

# ICCP Code of Ethics

Certified computing professionals, consistent with their obligation to the public at large, should promote the understanding of information processing methods and procedures using every resource at their command.

Certified computing professionals have an obligation to their profession to uphold the high ideals and level of personal knowledge as evidenced by the Certificate held. They should also encourage the dissemination of knowledge pertaining to the development of the computing profession.

Certified computing professionals have an obligation to serve the interests of their employers and clients loyally, diligently and honestly.

Certified computing professionals must not engage in any conduct or commit any act which is a discredit to the reputation or integrity of the information processing profession.

Certified computing professionals must not imply that the Certificates, which they hold, are their sole claim to professional competence.

## *Code of Conduct and Good Practice for certified computing professionals*

The essential elements relating to conduct that identify a professional activity are:

A high standard of skill and knowledge.

A confidential relationship with people served.

Public reliance upon the standards of conduct and established practice.

The observance of an ethical code.

Therefore, these Codes have been formulated to strengthen the professional status of certified computing professionals.

### 1. Preamble

**1.1:** The basic issue, which may arise in connection with any ethical proceedings before a Certification Council, is whether a holder of a Certificate administered by that Council has acted in a manner which violates the Code of Ethics for certified computing professionals.

**1.2:** Therefore, the ICCP has elaborated the existing Code of Conduct, which defines more specifically an individual's professional responsibility. This step was taken in recognition of questions and concerns as to what constitutes professional and ethical conduct in the computing profession.

**1.3:** The ICCP has reserved for and delegated to each Certification Council the right to revoke any Certificate which has been issued under its administration in the event that the recipient violates the Codes of Ethics, as amplified by the Code of Conduct. The revocation proceedings are specified by rules governing the business of the Certification Council and provide protection of the rights of any individual who may be subject to revocation of a certificate held. The ICCP may bypass revocation proceedings and automatically revoke any Certificate for non-compliance with mandatory recertification processes, providing the certificate was awarded subject to mandatory recertification requirements.

**1.4:** Insofar as violation of the Code of Conduct may be difficult to adjudicate, the ICCP has also promulgated a Code of Good Practice, the violation of which does not in itself constitute a reason to revoke a Certificate. However, any evidence concerning a serious and consistent breach of the Code of Good Practice may be considered as additional circumstantial evidence in any ethical proceedings before a Certification Council.

**1.5:** Whereas the Code of Conduct is of a fundamental nature, the Code of Good Practice is expected to be amended from time to time to

accommodate changes in the social environment and to keep up with the development of the information processing profession.

**1.6:** A Certification Council will not consider a complaint where the holder's conduct is already subject to legal proceedings. Any complaint will only be considered when the legal action is completed, or it is established that no legal proceedings will take place.

**1.7:** Recognizing that the language contained in all sections of either the Code of Conduct or Code of Good Practice is subject to interpretations beyond those intended, the ICCP intends to confine all Codes to the matters pertaining to personal actions of individual certified computing professionals in situations for which they can be held directly accountable without reasonable doubt.

**1.8:** Certified computing professionals have a responsibility to respect intellectual property rights, including copyrights, patents and trademarks. Violation of copyrights, patents and terms of license agreements is prohibited by law in most circumstances. Even when not so protected, such violations are contrary to professional behavior. Software should be copied only with proper authorization. Unauthorized duplication of both printed and electronic materials must be discouraged including those cases where the work has not been explicitly protected by any means. Credit should not be taken for the work of others. The work of others should not be used without specific acknowledgment and authorization.

### 2. Code of Conduct

**2.1:** Disclosure: Subject to the confidential relationships between oneself and one's employer or client one is expected not to transmit information which one acquires during the practice of one's profession in any situation which may seriously affect a third party.

**2.2:** Social Responsibility: One is expected to accept a responsibility to the public to diminish, through a continuing educational process, confusion and misconceptions surrounding the information processing industry. One is expected to be cognizant of and act in accordance with all procedures and regulations to improve public safety through the protection of information vital to the security of the nation and its people, both collectively and individually.

**2.3:** Conclusions and Opinions: One is expected to state a conclusion on a subject in one's field only when it can be demonstrated that it has been founded on adequate knowledge. One will state a qualified opinion when expressing a view in an area within one's professional competence but not supported by relevant facts.

**2.4:** Identification: One shall properly qualify oneself when expressing an opinion outside one's professional competence in the event that such an opinion could be identified by a third party as expert testimony, or if by inference the opinion can be expected to be used improperly.

**2.5:** Integrity: One will not knowingly lay claims to competence one does not demonstrably possess. One shall not take advantage of the lack of knowledge or inexperience of others.

**2.6:** Conflict of Interest: One shall act with strict impartiality when purporting to give independent advice. In the event that the advice given is currently or potentially influential to one's personal benefit, full and detailed disclosure to all relevant interested parties will be made at the time the advice is provided. One's employer especially should be made aware of any potential conflicts of interest. One will not denigrate the honesty or competence of a fellow professional or a competitor, with the intent to gain an unfair advantage.

