



# Code of Ethics

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# CONTENTS

<b>NAFC CODE OF ETHICS</b>	<b>3</b>
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<b>Preamble</b>	<b>3</b>
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Section A: General	4
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Section B: <b>NAFC</b> Professional Relationship	7
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Section C: Consulting	13
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Section D: Private Practice	14
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# NAFC CODE OF ETHICS

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## PREAMBLE

The **NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR FITNESS CERTIFICATION** (NAFC) is a Professional Certification Organization which certifies NAFC Professionals as having met standards for the general and specialty practice of professional training as established by the Board. The NAFC Professionals certified by NAFC may identify with different professional associations and are often licensed by jurisdictions which promote codes of ethics. The NAFC code of ethics provides a minimal ethical standard for the professional behavior of all NAFC Certificants. This code provides an expectation of and assurance for the ethical practice for all who use the professional services of an NAFC Certificants. In addition, it serves the purpose of having an enforceable standard for all NAFC Certificants and assures those served of some resource in case of a perceived ethical violation. The NAFC Ethical Code applies to all those certified by The NAFC regardless of any other professional affiliation. Persons who receive professional services from Certified NAFC Professionals may elect to use other ethical codes which apply to their training. Although NAFC cooperates with professional associations and credentialing organizations, it can bring actions to discipline or sanction to NAFC Certificants only if the provisions of the NAFC Code are found to have been violated.

The NAFC promotes Training through Certification. In pursuit of this mission, The NAFC:

- Promotes quality assurance in NAFC Professional practice
- Promotes the value of training
- Promotes public awareness of quality training practice
- Promotes professionalism in training
- Promotes leadership in credentialing

## Section A: General

1. Certified NAFC Professionals engage in continuous efforts to improve professional practices, services, and research. Certified NAFC Professionals are guided in their work by evidence of the best professional practices.
2. Certified NAFC Professionals have a responsibility to the clients they serve and to the institutions within which the services are performed. Certified NAFC Professionals also strive to assist the respective agency organization or institution in providing competent and ethical professional services. The acceptance of employment in an institution implies that the Certified NAFC Professional is in agreement with the general policies and principles of the institution. Therefore, the professional activities of the Certified NAFC Professional are in accord with the objectives of the institution. If the Certified NAFC Professional and the employer do not agree and cannot reach agreement on policies that are consistent with appropriate NAFC Professional ethical practice that is conducive to client growth and development, the employment should be terminated. If the situation warrants further action, the Certified NAFC Professional should work through professional organizations to have the unethical practice changed.
3. Ethical behavior among professional associates (i.e., both certified and non-certified NAFC Professional) must be expected at all times. When a Certified NAFC Professional has doubts as to the ethical behavior of professional colleagues, the Certified NAFC Professional must take action to attempt to reconcile this condition. Such action uses the respective institution's channels first and then uses procedures established by the NAFC or the perceived violator's profession.
4. Certified NAFC Professionals must refuse remuneration for consultation or training with persons who are entitled to these services through the Certified NAFC Professional's employing institution or agency. Certified NAFC Professional must not divert to their private practices, without the mutual consent of the institution and the client, legitimate

clients in their primary agencies/clubs or the institutions with which they are affiliated.

5. In establishing fees for NAFC services, Certified NAFC Professionals must consider the financial status of clients. In the event that the established fee status is inappropriate for a client, assistance must be provided in finding comparable services at acceptable cost.
6. Certified NAFC Professionals offer only professional services for which they are trained or have supervised experience. No assessment or treatment should be performed without prior training or supervision. Certified NAFC Professionals are responsible for correcting any misrepresentations of their qualifications by others.
7. Certified NAFC Professionals recognize their limitations and provide services or use techniques for which they are qualified by training and/or supervision. Certified NAFC Professionals recognize the need for and seek continuing education to assure competent services.
8. Certified NAFC Professionals are aware of the intimacy in the NAFC Professional relationship and maintain respect for the client. NAFC Professionals must not engage in activities that seek to meet their personal or professional needs at the expense of the client.
9. Certified NAFC Professionals must insure that they do not engage in personal, social, organizational, financial, or political activities which might lead to a misuse of their influence.
10. Sexual intimacy with clients is unethical. Certified NAFC Professionals will not be sexually, physically, or romantically intimate with clients, and they will not engage in sexual, physical, or romantic intimacy with clients within a minimum of one (1) year after terminating the NAFC Professional relationship.
11. Certified NAFC Professional do not condone or engage in sexual harassment, which is defined as unwelcome comments, gestures, or physical contact of a sexual nature.
12. Through awareness of the impact of stereotyping and unwarranted

