



# CODE OF ETHICS

Setting The Standards for Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals

Vocational Rehabilitation Association of Canada

## **GLOSSARY OF TERMS**

### **ADVOCACY**

The ability to speak or act on one's own behalf.

### **ASSENT**

To express agreement.

### **AUTONOMY**

To honor the right to make individual decisions.

### **ATTITUDINAL BARRIERS**

A state of mind, and/or demonstration of a behaviour that expresses an opinion or purpose that creates an obstacle.

### **BENEFICENCE**

To do good to others.

### **CLIENT**

An individual with, or directly affected by, a disability, functional limitation (s), or medical condition and who receives services from a rehabilitation counselor. At times, rehabilitation counseling may be provided to an individual other than one with a disability.

### **CONSULTEE**

The person who may score an assessment on behalf of a publisher or assessment vendor.

### **CRITICAL ANALYSIS**

The ability to critically reflect and examine the issue by separating it into its elements.

### **DEPENDANT PERSONS**

An individual whose maintenance is another person's responsibility.

### **FIDELITY**

To be loyal, honest and keep promises.

### **FUNDERS**

Persons, businesses and/or organizations that provide and/or obtain fund(s) in various ways.

### **INFORMED CONSENT**

Where an individual fully understands the proposed nature of the services, including any risks involved and consents to their participating.

### **JUSTICE**

To be fair and to give equally to others.

### **LEGAL GUARDIAN**

A person appointed by the court to make decisions on behalf of an individual who is considered by the court as not competent.

### **MORAL PRINCIPLES**

Concepts/values/beliefs that are fundamental to determine right and wrong behaviours.

### **NEED TO KNOW**

Information that is needed in order to provide competent services.

**NONMALEFICENCE**

To do no harm to others.

**OVER-INTERPRETATION**

Making interpretations that are beyond what the data supports.

**PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES AND/OR DISADVANTAGES**

Experiencing difficulties in life functions, activities of daily living as a result of poverty, abuse, limited education, lack of social skills, un/underemployment and/or disabilities.

**REHABILITATION PLANS**

A comprehensive plan of action that identifies specific goals and objectives that can be achieved through various means including education, training, exercise etc.

## INTRODUCTION

Codes of professional ethics identify those moral principles and standards of behaviour that professions, institutions, and organizations believe will assist them in distinguishing between right and wrong, and ultimately in making good moral judgments. Codes address professional relationships and do not prescribe personal morality. Codes of ethics define the appropriate relationships between professionals and others with whom they interact in a professional capacity. Professional relationships include many persons, e.g., direct consumers of services, family members, third parties, students, employees, supervisors, colleagues and program managers. Codes of ethics help to define the profession and assist professionals in serving the public good. Continuous discussion by professionals on the application of ethical principles may result in more respect and caring in the provision of services. The Vocational Rehabilitation Association of Canada has developed the Canadian Code of Ethics for Rehabilitation Professionals to guide the ethical practice of its members.

The purposes of a code of ethics are to:

- (a) Guide members of the profession on morally appropriate behaviour in conducting their professional activities.
- (b) Guide members of the profession on appropriate relationships for the protection of the public and consumer.
- (c) Identify the values and characteristics of the profession.
- (d) Provide tools, aids and supports for members in ethical decision-making.
- (e) Guide the teaching and learning of professional ethics.
- (f) Serve as a framework for processing ethical complaints.

### Scope of Practice:

Our members are committed to providing client-centered, outcome-based vocational/prevocational rehabilitation interventions and services to persons with a disability.

All persons with disabilities should have the right and opportunity to participate fully and with dignity in society. This includes being able to maintain quality of life as it leads towards independence, integration and full inclusion in the community.

Our members serve clients with a wide range of disabilities across the life span. These disabilities are the results of impairments due to “any loss or abnormality of psychological, physiological, or anatomical structure or function.” (W.H.O. definition)

Our members advocate for the recognition of the rights, and the accessibility to appropriate services for persons with disabilities. Our members work with persons with disabilities to enhance their power and control over their own lives.

The primary services provided within the rehabilitation process include Assessment; Vocational Career and Adjustment Counseling; Vocational Evaluation; Transferable Skills Analysis; Work Adjustment; Job Placement/ Development; Job Analysis and Evaluation; Case Management/ Rehabilitation Services Co-ordination; and Disability Management. There is a commitment to client-centered models of service delivery.

