

## **NASW CE Guidelines for the Development of Ethics Programs**

Most jurisdictions require that social workers take a certain number of hours of coursework in ethics to meet continuing education requirements for license renewal.

Ethics courses must reflect the social work profession's current code of ethics. Be sure to review the NASW Code of Ethics for more details and information when developing programs for social work ethics.

Program content for social work ethics should address specific core areas:

- History and evolution of values and ethics in social work
- Ethics Theories
- Professional standards of social work practice, such as exhibited in the NASW Code of Ethics
- Professional values and self-awareness about ethical professional behavior
- Ethical decision-making processes and dilemma examples

Potential ethical issues include but are not limited to: use of authority, representation to the public, sexual misconduct, boundary issues, dual and multiple relationships, conflicts of interest, confidentiality, fiduciary responsibilities, research and human subjects protocols, informed consent, service delivery, professional competency, fraud, client rights, professional impairment, mandatory reporting, discrimination, diversity, ethical billing practices, social justice, supervision and consultation.

Instructor qualifications:

While there are elements of ethical practice that apply to many health and mental health care professions, the relationship of these ethical principles to the practice of social work, and the integration of ethics into the core values of the profession, demands that presenters be members of the social work profession, and that they have extensive knowledge in broad ethical principles and theory, values and ethics within social work, and the practical application of these concepts.

It is recommended that presenters should have the following qualifications:

- Degree in social work
- Knowledge of high-risk areas of practice
- Practice competence in course content

Co-presenter: There may be instances when it is desirable to include a co-presenter from another professional discipline. In these situations, it is important that the other professional is licensed, registered, or certified in their field, if applicable. Individual regulatory boards may require specific instructor requirements or qualifications. Providers should check with the individual boards to determine specific requirements.