discrimination (e.g., biases based on age, disabilities, ethnicity gender, race, religion, or sexual orientation) Certified NAFC Professionals guard the individual rights and personal dignity of the client in the Training relationship.

13. Certified NAFC Professionals are accountable at all times for their behavior. They must be aware that all actions and behaviors of the NAFC Professional reflect on professional integrity and, when inappropriate, can damage the public trust in the Training profession. To protect public confidence in the NAFC Professional Certified NAFC Professionals avoid behavior that is clearly in violation of accepted moral and legal standards.
14. Products or services provided by Certified NAFC Professionals by means of classroom instruction, public lectures, demonstrations, written articles, radio or television programs or other types of media must meet the criteria cited in this code.

## Section B: NAFC Professional Relationship

1. The primary obligation of Certified NAFC Professional is to respect the integrity and promote the welfare of clients, whether they are assisted individually, in family units, or in group Training contexts. In a group setting the Certified NAFC Professional is also responsible for taking reasonable precautions to protect individuals from physical and/or psychological trauma resulting from interaction within the group.
2. Certified NAFC Professionals know and take into account the traditions and practices of other professional disciplines with whom they work and cooperate fully with such. If a person is receiving similar services from another professional, Certified NAFC Professionals do not solicit their services directly to such a person. If a Certified NAFC Professional is contacted by a person who is already receiving similar services from another professional, the Certified NAFC Professional carefully considers that professional relationship as well as the client's welfare and proceeds with caution and sensitivity to the prior and present Training circumstances and issues. When Certified NAFC Professionals learn that their clients are in a professional relationship with another NAFC Professional, they request release from the potential clients to inform the other NAFC Professional of their relationship with the client and strive to establish positive and collaborative professional relationships that are in the best interest of the client. Certified NAFC Professionals discuss these issues openly with clients so as to minimize the risk of confusion and conflict and encourage clients to inform other professionals of the new professional relationship.
3. Certified NAFC Professionals may choose to consult with any other professionally competent person about a client and must notify clients of this right, with proper release. Certified NAFC Professionals avoid placing a consultant in a conflict-of-interest situation that would preclude the consultant serving as a proper party to the efforts of the Certified NAFC Professional to help the client.
4. When a client's condition indicates that there is a clear and imminent danger to the client or others, the Certified NAFC Professional

must take reasonable action to inform their client and take precautionary preventative measures. Consultation with other professionals must be used when possible. Any assumption of responsibility for a client's behavior must be taken only after careful deliberation, and the client must be involved in the resumption of responsibility as quickly as possible.

5. Records of the NAFC Professional relationship, including interview notes, test data; correspondence, audio or visual tape recordings, electronic data storage and other documents are to be considered professional information for use in NAFC Professional Records and should contain accurate factual data. The physical records are property of the Certified NAFC Professional or their employers. The information contained in the record belongs to the client and therefore may not be released to others without the written consent of the client or when the NAFC Professional has exhausted challenges to a court order. Certified NAFC Professionals are responsible to insure that their employees handle confidential information appropriately. Confidentiality must be maintained during the storage and disposition of records. Records should be maintained for a period of at least five (5) years after the last NAFC Professional/client contact, including cases in which the client is deceased. All records must be released to the client upon request.
6. Certified NAFC Professionals must ensure that data maintained in electronic storage are secure. By using the best computer security methods available, the data must be limited to information that is appropriate and necessary for the services being provided and accessible only to appropriate staff members involved in the provision of services. Certified NAFC Professionals must also ensure that the electronically stored data are destroyed when the information is no longer of value in providing services or required as part of clients' records.
7. Any data derived from a client relationship and used in training or research shall be so disguised that the informed client's identity is fully protected. Any data which cannot be so disguised may be used only as expressly authorized by the client's informed and un-coerced written consent.