Ethical relationships are maintained between the vocational rehabilitation professional and clients; family members, other professionals and direct service providers; third parties, community agencies, employers, colleagues and students

Ethical relationships are maintained between professionals and direct service clients, family members, third parties, community agencies, employers, colleagues, and students. They are also maintained with third parties who contract for assessments; rehabilitation plans, and who provide work placement and job development services.

The fundamental spirit of respect and caring is the philosophical basis of the Canadian Code of Ethics for Rehabilitation Professionals. The ethical principles are described as:

**(a) Respect for the dignity, rights and autonomy of persons.**

This principle, with its emphasis on moral rights, should be given the highest weight except in circumstances in which there is a clear and imminent danger to the physical safety of any person.

**(b) Responsible caring for the best interests of persons.**

This principle generally should be given the second highest weight. Responsible caring requires competence and the obligation to do no harm and should be carried out only in ways that respect the dignity of persons.

**(c) Integrity in professional relationships.**

This principle generally should be given third highest weight if the principles are in conflict. However, in rare circumstances, values such as openness and straightforwardness may be subordinated to the principles of Respect and Responsible Caring.

**(d) Responsibility to society.**

This principle should be given the lowest weight when it conflicts with one or more of the other ethical principles. When a person's welfare appears to be in conflict with the benefits to society, it may be possible for the professional to serve both, but, if this is not possible, the respect and well being of the individual must take priority over that of society.

### **Ethical Dilemmas:**

Ethical dilemmas arise when it is not clear what the right action is for a professional to take in a given situation. Sometimes the dilemmas are based on not having sufficient information, or there is conflict between two or more principles or between the interests of different parties. The existence of an ethical dilemma may be signaled by one's feelings of discomfort about a situation, or there is a question of whose interests are being served. Identifying the reason for the discomfort may be the first step in engaging in a process of ethical decision making.

The range of ethical dilemmas is wider than between individual professionals and clients. For example, ethical dilemmas may arise in the relationships between professionals and third parties of various kinds, e.g., referrers, parents, teachers, doctors, lawyers, other agencies, and other professional disciplines. They also may arise between professionals and employers, funders, policy makers, administrators, and those who may contract for assessments. There may also be concerns about the relationships with program evaluators, accreditation surveyors, and researchers. Professionals may also be uncertain about the ethics of caring for oneself and colleagues in order to guard against burnout or impairment. In many dilemmas there is not one right or wrong answer, but rather the issue is how to manage the ongoing relationships in respectful and caring ways.

### **Ethical Decision-Making Steps:**

Ethical decision making steps assist in the process of choosing the action that is most consistent with the ethical principles.

The following problem solving steps are typical in models for ethical decision-making:

1. Identify the individuals and groups potentially affected by the decision.
2. Identify the ethically troubling issues, including the interests of persons who will be affected by the decisions, and the circumstances in which the dilemmas arose.
3. Consider how your personal biases, stresses, or self-interest may influence the development of choices of action.

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#### Ethical Decision-Making Steps (cont'd):

4. Develop alternative courses of action remembering that you do not have to do this alone. (Where feasible, include interdisciplinary team members, clients, and others who may be affected by the decisions to share in the process. If the situation is difficult, consult with your professional association or other trusted professionals to maintain your objectivity and increase your options for action).
5. Analyze the likely risks and benefits of each course of action for the persons likely to be affected.
6. Choose a course of action, individually or collectively as deemed appropriate to the situation, after conscientious application of existing principles, values and standards.
7. Act, with an individual or collective commitment, to assume responsibility for the consequences of the action. (A collective commitment, as may occur within an interdisciplinary team, requires that someone be assigned the responsibility for follow-up).
8. Establish a plan to evaluate the results of the course of action, including responsibility for corrections of negative consequences, if any.
9. Evaluate the organizational systems in which the issue arose in order to identify and remedy the circumstances, which may facilitate and reward unethical practices.

