



Washington Association of Technical Accident Investigators

CODE OF ETHICS

PREAMBLE:

The investigation and reconstruction of motor vehicle collisions is an important and learned occupation. The investigator/reconstructionist recognizes that their work has a vital effect upon justice and compensation to many victims of collisions. Accordingly, the services performed require honesty, impartiality, fairness, and equity and must be dedicated to the true and correct determination of the events culminating in the collision and any resultant damage and/or injury.

I. FUNDAMENTAL CANONS

Members in the fulfillment of their duties shall:

1. Perform services only in the areas of their competence.
2. Issue statements only in an objective and truthful manner
3. Act in a professional manner for each employer or client as faithful agents or trustees
4. Avoid improper solicitation of employment

II. RULES OF PRACTICE

1. Members shall maintain professionalism.
 - a. Members shall at all times recognize that their primary obligation is to protect the safety, health, property and welfare of the public. If their professional judgment is overruled under circumstances where the safety, health, property or welfare of the public are endangered, they shall notify their employer of client and such other authority as may be appropriate.
 - b. Members shall not reveal facts, data, or information obtained in a professional capacity without the prior consent of the client or employer except as authorized or required by law or this Code.
 - c. Members shall not permit the use of their name or firm name nor associate in business ventures with any person or firm which they have reason to believe is engaging in fraudulent or dishonest business or professional practices.
2. Members shall perform services only in the areas of their competence.
 - a. Members shall undertake assignments only when qualified by education or experience in the special technical fields involved.
 - b. Members may accept an assignment outside of their fields of competence to the extent that their services are restricted to those phases of the project in which they are qualified, and to the extent that they are satisfied that all other phases of such project will be performed by otherwise qualified associates, consultants or employees.

- c. Members shall be objective and truthful in professional reports, statements or testimony.
 - d. Members may express publicly a professional opinion on technical subjects only when that opinion is founded upon adequate knowledge of the facts and competence in the subject matter.
 - e. Members shall disclose all known or potential conflicts of interest to their employers or client by promptly informing them of any business association, interest or other circumstances which could influence or appear to influence their judgment or the quality of their services.
 - f. Members shall not accept compensation, financial or otherwise from more than one party for services on the same project, or for services pertaining to the same project, unless the circumstances are fully disclosed to, and agreed to, by all interested parties.
 - g. Members shall not solicit or accept a professional contract from a governmental body on which a principal or officer of their organization serves as a member.
3. Members shall avoid improper solicitation of professional employment.
- a. Members shall not falsify or permit misrepresentation of their, or their associates' academic or professional qualifications. They shall not misrepresent or exaggerate their degree of responsibility in or for the subject matter or prior assignments. Brochures or other presentations incident to the solicitation of employment shall not misrepresent pertinent facts concerning employers, employees, associates, joint ventures, or past accomplishments with the intent and purpose of enhancing their qualifications and their work.

III. PROFESSIONAL OBLIGATIONS

1. Members shall be guided in all their professional relations by the highest standards of integrity.
- a. Members shall admit and accept their own errors when proven wrong and refrain from distorting or altering the facts in an attempt to justify their decisions.
 - b. Members shall advise their clients or employers when they believe a project will not be successful.
 - c. Members shall not accept outside employment to the detriment of their regular work of interest. Before accepting any outside employment, they will notify their employers.
 - d. Members shall avoid any act promoting their own interest at the expense of the dignity and integrity of the profession.
2. Members shall avoid all conduct or practice which is likely to discredit the profession or deceive the public.
- a. Members will not use statements containing a material misrepresentation of fact or omitting a material fact necessary to keep statements from being misleading; statements intended or likely to create an unjustified expectation; statements containing prediction of future success; statements containing an opinion as to the quality of the member's services, or statements intended or likely to attract clients by the use of showmanship, or self-laudation, including the use of slogans, jingles, or sensational language or format.

3. Members shall not disclose confidential information concerning the business affairs of technical processes of any present or former member, client, or employer without their consent.
 - a. Members shall not, without the consent of all interested parties, participate in or represent an adversary interest in connection with a specific project or proceeding in which the member has gained particular specialized knowledge on behalf of a former client or employer.
4. Members shall not be influenced in their professional duties by conflicting interests.
 - a. Members shall not accept commissions or allowances, directly or indirectly from contractors or other parties dealing with clients or employers of the member in connection with work for which the member is responsible.
5. Members shall not compete unfairly with other members by attempting to obtain employment or advancement or professional engagements by taking advantage of a salaried position, by criticizing other members, or by other improper or questionable methods.
 - a. Members shall not request, propose, or accept a professional commission on a contingent basis under circumstances in which their professional judgment may be compromised.
 - b. Members shall not use equipment, supplies, laboratory or office facilities of an employer to carry on outside private practice without consent.
6. Members shall not attempt to injure, maliciously or falsely, directly or indirectly, the professional reputation, prospects, practice or employment of other members, nor indiscriminately criticize other members' work. Members who believe others are guilty of unethical or illegal practice shall present such information to the proper authority for action.
7. Members shall accept personal responsibility for all professional activities.
8. Members shall give credit for work to those to whom credit is due and will recognize the proprietary interests of others.
 - a. Members shall, whenever possible, name the person or persons who may be individually responsible for designs, inventions, writing or other accomplishments.
9. Members shall cooperate in extending the effectiveness of the profession by interchanging information and experience with other members, and will endeavor to provide opportunity for the professional development and advancement of members under their supervision.
 - a. Members shall encourage members' efforts to improve their educations
 - b. Members shall encourage other members to attend and present papers at professional and technical meetings.