8. When Training is initiated, and throughout the Training process as necessary, NAFC Professionals inform clients of the purposes, goals, techniques, procedures, limitations, potential risks and benefits of services to be performed, and clearly indicate limitations that may affect the relationship as well as any other pertinent information. NAFC Professional stake reasonable steps to ensure that clients understand the implications of any assessment, the intended use of tests and reports, methods of treatment and safety precautions that must be taken in their use, fees, and billing arrangements.
9. Certified NAFC Professionals who have an administrative, supervisory and for evaluative relationship with individuals seeking NAFC Professional services must not serve as the NAFC Professional and should refer the individuals to other professionals. Exceptions are made only in instances where an individual's situation warrants NAFC Professional intervention and another alternative is unavailable. Dual relationships that might impair the Certified NAFC Professional's objectivity and professional judgment must be avoided and/or the NAFC Professional relationship terminated through referral to a competent professional.
10. When Certified NAFC Professionals determine an inability to be of professional assistance to a potential or existing client, they must, respectively, not initiate the NAFC Professional relationship or immediately terminate the relationship. In either event, the Certified NAFC Professional must suggest appropriate alternatives. Certified NAFC Professionals must be knowledgeable about referral resources so that a satisfactory referral can be initiated. In the event that the client declines a suggested referral, the Certified NAFC Professional is not obligated to continue the relationship.
11. When Certified NAFC Professionals are engaged in intensive, short-term Training they must ensure that professional assistance is available at reasonable fee for service costs to clients during and following the short-term Training.
12. NAFC Professionals using electronic means in which NAFC

Professional and client are not in immediate proximity must present clients with local sources of care before establishing a continued short or long-term relationship. NAFC Professionals who communicate with clients via Internet are governed by NAFC standards for Web NAFC Professional.

13. NAFC Professionals must document permission to practice Training by electronic or otherwise available means in all jurisdictions where such NAFC Professional takes place.
14. When electronic data and systems are used as a component of NAFC Professional services, Certified NAFC Professionals must ensure that the computer application, and any information it contains, is appropriate for the respective needs of clients and is non-discriminatory. Certified NAFC Professionals must ensure that they themselves have acquired a facilitation level of knowledge with any system they use including hands-on application, and understanding of the uses of all aspects of the computer-based system. In selecting and/or maintaining computer based systems that contain Training information, NAFC Professionals must ensure that the system provides current, accurate, and locally relevant information. Certified NAFC Professionals must also ensure that clients are intellectually, emotionally, and physically compatible with computer applications and understand their purpose and operation. Client use of a computer application must be evaluated to correct possible problems that may arise and assess subsequent needs.
15. Certified NAFC Professionals who develop self-help/stand-alone computer software for use by the general public must first ensure that it is designed to function in a stand-alone manner that is appropriate and safe for all clients for which it is intended. A manual is required. The manual must provide the user with intended outcomes, suggestions for using the software, descriptions of appropriately used applications and descriptions of when and how other forms of Training services might be beneficial. Finally, the manual must include the qualifications of the developer, the development process, validation date, and operating procedures.