#### Relationship of VRA Canada Ethics to other Professional Codes:

The members of the Vocational Rehabilitation Association of Canada include representation from multiple professions with various approaches to the provision of rehabilitation services for persons with a disability and/or disadvantage. Therefore, while all of them must adhere to the VRA Canada Code of Ethics, some must also adhere to the codes of other professional associations or regulatory bodies. While the ethical principles of the different professional codes may be very similar, there may be differences in how they are interpreted. In a given situation these differences may be resolved through consultation or an ethical decision-making process that evaluates the proposed behaviours against the common values of the professions. Those persons, who work in the rehabilitation field without formal membership in a professional association, and their supervisors, also may refer to this code for guidance in maintaining ethical practices.

#### Periodic Review:

VRA Canada, as a national voluntary association, provides leadership in establishing standards for the practice of rehabilitation professionals. VRA Canada has the authority to suspend membership and registration for inappropriate behaviour, but does not have the legislative authority to enforce compliance to a code of ethics. Provincial governments may grant such authority to professional disciplines through legislation. This code of ethics contains both aspirational and prescriptive statements.

Professional codes of ethics must be reviewed periodically in order for them to remain current; it is recommended within 3-5 years. The ethical principles provide a framework that remains durable over time, although changes occur in philosophical thinking, legislation and technological advances. Attitudes and access to services for persons with a disability and/or disadvantage are continuing to change. VRA Canada welcomes the suggestions from members, persons with a disability and/or disadvantage, and other interested parties on additions or revisions that would improve the usefulness of the Code of Ethics.

## ETHICAL STANDARDS

### 1. PROFESSIONAL - CLIENT RELATIONSHIP

#### Value Statement

Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals respect the dignity, autonomy, self-determination, and rights of all persons with whom they interact in a professional capacity. They recognize the innate worth of human beings is neither enhanced or reduced by their ethnicity, religion, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, physical or mental disabilities, age, socio-economic status, or any other preference or personal characteristic, condition, or status. Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals have a responsibility to demonstrate respect in proactive ways. The primary ethical obligation of Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals is to their clients, or those persons who are directly in receipt of their services. Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals will endeavour at all times to promote each client's welfare and to place the client's interest above their own and avoid imposing values inconsistent with vocational rehabilitation.

**1.1 Informed Consent.** Prior to entering into a professional relationship with a client, the Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals will inform clients verbally, in writing and in a manner which accommodates any limitations the client may have, the rights and responsibilities of both the client and Vocational Rehabilitation Consultant. Disclosure will minimally include the following:

- The Vocational Rehabilitation Professional's credentials, training, and relevant experience
- Purposes, goals, techniques, procedures, modalities, orientation
- Limitations, potential risks and benefits of service
- Frequency and length of services
- Expectations of client involvement
- Confidentiality and privilege
- Limits of confidentiality, including statutory exceptions, supervisors or other team members who may be involved, and risks of electronic communications
- Information and case files retrieval, preservation and disposal
- Affiliation relationships
- Intended use of tests, assessments and reports
- Fees and billing arrangements
- Cancellation policy
- Process for disputes or complaints
- Contingencies for continuation of vocational rehabilitation services
- Recognize that a client has the freedom to choose to enter, continue and/or terminate the potential relationship
- Informed consent must be obtained when a Vocational Rehabilitation Consultant changes from the original role to another or different role

Vocational Rehabilitation professionals need to recognize that any or all of these issues may need to be reiterated or expanded upon throughout the client-professional relationship.

**1.2 Collaborative Relationship.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals will work jointly with their clients in developing and revising integrated, individual rehabilitation plans that are realistic and mutually agreed upon goals, consistent with the client's abilities and circumstances of the clients. They will consider vocational outcomes that are consistent with the overall abilities, vocational limitations, physical and psychological restrictions or limitations, general temperament, interest, aptitudes, social skills, education, general qualifications, transferable skills, and cultural, and other relevant characteristics and needs of client, employer and public and offers a reasonable promise of success of mutually agreed upon goals.



