

Texas Association of the Deaf

Member Code of Ethics and Conduct

1. Reason for TAD Code of Ethics and Conduct

The Texas Association of the Deaf (“Association”) Board of Directors has adopted this Code of Ethics and Conduct in order to:

- 1.1 promote honest and ethical conduct, including the ethical handling of actual or apparent conflicts of interest;
- 1.2 promote personal investment and participation on the part of Association members;
- 1.3 cultivate confidence in the leadership of the Association;
- 1.4 promote the protection of the Association’s mission and assets;
- 1.5 promote compliance with any applicable governmental laws, rules and regulations;
- 1.6 promote fair dealing practices;
- 1.7 deter wrongdoing; and
- 1.8 ensure accountability for adherence to the Code.

2. Code Requirements

- 2.1 All members of the Association, including the Board of Directors, are required to be familiar with the Code,
- 2.2 Comply with its provisions and,
- 2.3 Report any violations as described in Section 10, Reporting and Enforcement.

3. Honest and Ethical Conduct

- 3.1 The Association's policy is to promote high standards of integrity by conducting its affairs honestly and ethically.
- 3.2 All officers, regional representatives, committee chairs, and members must act with integrity and observe the highest ethical standards of business conduct in his or her dealings with the Association’s partners, suppliers, service providers, competitors and anyone else with whom he or she has contact in the course of performing his or her duty.

4. Disclosure

- 4.1 The Association’s periodic reports and other documents filed with the IRS and other governmental entities, including all financial statements and other financial information, must comply with applicable federal and state laws and rules.
- 4.2 Each officer, regional representative, or member who contributes in any way to the preparation or verification of the Association’s financial statements and other financial information must ensure that the Association’s books, records and accounts are accurately maintained. Each officer, regional representative, or member must cooperate fully with the Association’s accounting and internal audit departments, as well as the

Association's independent public accountants and counsel.

5. Protection and Proper Use of Association Assets

- 5.1 All officers, regional representatives, or members should protect the Association's assets and ensure their efficient use. Theft, carelessness and waste have a direct impact on the Association's profitability and are prohibited.
- 5.2 All Association assets should be used only for legitimate business purposes, though pre-approved incidental personal use may be permitted. Any suspected incident of fraud or theft should be reported for investigation immediately.
- 5.3 The obligation to protect TAD assets includes the Association's proprietary information. Proprietary information includes intellectual property such as trade secrets, patents, trademarks, and copyrights, as well as business and marketing plans, workshop and program ideas, designs, databases, records and any nonpublic financial data or reports, and the official publication of the Association, *The Deaf Texan*. Unauthorized use or distribution of this information is prohibited and could also be illegal and result in civil or criminal penalties.

6. Fair Dealing

Each officer, regional representative, or member must deal fairly with the Association's customers, suppliers, partners, service providers, competitors, employees and anyone else with whom he or she has contact in the course of performing his or her job. No officer, regional representative, committee chair or member may take unfair advantage of anyone through manipulation, concealment, abuse or privileged information, misrepresentation of facts or any other unfair dealing practice.

7. Reporting and Enforcement

7.1 Reporting and Investigation of Violations

All actions prohibited by this Code involving TAD officers, regional representatives, or committee chairs must be reported to the Grievance Committee.

- a. All actions prohibited by this Code involving anyone other than an officer, regional representative, committee chair, or member must be reported to a Board member, who shall bring the complaint to the attention of the Grievance Committee.
- b. After receiving a report of an alleged prohibited action, the Grievance Committee must promptly take all appropriate actions necessary to investigate.
- c. All officers, regional representatives, or members are expected to cooperate in any internal investigation of misconduct.

7.2 Enforcement

- a. The Association must ensure prompt and consistent action against violations of this Code.

- b. If, after investigating a report of an alleged prohibited action by an officer or regional representative, the Grievance Committee determines that a violation of this Code has occurred, the Grievance Committee will report such determination to the Board of Directors.
- c. If, after investigating a report of an alleged prohibited action by any other person, the Grievance Committee determines that a violation of this Code has occurred, the Committee will report such determination to the Board of Directors.
- d. Upon receipt of a determination from the Grievance Committee that there has been a violation of this Code, the Board of Directors, after consultation with the (Association's attorney/ General Counsel) will take such preventative or disciplinary action as it deems appropriate, including, but not limited to, reassignment, demotion, dismissal, labeled as PNG-*persona non grata*, and, in the event of criminal conduct or other serious violations of the law, notification of appropriate governmental authorities.

7.3 Waivers

The Association Board of Directors in the case of a violation by an officer, regional representative, or member, and the Association's legal counsel (in the case of a violation by any other person) may, in its discretion, waive any violation of this Code.

Membership Obligations and Member Conduct

1. Dues

- 1.1 Members will pay their dues on time as required by the Board.
- 1.2 Membership dues will be set at the Board's discretion during the biennial general meeting of the association held in the odd-numbered years.

2. Attendance

- 2.1 Members will make a good-faith effort to attend all Association events and meetings.
- 2.2 The Board has discretion to set concrete attendance requirements to retain membership eligibility.

3. Conduct at Meetings

- 3.1 These rules apply to all meetings of the Association, either in-person or virtually/online.
- 3.2 Members will show courtesy to other members and to the Board throughout all meetings.
- 3.3 Members will await recognition of their turn to speak and refrain from causing disruptions that distract from or otherwise impede the purpose of the meeting.
- 3.4 Members shall refer to the Association's Code of Conduct for In-Person and Virtual Meetings for specific conduct procedures and requirements.

Membership Grievance Procedure and Removal Policy

1. Member Removal

- 1.1 The Board of Directors may vote to remove a member if the member is found to be ineligible for membership by any of the terms of the Association's Bylaws or Board Policies, or if the member violates the terms of any of the Association's Bylaws or Board Policies.
- 1.2 A majority vote of the Board of Directors is necessary to remove a member.
2. Grievance Procedure
 - 2.1 Members with complaints or grievances regarding a member's non-compliance with this or other Association Bylaws or Board Policies shall privately submit their complaint in writing (typed or signed video) to the Grievance Committee.
 - 2.2 The Grievance Committee shall conduct an investigation and make a recommendation to the Board of Directors.
 - 2.3 Any member or individual accused of non-compliance or violation of Association Bylaws or Board Policies shall have the right to present their case to the Grievance Committee for a hearing. The member or individual shall provide supporting documentation in writing (typed or signed video) in advance of the hearing for consideration by the Grievance Committee.
 - 2.4 After review of supporting documentation and a meeting of the Grievance Committee with the individual accused of non-compliance or violation of Association Bylaws or Board Policies, the Grievance Committee shall determine its decision based on the information provided and the severity of the alleged offense(s). The Grievance Committee will then forward its recommended decision, along with related documentation to the Board of Directors for the final decision.
 - 2.5 After careful deliberation, the decision of the Board of Directors may include, but are not limited to:
 - a. revocation of TAD Membership for a certain amount of time,
 - b. total revocation of TAD membership for life,
 - c. repayment of any monies owed for damages or costs incurred by the member or individual during the course of the alleged violation,
 - d. disbarment from participation in any activities of the Association, and
 - e. legal action.The Board of Directors may also call the individual or member for further questioning if this is determined necessary in making the final decision.
 - 2.6 All parties involved with the grievance will endeavor to maintain the privacy and anonymity of the individual/s submitting the grievance and the individual(s) with whom the grievance concerns, including the Board of Directors. Any records of the investigation will remain private and may be made public only for good cause and at the decision of the Board of Directors.