16. The Training relationship and information resulting from it remains confidential, consistent with the legal and ethical obligations of Certified NAFC Professionals. In group Training circumstances, NAFC Professionals clearly define confidentiality and the parameters for the specific group being entered, explain the importance of confidentiality, and discuss the difficulties related to confidentiality involved in group training work. The fact that confidentiality cannot be guaranteed is clearly communicated to group members. However, NAFC Professionals should give assurance about their professional responsibility to keep all group training communications confidential.
17. Certified NAFC Professional have an obligation to withdraw from the practice of Training if they violate the Code of Ethics, or if the mental or physical condition of the Certified NAFC Professional renders it unlikely that a NAFC Professional cannot maintain a professional relationship with clients.
18. Certified NAFC Professionals who conduct and report research investigations must do so in a manner that minimizes the possibility that the results will be misleading.
19. Certified NAFC Professionals are obligated to make available sufficient original research data to qualified, others who may wish to replicate the study.
20. Certified NAFC Professionals who supply data, aid in the research of another person, report research results, or make original data available, must take due care to disguise the identity of respective subjects in the absence of specific written authorization from the subjects to do otherwise.
21. When conducting and reporting research, Certified NAFC Professional must be familiar with and give recognition to previous work on the topic, must observe all copyright laws, and must follow the principles of giving full credit to those to whom credit is due.
22. Certified NAFC Professionals must give due credit through joint authorship, acknowledgment, footnote statements, or other appropriate

means to those who have contributed to the research and/or publication, in accordance with such contributions.

23. Certified NAFC Professional should communicate to other NAFC Professionals the results of any research judged to be of professional value. Results that reflect unfavorably on institutions, programs, services, or vested interests must not be withheld.
24. Certified NAFC Professionals who agree to cooperate with another individual in research and/or publication incur an obligation to cooperate as promised in terms of punctuality of performance and with full regard to the completeness and accuracy of the information required.
15. Certified NAFC Professional must not submit the same manuscript, or one essentially similar in content, for simultaneous publication consideration by two (2) or more journals. In addition, manuscripts that have been published in whole or substantial part should not be submitted for additional publication without acknowledgment and permission from any previous published.

## Section C: Consulting

1. Consultation refers to a voluntary relationship between a professional NAFC Professional (helper) and a help-needing individual or group in which the consultant is providing help to the client(s) in defining and solving a problem or potential problem with a client or client system.
2. Certified NAFC Professionals, acting as consultants, must have a high degree of self-awareness of their own values, knowledge, skills, limitations, and needs in entering a helping relationship that involves human and/or organizational change. The focus of the consulting relationship must be on the issues to be resolved and not on the person(s) presenting the problem.
3. In the consulting relationship, the Certified NAFC Professional and client must understand and agree upon the problem definition, subsequent goals, and predicted consequences of interventions/training selected.
4. Certified NAFC Professional acting as consultants must be reasonably certain that they, or the organization represented, have the necessary competencies and resources for giving the kind of help that is needed or that may develop later, and that appropriate referral resources are available.
5. Certified NAFC Professionals in a consulting relationship must encourage and cultivate client adaptability and growth toward self-direction. Certified NAFC Professionals must maintain this role consistently and not become a decision maker for clients or create a future dependency on the consultant.

## Section D: Private Practice

1. Advertising services as a private practitioner, Certified NAFC Professionals must advertise in a manner that accurately informs the public of the professional services, expertise, and techniques of Training available, in keeping with the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR FITNESS CERTIFICATION Guidelines.
2. Certified NAFC Professionals who assume an executive leadership role in a private practice organization do not permit their names to be used in professional notices during periods of time when they are not actively engaged in the private practice of Training unless their Executive roles are clearly stated.
3. Certified NAFC Professionals must make available their highest degree (described by discipline), type and level of certification and/or license, address, telephone number, hours of availability, type and/or description of services, and other relevant information. Listed information must not contain false, inaccurate, misleading or partial, out-of context, or otherwise deceptive material or statements.
4. Certified NAFC Professionals who are involved in a partnership/corporation with other Certified NAFC Professionals and/or other professionals must clearly specify all relevant specialties of each member of the partnership or corporation.

**Appendix: Certification Examination:** Applicants for the NAFC Certification Examinations must have fulfilled all current eligibility requirements and are responsible for the accuracy and validity of all information and/or materials provided by themselves or by others for fulfillment of eligibility criteria.