- 1.3 Client Choice.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals will recognize the client's right to make choices and will provide clients with options to make informed choices. When working with minors or other persons who are unable to give voluntary, informed consent, the Vocational Rehabilitation Professional will protect the client's best interest. Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals must provide adequate information in order to make an informed decision regarding services.
- 1.4 Involvement of Family or Significant Others.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals will recognize the family, significant others, social, workplace or educational networks as potential resources and will attempt to enlist family or significant others' understanding and involvement in the rehabilitation process if and when appropriate. The client or legal guardian's permission will be secured prior to any involvement of family or significant others.
- 1.5 Client Welfare.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professional will not exploit the trust and dependency manifested in clients or their families, and will avoid any economic, physical, psychological or sexual abuse or impropriety when dealing with clients and their families.
- 1.6 Respecting Diversity.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals will demonstrate respect, acceptance and a willingness to understand different beliefs that affect their professional activities. Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals will develop and adapt interventions and services to incorporate consideration of client's preferences and will not discriminate on the basis of age, colour, culture, disability, nationality, ethnic group, gender, race, language preference, religion, spirituality, sexual orientation, marital status, and/or socio-economic status.
- 1.7 Language.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals will use language that conveys respect and addresses issues of difference in ways that are open and professional.
- 1.8 Professional/Personal Relationships.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals will make every effort possible to avoid developing dual relationships with clients which could affect professional judgement and/or increase the potential of exploitation. Examples may include, but are not limited to, professional relationships with employees, students, close friends, relatives, or research subjects.
- 1.9 Third Party Relationships.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals who provide services at the request of a third party will clarify the nature of their contributions, and responsibilities to all involved. They will ensure that all parties are aware of the nature, scope, and duration of the services to be provided, the goals and expected outcomes, and to whom and how such outcomes will be communicated. When serving as case consultants or expert witnesses, Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals are obligated to provide unbiased, objective opinion.
- 1.10 Multiple Clients.** When Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals provide services to two or more persons, such as husband and wife, parent and children, the Vocational Rehabilitation Professional will clarify at the outset, which person or persons are clients and the nature of the relationship they will have with each involved person. If it becomes apparent the Vocational Rehabilitation Professional may be called upon to perform potentially conflicting roles, they will clarify, adjust, or withdraw from such roles with care.
- 1.11 Group Work.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals will screen prospective group participants to the extent possible whose needs and goals are compatible with the goals of the group, who will not impede the group process, and whose well being will not be jeopardized by the group experience. Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals will take reasonable precautions to protect clients from physical and/or psychological trauma while participating in the group. Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals will clearly communicate the limitations of confidentiality to the group participants.



- 1.12 Protection of Client Interest.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals will support and protect clients in conflicts between clients' interests and the welfare of the community, the client's family or the organization with which the Vocational Rehabilitation Professional is associated, unless there is immediate danger to other individuals or the client's behaviour is perceived to be not in their best interests, illegal, or harmful to the others.
- 1.13 Respect for Privacy.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals will respect their client's privacy and will solicit information when it is beneficial and /or necessary to the provision of services.
- 1.14 Sexual Relationships.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals will not engage in sexual or romantic relationships with current clients. Sexual or romantic relationships with former clients are prohibited for five years following the last professional contact of any kind.
- 1.15 Prohibition of sexual relationship with former clients.** Before engaging in sexual or romantic relationships with former clients after the five-year-period, the Vocational Rehabilitation Professional will consult with a knowledgeable professional and discuss the potential of the relationship to be harmful, coercive or exploitative in any manner. If a client has a history of physical, emotional, or sexual abuse or if the client has ever been diagnosed with any form of psychosis or personality disorder, developmental disability, marked cognitive impairment, or if the client is likely to remain in need of therapy due to the intensity or chronicity of a problem, Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals do not engage in sexual activities or sexual contact with a former client, regardless of the length of time elapsed since termination of the client relationship.
- 1.16 Communication of Information.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals shall communicate in a manner that is both developmentally, psychologically, and culturally appropriate. When clients have difficulty understanding the language used by the professional, the Vocational Rehabilitation Professional will provide the necessary services to ensure comprehension by the client. This may include interpreters, translators, and/or use of assistive technology.
- 1.16.1 File Documentation.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals will establish and maintain documentation that accurately, sufficiently, and timely reflects the services provided, and that identifies who provided the service. If case notes need to be altered it is done in a manner that preserves the original note and is accompanied by the date of change, information that identifies the person who made the change, and the reason for the change. Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals will maintain appropriate client file documentation. Subject to the reason for referral, documentation will include:
- Reason for referral
  - Professional disclosure/informed consent
  - Signed consents to release information
  - Initial vocational assessment
  - Correspondence
  - Regulatory orders, if available
  - Written evaluation
  - Vocational assessment/testing results
  - Written agreement such as training-on-the job
  - Medical/psychological reports
  - Other interventions
  - Written closure report
- Materials used in the formation of an opinion or plan shall form part of the file documentation.*
- 1.17 Universal Design.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals support the principle of universal design. The use of multiple techniques and tools which are accessible and appropriate for individual's varied backgrounds, learning styles, and abilities, aid in the reduction and/or elimination of barriers to full engagement, learning and self-discovery in vocational rehabilitation process.

