

**CODE OF ETHICS
FOR THE WASHINGTON STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL MEMBERS
AND STAFF**

POLICY STATEMENT

PREAMBLE

The Washington State Rehabilitation Council (WSRC) members and staff are responsible for creating, maintaining, and advancing a council culture conducive to achieving our mission. We recognize that our individual conduct and manners impact the council dynamic, and that our collective progress is linked with the way we behave in relationship with one another and with partners and stakeholders.

Therefore, each council member and staff person should adhere to agreed on, ethical standards of the highest degree to promote the moral, social, and political development of the council and its members in relationship to the people of Washington State that we serve.

To achieve these goals, WSRC members and staff support active dialogue and principled conduct among us and with partners and key stakeholders.

While no code of ethics alone can guarantee ethical behavior, the values and principles set forth in this code are intended to guide WSRC members and staff in carrying out the mission established by the Rehabilitation Act. The WSRC will encourage members and staff in learning the skills and refining the abilities to foster a council culture that makes these ethics integral to our practice.

ETHICAL VALUES TO BE USED IN MAKING DECISIONS

To promote individual development and the common good, members will strive to promote basic values of how people agree to conduct themselves when dealing with the public, key partners, and stakeholders. These values represent a shared ideal which will permeate the institution and become for council members and staff a primary responsibility to uphold and honor.

Honesty. Council members and staff are truthful and honorable in their actions and words.

Integrity. Council members and staff are principled, honorable and upright.

Promise-keeping. Council members and staff keep promises, fulfill commitments, and abide by the spirit as well as the letter of an agreement.

Fairness. Council members and staff manifest a commitment to justice, the equal treatment of individuals, and the acceptance of diversity. They are open-minded and willing to admit error, and, when possible, willing to change their positions or beliefs.

Caring. Council members and staff are concerned for the well-being of others which manifests itself in compassion, kindness and serving; it requires one to attempt to help those in need and to avoid harming others.

Respect. Council members and staff demonstrate respect for human dignity, privacy, confidentiality and the right to self-determination of all persons.

Engaged Service. Council members and staff are responsible for recognizing their ethical obligation. This involves lawfulness, participation, social consciousness, and public service. Council members and staff have the additional responsibility of encouraging participation of others and a special obligation to respect and honor democratic processes avoiding unnecessary secrecy or concealment of information, thus assuring the public has all the information needed to exercise full participation.

Informed Decision Making. Council members and staff will demonstrate a commitment to one another and their common work by being willing and well prepared to pursue the mission of the WSRC.

Accountability. Council members and staff accept responsibility for decisions, for the foreseeable consequences of actions and inactions; and for setting an example for others.

Public Integrity. Council members and staff, serving the people of Washington State and using public funds, have special obligations to lead by example, to safeguard and advance the integrity and reputation of our council culture and process, to avoid even the appearance of impropriety, and to support other partners and stakeholders in upholding standards of ethical conduct.

Advancing Social & Economic Justice. The WSRC was established by the Rehabilitation Act to address the persistent barriers to employment created by discrimination against people with disabilities. Accordingly the council members and staff recognize a particular obligation to advance social and economic justice through our council work by prioritizing accessible process and practice, and by evaluating our own biases. The WSRC recognizes that disability is an experience that can impact people of any race, class, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, or religion.

To succeed in the mission set forth in the Rehabilitation Act, we must build trust and credibility with people with disabilities from every community across the state. For example, to maximize resources and services, the Council supports American Indians with disabilities being given the option of applying for Tribal Vocational Rehabilitation services, state Vocational Rehabilitation services, or both. The council will prioritize community specific, culturally competent strategies for engagement to welcome all people.