**2.7:** Accountability: The degree of professional accountability for results will be dependent on the position held and type of work performed. For instance: A senior executive is accountable for the quality of work performed by all individuals the person supervises and for ensuring that recipients of information are fully aware of known limitations in the results provided. The personal accountability of consultants and technical experts is especially important because of the

positions of unique trust inherent in their advisory roles. Consequently, they are accountable for seeing to it that known limitations of their work are fully disclosed, documented and explained. Furthermore, information processing professionals have a responsibility to take appropriate action regarding any illegal or unethical practices that come to their attention. Charges should be brought against a person only when a reasonable basis for the allegations has been established, without regard to personal interest.

**2.8: Protection of Privacy:** One shall protect the privacy and confidentiality of all entrusted information. One shall have special regard for the potential effects of computer-based systems on the right of privacy of individuals whether this is within one's own organization, among customers or suppliers, or in relation to the general public. Because of the privileged capability of computing professionals to gain access to computerized files, especially strong strictures will be applied to those who have used their position of trust to obtain information from computerized files for their personal gain. Where it is possible that decisions can be made within a computer-based system could adversely affect the personal security, work or career of an individual, the system design shall specifically provide for decision review by a responsible executive who will thus remain accountable and identifiable for that decision.

### 3. Code of Good Practice

**3.1: Education:** One has a special responsibility to keep oneself fully aware of developments in information processing technology relevant to one's current professional occupation. One will contribute to the interchange of technical and professional information by encouraging and participating in educational activities directed to both fellow professionals and to the public at large. One will do all in one's power to further public understanding of computer systems. One will contribute to the growth of knowledge in the field to the extent that one's expertise, and ability allow.

**3.2: Personal Conduct:** Insofar as one's personal and professional activities interact visibly to the same public, one is expected to support, respect and abide by the appropriate laws and in general to apply the same high standards of behavior in one's personal life as are demanded in one's professional activities.

**3.3: Competence:** One shall at all times exercise technical and professional competence at least to the level one claims. One shall not deliberately withhold information in one's possession unless disclosure of that information could harm or seriously affect another party, or unless one is bound by a proper, clearly defined confidential relationship. One shall not deliberately destroy or diminish the value or effectiveness of a computer-based system through acts of commission or omission.

**3.4: Statements:** One shall not make false or exaggerated statements as to the state of affairs existing or expected regarding any aspect of information technology or the use of computers. In communicating with lay persons, one shall use general language wherever possible and shall not use technical terms or expressions unless there exist no adequate equivalents in the general language.

**3.5: Discretion:** One shall exercise maximum discretion in disclosing, or permitting to be disclosed, or using to one's own advantage, any information relating the affairs of one's present or previous employers or clients.

**3.6: Conflict of interest:** One shall not knowingly hold, assume, or accept a position or a client with which one's interests conflict or are likely to conflict with one's current duties or clients unless that interest has been disclosed in advance to all parties involved.

**3.7: Public Safety:** One has a responsibility to protect fundamental human rights and dignity and to respect cultural diversity. Those who design, develop and maintain computer systems shall be alert to and make others aware of any potential damage to the local and global environment. When developing information systems, computing professionals must ensure that their efforts are used to benefit humanity. Harmful effects to general health and welfare of the public shall be avoided.

**3.8: Violations:** One is expected to report violations of the Code, testify in ethical proceedings where one has expert or firsthand knowledge, and serve on panels to judge complaints of violations of ethical conduct.

### 4. Procedural requirements for revocation of certificate awarded

**4.1:** The ICCP may automatically revoke Certificates for non-compliance with mandatory recertification processes, providing the certificate was awarded subject to mandatory recertification requirements.

**4.2:** A Certification Council, on behalf of the Institute for Certification of Computing Professionals, has the right to revoke any Certificate which has been awarded by it in the event that the recipient violates the Codes, or engages in conduct which is a discredit or disgrace to the computing profession.

**4.3:** The grounds for revocation, except for failure to comply with mandatory recertification requirements, will be based upon the opinion of at least two-thirds of the members of the Council.

**4.4: Procedure for handling revocation:**

1. A formal written statement of charges alleging facts which constitute the grounds for revocation will be prepared.
2. A copy of said charges will be forwarded to the person accused, fixing a time within which such person may file with the Council answers to the charges.
3. If the charges are denied in the answer, the Council will fix a time for the hearing and give notice of the time and place of the hearing to the person accused.
4. Presentation of evidence in support of the charges will be made by the secretary (a nonvoting member) of the Certification Council.
5. Presentation of the evidence in defense of the charges will be made by the accused or the designated representative of the accused.
6. Ample opportunity for both sides to present facts and arguments will be allowed at the hearing.
7. At the conclusion of the hearing, the Council will determine whether or not the charges have been sufficiently established by the evidence and whether the Certificate should be revoked or should not be revoked.
8. The accused will be notified of the decision by registered mail.
9. The accused has the right to request review of the decision by the Executive Committee of ICCP, provided an appeal in writing is submitted to the President of ICCP within 30 days of the accused's receipt of the Council's decision.



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