- 1.18 Technology.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals will ensure that technology or any of its applications do not present a barrier to participation in rehabilitation services. Where a barrier exists, the Vocational Rehabilitation Professional will design or recommend alternatives.
- 1.19 Termination of Services.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals will not abandon clients or terminate services unless:
- it has been ascertained that the client is not benefiting from services,
  - vocational rehabilitation services are no longer required,
  - vocational services no longer service the client needs or interests,
  - the client is referred to an appropriate resource, or
  - the vocational rehabilitation consultant is in jeopardy of harm by the client or another person whom the client has a relationship.
- 1.20 Transfer of Services.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals are expected to be knowledgeable about referral resources and suggest appropriate resources. They are expected to ensure that appropriate administrative processes are completed in a timely manner and open communication is maintained with both the client and service providers. Vocational Rehabilitation Consultants prepare and disseminate, to an identified colleague or records custodian, a plan for transfer of the client and files in case of death, incapacitation or termination of practice.

## 2. CONFIDENTIALITY

### Value Statement

Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals establish and uphold appropriate boundaries, respect privacy and maintain confidentiality. Considering the developmental, cognitive, psychological and or cultural context of the client, Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals clearly and competently communicate the parameters of confidentiality prior to engaging in any rehabilitation services or activities and reiterate the information throughout the rehabilitation process.

- 2.1 Confidentiality.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals shall respect the confidentiality of client information and take reasonable precautions to protect confidential information obtained through the course of their work. Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals will inform and discuss with clients, at the onset of services, and provide in writing, the confidential nature of the relationship and of any limits or potential limitations such as but not limited to:
- **Information Shared with Others.** Discussion with team members, supervisors, employers, and /or consultation with other professionals for the purposes of providing effective services. This includes information collected on behalf of government, insurance companies and/or other agencies to which the vocational rehabilitation consultant has a contractual obligation.
  - **Legal Requirement and Disclosure.** Legal regulations such as reporting risk of neglect of children, response to subpoena or court order, investigation or complaint by legal body, and disclosure of contagious and fatal diseases.
  - **Client or Public Safety.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals take necessary precautions to protect their clients, their own and/or others health and safety from the inappropriate actions of others and are obliged to follow the requirements of the appropriate Occupational Health and Safety legislation.
  - **Third party Services.** Conditions of services contracted and paid for by third parties
- 2.2 Cultural Sensitivity.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals will maintain knowledge, personal awareness, sensitivity and skills regarding cultural meanings of confidentiality and privacy.
- 2.2.1 Safeguarding Records.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals will take measures necessary to protect and safeguard the dissemination, maintenance, storage and disposal of client information and records in ways that protect confidentiality.

