

The NCAC Canon of Ethics

Revised 5/2021

PREAMBLE

Acoustical consulting is an important and learned profession. The members of the profession recognize that their work has a direct and vital impact on the quality of life for all people. Accordingly, the services provided by acoustical consultants require honesty, impartiality, fairness and equity and must be dedicated to the protection of the public health, safety and welfare in the practice of their profession. Acoustical consultants must perform under a standard of professional behavior which requires adherence to the highest principles of ethical conduct on behalf of the public, clients, employees and the profession.

Fundamental Canons

Acoustical consultants, in the fulfillment of their professional duties, shall:

1. Hold paramount the safety, health and welfare of the public in the performance of their professional duties.
2. Perform services only in areas of their competence.
3. Issue public statements only in an objective and truthful manner.
4. Respectfully act in professional matters for each client as faithful agents or trustees.
5. Acoustical consultants shall not knowingly engage in deceptive acts or behavior that inappropriately influences the actions of others.
6. Interact with fellow acoustical consulting firms in a professional manner.
7. Recognize and fulfill their obligation to nurture and treat equitably fellow professionals within their organizations.

Rules of Practice

1. Acoustical consultants shall hold paramount the safety, health and welfare of the public in the performance of their professional duties.

- a. Acoustical consultants 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 client and such other authority as may be appropriate.
- b. Acoustical consultants shall approve only acoustical consulting work which, to the best of their knowledge and belief, is safe for public health, property and welfare and in conformity with accepted standards.
- c. Acoustical consultants shall not reveal facts, data or information obtained in a professional capacity without the proper consent of the client except as authorized or required by law or these Canons.
- d. Acoustical consultants shall not permit the use of their name or firm 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
- e. Acoustical consultants having knowledge of any alleged violation of these Canons shall cooperate with the proper authorities in furnishing such information or assistance as may be required

2. Acoustical consultants shall perform services only in the areas of their competence.

- a. Acoustical consultants shall undertake assignments only when qualified by education or experience in the specific technical fields involved.
- b. Acoustical consultants shall not affix their signatures to any plans or documents dealing with subject matter in which they lack competence nor to any plan or document not prepared under their direction and control.

- c. Acoustical consultants 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 registered or otherwise qualified associates, consultants or employees, in which case they may then sign the documents for the total project.

3. Acoustical consultants shall issue public statements only in an objective and truthful manner.

- a. Acoustical consultants shall be objective and truthful in professional reports, statements or testimony. They shall include all relevant and pertinent information in such reports, statements or testimony.
- b. Acoustical consultants 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.
- c. Acoustical consultants shall issue no statements, criticisms, or arguments on technical matters which are influenced or paid for by interested parties, unless they have prefaced their comments by explicitly identifying the interested parties on whose behalf they are speaking and by revealing the existence of any interest they may have in the matters.

4. Acoustical consultants shall respectfully act in professional matters for each client as faithful agents or trustees.

- a. Acoustical consultants shall disclose all known or potential conflicts of interest to their clients by promptly informing them of any business association, interest or other circumstances which could influence or appear to influence their judgment of the quality of their services.
- b. Acoustical consultants 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.
- c. Acoustical consultants in public services as members of a governmental body or department shall not participate in decisions with respect to professional services solicited or provided by them or their organizations in private acoustical consulting practices.
- d. Acoustical consultants 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.
- e. Acoustical consultants shall not discriminate based on race, gender, age, religion, national origin, ethnicity, gender identity, or sexual orientation and shall conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the United Nations (UN) Declaration of Human Rights and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

5. Acoustical consultants shall not knowingly engage in deceptive acts or behavior that inappropriately influences the actions of others.

- a. Acoustical consultants shall not falsify or permit misrepresentation of their, or their associates, academic or professional qualifications. Acoustical consultants shall not misrepresent or exaggerate their degree of responsibility and details regarding prior assignments. Acoustical consultants shall not misrepresent the firm's scope of services for projects where some or all of the acoustical consulting services were performed by other firms. Websites and other marketing materials shall not misrepresent pertinent facts concerning employees, associates, joint ventures or past accomplishments with the intent and purpose of enhancing their qualifications and their work.
- b. Acoustical consultants shall give credit for completed work to those to whom credit is due and shall recognize the proprietary interests of others.
- c. Acoustical consultants shall not offer, give, solicit or receive, either directly or indirectly, any political contribution in an amount intended to influence the award of a contract by public authority. They shall not offer any gift or other valuable consideration in order to secure work.
- d. They shall not pay a commission, percentage or brokerage fee in order to secure work except to a bona fide employee or bona fide established commercial or marketing agencies retained by them.

6. Acoustical consultants shall interact with fellow acoustical consulting firms in a professional manner.

- a. An NCAC member firm's company profile or marketing materials, shall not include projects completed by employees while they were employed by another firm unless proper disclosure is provided.
- b. Individual resumes may list projects completed while employed by another firm as long as the information is clearly presented as the individual's experience and not the firm's experience.

7. Acoustical consultants shall recognize and fulfill their obligation to nurture and treat equitably fellow professionals within their organizations.

- a. Acoustical consultants shall cultivate and promote a fair, inclusive, and respectful culture within the workplace and be receptive to grievances without reproach.
- b. Acoustical consultants shall compensate colleagues, employees, and interns fairly.
- c. Acoustical consultants shall support the professional development of colleagues through all stages of their career.