

## **DEBOYCO-CODE OF ETHICS:**

**DEBOYCO** expects its staffs to maintain high standards of professional conduct in their capacity and identity as an interpreter. Staffs are required to abide by the Code of Ethics and follow the Guidelines for Professional Conduct as a condition of staffs in the organization.

This document articulates ethical principles, values, and standards of conduct to guide all staffs of **DEBOYCO** in their pursuit of professional practice. It is intended to provide direction to interpreters for ethical and professional decision-making in their day-to-day work. The Code of Ethics and Guidelines for Professional Conduct is the mechanism by which the public is protected in the delivery of service.

## **VALUES UNDERLYING THE CODE OF ETHICS & GUIDELINES FOR PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT.**

### **DEBOYCO VALUES:**

#### **1. Professional accountability:**

Accepting responsibility for professional decisions and actions.

#### **2. Professional competence:**

Committing to provide quality professional service throughout one's practice.

#### **3. Non-discrimination:**

Approaching professional service with respect and cultural sensitivity.

#### **4. Integrity in professional relationships:**

Dealing honestly and fairly with consumers and colleagues.

#### **5. Integrity in business practices:**

##### **Dealing honestly and ethically in all business practices.**

Staffs are to understand that each of these core values and accompanying sections are to be considered when making ethical and professional decisions in their capacity and identity as an interpreter. These values are of equal weight and importance.

## **Code of Ethics and Guidelines for Professional Conduct**

**1.0 PROFESSIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY:** Interpreters accept responsibility for all professional decisions made and actions taken.

## **1.1 Confidentiality**

1.1.1 Staffs will respect the privacy of consumers and hold in confidence all information obtained in the course of professional service. Staffs may be released from this obligation only with their consumers' authorization or when ordered by law.

1.1.2 Where necessary, a member may exchange pertinent information with a colleague in order to provide consistent quality of service. This will be done in a manner that protects the information and the consumers.

1.1.3 Staffs needs to be aware that other professional codes of conduct may impact upon their work. In such circumstances, staffs will make appropriate professional decisions and conduct themselves in a manner befitting the setting and the profession.

## **1.2 Professional Conduct**

1.2.1 Staffs will hold the needs of consumers' primary when making professional decisions.

1.2.2 Staffs shall recognize that all work undertaken by them on an individual basis, whether pro bono or paid, will ultimately reflect the integrity of themselves and of the profession.

1.2.3 Staffs shall conduct themselves in a professional manner at all times. They shall not badger or coerce individuals or agencies to use their professional services.

1.2.4 Staffs shall take into account the limitations of their abilities, knowledge and the resources available to them prior to accepting work. They will remove themselves from a given setting when they realize an inability to provide professional service.

1.2.5 Staffs must be aware of personal circumstances or conflict of interest that might interfere with their effectiveness. They will refrain from conduct that can lead to substandard performance and/or harm to anyone including themselves and consumers.

1.2.6 Staffs are accountable to **DEBOYCO** and to their local chapter affiliate for their professional and ethical conduct. Further, staffs are responsible to discuss and resolve, in a professional manner, issues arising from breaches of ethical or professional conduct on the part of individual colleagues after they are observed. In the case where these breaches are potentially harmful to others or chronic, and attempts to resolve the issue have not been successful, such conduct should be reported to **DEBOYCO** and/or their local chapter affiliate in a manner directed by the appropriate grievance procedure.

## **1.3 Scope of Practice**

1.3.1 Staffs will refrain from using their professional role to perform other functions that lie beyond

the scope of an interpreting assignment and the parameters of their professional duties. They will not counsel, advice, or interject personal opinions.

1.3.2 When functioning as part of a professional team (e.g., dealing on important export transaction, purchase and sale of bank instruments, legal, medical supply and mental health settings) it is understood that staffs will limit their expertise to interpretation. In such settings, it may be appropriate for staffs to comment on the overall effectiveness of communication, the interpreting process and to suggest appropriate resources and referrals. This should be done only within the context of the professional team.

1.3.3 Staffs will refrain from manipulating work situations for personal benefit or gain. When working as independent contractors, staffs may promote their professional services within the scope of their practice. When working under the auspices of an agency or other employer, it is not ethical for the staffs to promote their professional services independent of the agency or employer.

#### **1.4 Integrity of Service**

Staffs will demonstrate sound professional judgment and accept responsibility for their decisions. Staffs will make every attempt to avoid situations that constitute a real or perceived conflict of interest. Staffs will ensure there is full disclosure to all parties should their ancillary interest be seen as a real or perceived conflict of interest.

**2.0 PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE:** Interpreters provide the highest possible quality of service through all aspects of their professional practice.

#### **2.1 Qualifications to Practice**

Staffs will possess the knowledge and skills to support accurate and appropriate interpretation. It is recognized that staffs work in a range of settings and with a variety of consumers. This demands that staffs be adept at meeting the linguistic needs of consumers, the cultural dynamics of each situation, and the spirit and content of the discourse.