- 2.3 Physical Environment.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals will ensure that interview rooms, reception areas, and conference areas are secure as to protect confidentiality. Informed consent applies when meeting with clients in other settings.
- 2.4 Limitations of Electronic Communications.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals who offer services, products or information via electronic transmission will inform clients of the risks to privacy and limits of confidentiality. Vocational Rehabilitation Professional will notify clients of their intent to utilize electronic communication such as e-mail as a medium to manage client information, seek to assess that clients have understood the implications of this communication method and obtain consent from the client to use this type of communication method.
- 2.5 Written Release of Information.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals will not consult with or release confidential information to other professionals, employers or rehabilitation team members without the written permission of client, the client's legal guardian or referral source unless a court of law compels disclosure.
- 2.6 Minimal Disclosure.** In disclosing information, Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals will only provide germane information necessary to enable the recipient of the information to assist that client and will make every effort to avoid undue invasions of privacy.
- 2.7 Cooperating Agencies.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals will instruct recipients of client information about confidentiality standards to be observed and ensure that other agencies with which information is shared have policies to protect confidentiality.
- 2.8 Confidential Information for Didactic or Other Purposes.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals will ensure that client information used in research, position papers, education, or other public media adequately protect the confidentiality of clients.
- 2.9 Recorded Interactions.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals will obtain written permission from the client, legal guardian, and/or legal representative prior to any video/audio taping and/or photographing of their interview session or any interaction they may have with the client.
- 2.10 Group Work.** The Vocational Rehabilitation Professional will clearly define confidentiality and the parameters for the specific group being entered, explain its importance and discuss the difficulties related confidentiality. The fact that confidentiality cannot be guaranteed will be clearly communicated to group members.
- 2.11 Family Work.** The Vocational Rehabilitation Professional will protect the privacy rights of each family member. Unless otherwise directed by law, information about one family member will not be disclosed to another member without permission.
- 2.12 Alternative Communications.** When using alternative means of communication, e.g interpretative services, confidentiality is maintained.
- 2.13 Client Access to files.** Vocational Rehabilitation consultants recognize that vocational records are kept for the benefit of the client, and therefore provide access to records and copies of records when requested by the client, unless prohibited by law. In instances where records contain information that may be sensitive, confusing, or detrimental to the client, vocational rehabilitation professionals have a responsibility to adequately interpret such information to the client. In situations of multiple clients, access to records is limited to those parts of records that do not include confidential information related to another client. When vocational rehabilitation professionals are in possession of records from other sources, they refer the client back to the original source.

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### 3. PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY

#### Value Statement

Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals value competence in all their professional activities, and are committed to open, honest, and accurate communication and practice in a non-discriminatory manner within the boundaries of professional and personal competence. They cooperate in inter-professional relationships. Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals have a responsibility to abide by their professional Code of Ethics, which governs the standards of conduct.

- 3.1 Knowledge of Standards.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals have a responsibility to read, understand and follow the Vocational Rehabilitation Association of Canada (VRA Canada) Code of Ethics and adhere to applicable laws and regulations.
- 3.2 Boundaries of Competence.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals will practice only within the boundaries of their competence, based on their education, training, supervised experience, credentials, and appropriate professional experience. Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals will not misrepresent their role or competence to clients.
- 3.3 Referral.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals will refer clients to other professionals or agencies as the needs of the clients dictate and ensure that the referral is to an appropriate resource.
- 3.4 New Speciality Areas of Practice.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals may expand their practices in areas new to them only after appropriate education, training, and experience. While developing skills in new areas, the Vocational Rehabilitation Professional will take steps to ensure the competence of their work and to protect clients from harm.
- 3.5 Resources.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals will ensure that the resources used or accessed in their work are credible and valid (e.g., web link, references used in bibliographies, etc.).
- 3.6 Qualified for Service Delivery.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals may accept employment and/or contracts for service delivery only for positions for which they are qualified by education, training, credentials, and experience. Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals will hire and/or contract only individuals who are qualified and competent for vocational rehabilitation positions.
- 3.7 Accurate Representation.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals claim or imply only professional qualifications actually completed and correct any known misrepresentations of their qualifications by others. Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals truthfully represent the qualifications of their professional colleagues and clearly distinguish between paid and volunteer work experience and accurately describe their continuing education and specialized training.
- 3.8 Monitor Effectiveness.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals will take steps to evaluate their efficacy as Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals, by developing collegial supports, peer supervision and/or mentorship.
- 3.9 Ethical Issues Consultation.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals will take steps to consult with other rehabilitation professionals or related professionals when they have questions regarding their ethical obligations or professional practices.
- 3.10 Maintaining Competence.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals will engage in continuing education to maintain competence in the skills they use, will remain current with generally accepted and applicable standards of practice within the profession, will be open to exploring new and emerging techniques through such activities as reading, courses, professional meetings, supervision, conferences, and other continuing education activities. Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals will meet the required hours of continuing education within the specified time frame necessary to maintain professional registration.

