guideline at apega.ca.

If you have questions or would like to have a confidential conversation about an ethical dilemma, please contact APEGA at professionalpractice@apega.ca.

RULE 1

Professional engineers and geoscientists shall, in their areas of practice, hold paramount the health, safety, and welfare of the public and have regard for the environment.

SEVEN KEY CONCEPTS OF RULE 1

PROTECTING THE PUBLIC INTEREST



- ▶ You're responsible for protecting the public interest and the interest of public safety by safeguarding life, health, the environment, and the property and economic interests of the public.
- ▶ Some factors include:
 - protection of people
 - the environment
 - sustainability and future generations
 - implications of emerging technology
 - societal values and needs
 - the economic interests of the public

HOLDING PARAMOUNT



- ▶ Holding paramount means that the health, safety, and welfare of the public, and having regard for the environment, take precedence over all other considerations.
- ▶ This means you must:
 - Always put the safety of the public first, even if that means going against your own interests or the interests of your employer or client.
 - Ensure employers and clients are aware of societal and environmental concerns.
 - Raise any concerns with your employer or client to allow them the opportunity to correct the action.

ENSURING SAFE WORKPLACES



- ▶ You are a trusted leader providing direction that protects the overall health, safety, and welfare of the public and workers.
- ▶ You are expected to be aware of the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*, relevant safety regulations, and environmental protection requirements.
- ▶ A safe physical workplace helps individuals feel valued, creates productive work environments, enables continuous improvement, and reduces work-related injuries, illness, or death.
- ▶ A psychologically safe workplace enables people to freely and safely bring forward concerns, and it promotes collaboration, improves problem solving, and inspires innovation.
- ▶ Some key points to keep in mind include:
 - identifying and mitigating potential workplace hazards
 - providing training to all individuals in the workplace
 - keeping workplaces safe during all phases of work

PROVIDING PROFESSIONAL LEADERSHIP



- ▶ Lead by example and set the tone for competent and ethical conduct.
- ▶ You may be the only person who has a legal obligation to protect the public interest.
- ▶ Encourage equity within the engineering and geoscience professions.
- ▶ Ensure interactions are respectful, courteous, and fair.
- ▶ Promote safety and support a culture of belonging.
- ▶ Receive and respond to feedback in a way that encourages discussion and learning.

SEVEN KEY CONCEPTS OF RULE 1 (continued)

HAVING REGARD FOR THE ENVIRONMENT



- ▶ Having regard for the environment may mean going beyond meeting minimum industry standards and regulations, including:
 - having regard for cultural and traditional land uses and impacts
 - making informed decisions related to sustainable development and life-cycle management
 - mitigating negative consequences and recognizing that the most cost-efficient options may not be in the best interest of the environment

EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES



- ▶ You are responsible for maintaining knowledge about, or gaining competence in, the use of emerging technologies.
- ▶ This includes due diligence to ensure you understand the immediate and long-term effects of emerging technologies.

WHISTLEBLOWING

REPORT

- ▶ Once all other internal avenues have been exhausted, you have an ethical obligation to report a colleague, employer, or client who is putting the public interest at risk.

RULE 2

Professional engineers and geoscientists shall undertake only work that they are competent to perform by virtue of their training and experience.

SEVEN KEY CONCEPTS OF RULE 2

COMPETENCE AND KNOWLEDGE



- ▶ For all work you perform, you must have the education, experience, knowledge, skills, proficiency, attitudes, and judgement required to complete the work.
- ▶ Be transparent about your competency and address gaps.
- ▶ When relying on the expertise of others, follow the practice standard *Relying on the Work of Others and Outsourcing*, which is published on APEGA's website.

AUTHENTICATION AND VALIDATION



- ▶ You must work within your competency and always authenticate professional work products.
- ▶ Refer to the practice standard *Authenticating Professional Work Products*.

ENGAGING EXPERTS



- ▶ Engage other experts and specialists when needed.
- ▶ Follow the practice standard *Relying on the Work of Others and Outsourcing*.

SCOPE OF RESPONSIBILITY



- ▶ Be sure your employer or client is aware of your professional capabilities and limitations, and your scope of responsibility is well defined and mutually understood.

CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE



- ▶ Participate in meaningful continuing professional development activities.
- ▶ Meet the requirements of the *Continuing Professional Development* practice standard.

PROVIDING ADVICE



- ▶ Only professionals licensed with APEGA can provide engineering and geoscience advice.
- ▶ Limit advice to your areas of skill, knowledge, training, and experience.
- ▶ Never use your title or designation to lend more credibility to your views.

PRESENTATION OF QUALIFICATIONS



- ▶ Present your qualifications and competencies factually, including correct and appropriate use of reserved titles and designations.

RULE 3

Professional engineers and geoscientists shall conduct themselves with integrity, honesty, fairness, and objectivity in their professional activities.

