



2017 Approved Changes to the *NASW Code of Ethics*

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. When does the new *NASW Code of Ethics* go into effect?

The new *NASW Code of Ethics* goes into effect on January 1, 2018.

2. Where can I get a copy of the revised *NASW Code of Ethics*?

Copies of the revised *NASW Code of Ethics* will be available by November 1, 2017. You can pre-order a copy by calling NASW Press at 800.227.3590.

3. Which sections of the *NASW Code of Ethics* were updated?

The sections of the *NASW Code of Ethics* that were revised include:

The Purpose of the Code	1.16 Referral for Services
1.03 Informed Consent	2.01 Respect
1.04 Competence	2.06 Sexual Relationships
1.05 Cultural Competence and Social Diversity	2.07 Sexual Harassment
1.06 Conflicts of Interest	2.10 Unethical Conduct of Colleagues
1.07 Privacy and Confidentiality	3.01 Supervision and Consultation
1.08 Access to Records	3.02 Education and Training
1.09 Sexual Relationships	3.04 Client Records
1.11 Sexual Harassment	5.02 Evaluation and Research
1.15 Interruption of Services	6.04 Social and Political Action

4. What educational resources are available to explain the latest revisions to the *NASW Code of Ethics*?

Several resources will be available, including an online training, an NASW chat, a blog, code revision consults, and a posting of the changes with the explanations on the NASW website.

5. Which social workers are accountable to the *NASW Code of Ethics*?

Most social workers are held accountable to the *NASW Code of Ethics*, including NASW members, many licensed social workers, employed social workers, and students.

6. Do these changes affect social workers who aren't members of NASW?

Yes. The *NASW Code of Ethics* sets forth the values, principles, and standards that guide the profession as a whole. NASW members are formally bound to the *NASW Code of Ethics*, and social work licensees are also accountable as many states incorporate the *Code of Ethics* into their licensing statutes.

7. Who was responsible for revising the *NASW Code of Ethics*?

An *NASW Code of Ethics* Review Task Force was appointed by the NASW President and approved by the NASW Board of Directors.

8. How am I held accountable if I do not implement these changes by the effective date?

If you are a member of NASW, you may be held accountable through the NASW professional review process, if someone files an ethics complaint against you. You may also be held accountable by a state licensing board if a licensing board complaint is filed against you. Furthermore, you may be held accountable by your employer or your university, which may take disciplinary action for failure to adhere to the *NASW Code of Ethics*. Finally, you may be held accountable through a court of law that looks to the *NASW Code of Ethics* to establish the standard for professional ethical social work practice.

9. Have social work schools, employers, agencies, etc., been made aware of the changes?

NASW is working diligently to notify the social work profession and stakeholders using various communication channels, including print, social media, and web-based notices.

10. Who do I contact if I have additional questions?

The resources described in section four above should resolve most questions about the revisions. If you still have questions after these resources are made available, you may contact the Office of Ethics and Professional Review at ethics@socialworkers.org. Please include your telephone number and a return email address. Due to the potential volume of questions, it may take time to reply. We appreciate your understanding.