- 3.11 Respect for Diversity.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals develop and adopt interventions and services to incorporate consideration of a client's cultural perspective and recognition of barriers external to the client that may interfere with achieving effective rehabilitation outcomes. Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals do not discriminate.
- 3.12 Administrative Roles.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals who are administrators/supervisors of rehabilitation services units will ensure that services are provided in a legal and ethical manner.
- 3.13 Educational Roles.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals who function as educators of other professionals will ensure that program materials and course content are appropriate to train students to function competently as professionals and practice the principals of universal design.
- 3.14 Self-Care and Functional Competence.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals will engage in healthy self-care activities and be alert to signs of physical, mental, or emotional problems and will refrain from offering or rendering professional services when their physical, mental, or emotional conditions are likely to harm the client or others. They seek assistance for problems that reach the level of professional impairment, and if necessary, they limit, suspend, or terminate their professional responsibilities until such time it is determined that they may safely resume their work.
- 3.15 Functional Impairment in Colleagues and Supervisors.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals assist colleagues or supervisors in recognizing their own professional impairment and provide consultation and assistance when warranted with colleagues or supervisors demonstrating signs of impairment and intervene as appropriate to avoid harm to client.
- 3.16 Delegation of Work to Others.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals who delegate work to others or who use the services of others will take reasonable steps to:
- avoid delegating work to persons who have multiple relationships with those clients being served that would likely lead to exploitation or loss of objectivity,
  - authorize only those responsibilities that such persons can be expected to perform competently on the basis of their education, training, or experience, either independently or with the level of supervision being provided; and
  - see that such persons perform these services competently.
- 3.17 Team Relationships.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals will ensure that clients and/or their legally recognized representative are afforded the opportunity for full participation in their own rehabilitation planning. This includes a mutual understanding of the plan by all agencies and secure appropriate reports and evaluations when such reports are essential for rehabilitation planning and/or service delivery.
- 3.17.1 Interdisciplinary Teamwork.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals, who are members of interdisciplinary teams delivering multifaceted services to clients, must keep the focus on how to best serve the client. They participate in and contribute to decisions that affect the well-being of the client by drawing on the perspectives, values, and experiences of the counselling profession and those of colleagues from other disciplines.
- 3.18 Responsibility to the public and other professionals.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals have an ethical obligation to act responsibly with the public, other professionals and the media. They do not engage in any act or omission of a dishonest, deceitful or fraudulent nature in the conduct of their professional activities. These obligations include, but are not limited to:
- Sexual harassment and exploitation of others
  - Reports to third parties
  - Public presentations and public statements
  - Conflict of interest
  - Employer policies and practices
  - Personnel recruitment, selection and assignment
  - Consultation and relationships to other professionals



- 3.18.1 Personal Public Statements.** When making personal statements in a public context, vocational rehabilitation professionals clarify that they are speaking from their personal perspectives and that they are not speaking on behalf of all vocational rehabilitation professionals, the profession, or any professional association with which they may be affiliated.
- 3.19 Disparaging Remarks.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals do not disparage individuals, groups of individuals or their employer.
- 3.20 Questionable Conditions.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals alert their employers to conditions or inappropriate policies or practices that may be potentially disruptive or damaging to the Vocational Rehabilitation Professional's professional responsibilities or that may limit their effectiveness. In those instances where vocational rehabilitation professionals are critical of policies, they attempt to affect such changes in such policies or procedures through constructive action within the organization. Such action may include referral to appropriate certification, accreditation, or licensure organizations, or voluntary termination of employment.
- 3.21 Employer Policies.** The acceptance of employment in an agency or institution implies that Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals are in agreement with its general policy and principals. Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals strive to reach agreement with employers as to acceptable standards of conduct that allow for changes in employer policies which are conducive to the growth and development of the client.
- 3.22 Protection from Punitive Action.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals take care not to harass or dismiss an employee who has acted in a responsible and ethical manner to expose inappropriate employer policies or practices.
- 3.23 Professional Consultation.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals may choose to consult with professionally competent persons about their client. In choosing consultants Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals avoid conflict of interest. Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals ensure that they have reviewed verbally and in writing with all parties, the rights and responsibilities of the consultee and Vocational Rehabilitation Professional, the purposes of the services to be provided, relevant costs, potential risks and benefits, and the limits of confidentiality.
- 3.24 Termination and Referral.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals terminate a professional relationship when it becomes reasonably apparent that the client no longer needs assistance, is not likely to benefit, or is being harmed by continued services. Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals may terminate services when in jeopardy of harm by the client or another person with whom the client has a relationship, or when the client does not pay agreed-upon fees. Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals provide pretermination services and recommend other culturally and clinically appropriate service sources when necessary.
- 3.25 Transfer of Services.** When Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals transfer or refer the client to other practitioners, they ensure that appropriate counselling and administrative processes are completed in a timely manner and that open communication is maintained with both the client and practitioners. Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals prepare and disseminate, to an identified colleague or records custodian, a plan for the transfer of the client and files in the case of their incapacitation, death, or termination of practice.