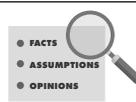
SEVEN KEY CONCEPTS OF RULE 3

PRACTISING THE PROFESSIONS



- ▶ Acting with integrity, honesty, fairness, and objectivity includes:
 - documenting, reporting, and addressing errors or omissions
 - identifying and communicating risks and providing guidance to manage the risks
 - providing timely notice when a project will be late or not be successful
 - communicating in a clear, respectful, and purposeful manner
 - making objective decisions
 - interpreting agreements and contracts to reflect their spirit and intent
- ▶ Your duties to protect the public interest, comply with the Code of Ethics, and uphold human rights take precedence over employer or client interests.

EXPRESSING OPINIONS IN PUBLIC



- ▶ You should clearly distinguish between facts, assumptions, and opinions.
- ▶ Personal interests and opinions shouldn't influence your professional activities.

MAINTAINING CONFIDENTIALITY AND DISCLOSING CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION



- ▶ It's your duty to protect confidential information.
- ▶ All employer and client information should be considered confidential.
- ▶ Protecting confidential information is a legal obligation.
- ▶ Non-proprietary technical knowledge and skills gained through experience may be used in future work without consent.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST



- ▶ Inform your employers and clients of any conflicts of interest.

HAVING RECOMMENDATIONS OVERRULED



- ▶ It's your duty to clearly present the consequences of a recommendation that is overruled, including any adverse impacts to the public interest.
- ▶ Seek to understand others' perspectives and consider new information while helping others understand relevant facts.
- ▶ If a risk to public safety remains, report your concern to the appropriate authority after informing your employer or client of your intentions.

BIAS IN THE PROFESSIONS



- ▶ Biases should not influence your actions and decisions. Uphold the trust, dignity, and honour of the professions by educating yourself on biases.
- ▶ Biases can lead to:
 - systemic errors in thinking
 - errors in judgement
 - inaccurate or unreasonable conclusions or decisions
- ▶ Biases can also influence professional judgement and affect objectivity and fairness.

COMPENSATION FOR PROFESSIONAL SERVICES



- ▶ You should always be monetarily compensated for your services.
- ▶ When volunteering, be sure to understand risks, abide by all legislation, and get permission from your employer, if required.

RULE 4

Professional engineers and geoscientists shall comply with applicable statutes, regulations, and bylaws in their professional practices.

TWO KEY CONCEPTS OF RULE 4

BEING AWARE OF THE LAW



- ▶ Maintain adequate knowledge of laws.
- ▶ You must be a professional with practising status licensed by APEGA to provide professional services in Alberta.
- ▶ Stay informed of relevant legislation, the Code of Ethics, and APEGA's practice standards, bulletins, and guidelines to ensure you understand your responsibilities.

MAKING EMPLOYERS AND CLIENTS AWARE OF THE LAW



- ▶ Ensure your employers and clients comply with the laws governing their work or industry and advise them of any potential legal conflict.

RULE 5

Professional engineers and geoscientists shall uphold and enhance the honour, dignity, and reputation of their professions, and thus the ability of the professions to serve the public interest.

FIVE KEY CONCEPTS OF RULE 5

DISCRIMINATION AND HUMAN RIGHTS



- ▶ You're expected to have regard for the personal dignity and human rights of others and comply with relevant legislation.
- ▶ It's expected that you:
 - Uphold the human rights of others.
 - Do not discriminate on any basis.
 - Treat all others with fairness, dignity, and respect in all capacities.

ADVERTISING AND MARKETING PROFESSIONAL SERVICES



- ▶ Advertisements, marketing materials, and any information you provide must be factual, clear, and dignified.

RECONCILIATION AND THE PROFESSIONS



- ▶ Reconciliation includes understanding and acknowledging the impact of the engineering and geoscience professions on Indigenous Peoples and communities.
- ▶ Educating yourself about reconciliation is a meaningful way to uphold the honour, dignity, and reputation of the professions.

SUPERVISION



- ▶ The work of others must be supervised and controlled by professionals licensed by APEGA.
- ▶ Appropriate leadership includes:
 - assigning duties equitably
 - being active in professional and technical societies and in continuing education
 - providing inclusive and equitable mentorship, constructive input, and feedback
 - encouraging participation in professional development activities
 - sharing knowledge and experience
 - promoting discussions with other professionals

FIVE KEY CONCEPTS OF RULE 5 (continued)

CONDUCT TOWARDS OTHERS, REVIEWING THE WORK OF OTHERS, AND OFF-DUTY CONDUCT



- ▶ Your conduct should be respectful, courteous, fair, and in good faith.
- ▶ This includes:
 - encouraging inclusion and collaboration
 - taking time to understand and consider diverse perspectives
 - giving full credit to others when due, including:
 - citing sources
 - avoiding plagiarism
 - acknowledging others
- ▶ Avoid engaging in personal activities that may compromise your professional or personal reputation or discredit the professions.
- ▶ You should never call into question the professional conduct or competence of other professionals without first consulting the individual.