#### **2.2 Faithfulness of Interpretation**

Every interpretation shall be faithful to and render exactly the message of the source text. A faithful interpretation should not be confused with a literal interpretation. The fidelity of an interpretation includes an adaptation to make the form, the tone, and the deeper meaning of the source text felt in the target language and culture.

#### **2.3 Accountability for Professional Competence**

2.3.1 Staffs will accept full responsibility for the quality of their own work and will refrain from making inaccurate statements regarding their competence, education, experience or certification.

2.3.2 Staffs are responsible for properly preparing themselves for the work contracted.

2.3.3 Staffs will accept contracts for work only after determining they have the appropriate qualifications and can remain neutral throughout the assignment.

#### **2.4 Ongoing Professional Development**

2.4.1 Staffs will incorporate current theoretical and applied knowledge, enhance that knowledge through continuing education throughout their professional careers and will strive for **DEBOYCO** Certification.

2.4.2 Staffs will aim to be self-directed learners, pursuing educational opportunities which are relevant to their professional practice. This could include but is not limited to peer review, collegial consultation, mentoring and regular feedback regarding specific areas of skill development.

**3.0 NON-DISCRIMINATION:** Interpreters approach professional services with respect and cultural sensitivity towards all participants.

#### **3.1 Non-discrimination**

Staffs will respect the individuality, the right to self-determination, and the autonomy of the people with whom they work. They will not discriminate based on ethnicity, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, religion, personal beliefs and practices, social status or any other factor.

#### **3.2 Communication Preferences**

Staffs will respect and use the form of communication preferred by those deaf and hard of hearing consumers for whom they provide service or work with.

### **4.0 INTEGRITY IN PROFESSIONAL RELATIONSHIPS:**

Interpreters deal honestly and fairly with consumers and colleagues while establishing and maintaining professional boundaries.

#### **4.1 Professional Relationships**

Staffs shall understand the difference between professional and social interactions. They will establish and maintain appropriate boundaries between themselves and consumers. Staffs will assume responsibility to ensure relationships with all parties involved are reasonable, fair and professional.

## **4.2 Impartiality**

4.2.1 Staffs shall remain neutral, impartial, and objective. They will refrain from altering a message for political, religious, moral, or philosophical reasons, or any other biased or subjective consideration.

4.2.2 Should a member not be able to put aside personal biases or reactions which threaten impartiality, the member will examine options available to them. This may include not accepting the work or withdrawing their services from the assignment or contract.

## **4.3 Respects for Colleagues**

4.3.1 Staffs will act toward colleagues in a spirit of mutual cooperation, treating and portraying them to others with respect, courtesy, fairness and good faith, etc.

4.3.2 Staffs have a professional obligation to assist and encourage new interpreting practitioners in the profession.

4.3.3 Staffs shall not abuse the good faith of other staffs or be guilty of a breach of trust or the use of unfair tactics.

## **4.4 Support for Professional Associations**

Staffs shall support **DEBOYCO**, its affiliates, and other organizations representing the profession and the Deaf community.

**5.0 INTEGRITY IN BUSINESS RELATIONSHIPS:** Interpreters establish and maintain professional boundaries with consumers and colleagues in a manner that is honest and fair.

## **5.1 Business Practices**

5.1.1 Staffs will refrain from any unfair competition with their colleagues, including but not limited to: (a) engaging in comparative advertising (b) willfully undercutting; or (c) artificially inflating fees during times when market demand exceeds supply.

5.1.2 Staffs will conduct themselves in all phases of the interpreting situation in a manner befitting the profession, including negotiating work and contracts, obtaining suitable preparation material, and choice of attire and professional demeanor.

5.1.3 Staffs will honor professional commitments made when accepting work, and will follow through on their obligations. Staffs may not unilaterally terminate work or a contract unless they have fair and reasonable grounds to do so.

5.14 Staffs shall take reasonable care of material and/or property given to them by a consumer and may not lend such or use it for purposes other than those for which it was entrusted to them.

## **5.2 Accurate Representation of Credentials**

5.2.1 Staffs shall not by any means engage in, nor allow the use of, statements that are false, misleading, incomplete, or likely to mislead consumers or staffs of the public.

5.2.2 Staffs will refrain from making inaccurate statements regarding their competence, education, experience or certification. Only staffs certified by **DEBOYCO** may use the term "certified" in printed, electronic, signed or oral transmission. This may include, but is not limited to, interpreter directories, business cards and forms, promotional materials, resumes or publications they have authored.

## **5.3 Reimbursement for Services**

5.3.1 Staffs will bill only for services provided. Staffs will negotiate fees, including cancellation policies, preferably in writing or contract form before service is provided. Staffs will be sensitive to professional and community norms when establishing fees for services.

5.3.2 Staffs may also provide bartered or pro bono service in situations where the profession of interpreting and the livelihood of other practitioners will not be threatened.