## 4. ADVOCACY

### Value Statement

Vocational Rehabilitation Professions recognize that many of the problems experienced or faced by persons with a disability/disadvantage and other minority populations are socially constructed. Persons with a disability and /or disadvantages are still among those least valued and most in need of empowerment. When social policy and societal attitudes seriously ignore or violate the ethical principles of respect, caring and honesty to the detriment of special populations, vocational rehabilitation professionals have a responsibility to be critical and to advocate for change.

There are many avenues for social action. A professional that maintains high standards for its members in practice, teaching and research is serving the interest of society. They influence social policy through public education, advocacy, and lobbying within one's workplace, one's community or at the provincial, national, or international levels. Vocational rehabilitation professionals may also assist persons with a disability and/or disadvantages to work for change. Social change activities on a broad scale and community development on a local scale are needed in order to achieve a better quality of life.

- 4.1 Attitudinal Barriers.** Vocational rehabilitation professionals will strive to eliminate attitudinal barriers, including stereotyping and discrimination, towards individuals with disabilities and/or disadvantages and to increase their own awareness and sensitivity to such individuals.
- 4.2 Advocacy with Cooperating Agencies.** Vocational rehabilitation professionals will remain aware of actions taken by cooperating agencies on behalf of their clients and may be required to act as advocates of such clients to ensure effective service delivery.
- 4.3 Empowerment.** Vocational rehabilitation professionals will provide the client with appropriate information to facilitate their self-advocacy actions whenever possible and will support their efforts of self-advocacy both on an individual and an organizational level. They will empower clients to understand their rights and responsibilities, speak for themselves, make decisions, and contribute to society.
- 4.4 Professional Practice.** Vocational rehabilitation professionals will demonstrate in their practice, an appreciation of the need to provide necessary accommodations, including accessible facilities and services for persons with disabilities.
- 4.5 Barrier to Access.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals will identify environmental, physical, communicative, and transportation barriers to clients and will communicate information on barriers to public and private authorities to facilitate removal of barriers to access.
- 4.6 Referral Accessibility.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals, as advocates for people with disabilities will ensure, prior to referring clients to programs, facilities, or employment settings that they are appropriately accessible.
- 4.7 Knowledge of Benefits and Systems.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals will maintain and provide accurate and timely information or appropriate resources about disability benefit systems that may directly affect the quality of the life of a client.



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## 5. EVALUATION, ASSESSMENT AND INTERPRETATION

### Value Statement

Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals shall provide quality vocational evaluation and assessment services through the use of valid and reliable assessment tools and techniques. Vocational evaluation and assessment services should be provided in a manner consistent with the best practice principles of the profession. They recognize the historical, social prejudices in the misdiagnosis and pathologizing of certain individuals and groups.

**5.1 Validity and Reliability.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals shall ensure that the evaluation, assessment and interpretation process is valid and reliable. Observation and/or measurement of interest, values, temperament, learning style, ability, aptitude, personality and performance are assessed using a variety of tools and techniques that may include standardized tests, work sample, and/or situational assessments in simulated and/or real work environments.

### 5.2 Informed Consent

a.) **Prior to assessment.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals will explain the nature and purpose of the assessment and the specific uses of the assessment results by potential recipients. The explanation will be provided in a language the client (or other legally authorized person on behalf of the client) can understand. Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals should consider the client's personal or cultural context, the level of the client's understanding of the results and the impact the results may have on the client. Upon completion of the assessments, the Vocational Rehabilitation Professional will debrief the client.

b.) **Recipients of Results.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals should have an explicit understanding and prior agreements in determining who receives the assessment results. Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals will include accurate and appropriate interpretations with any release of assessment results and recognize the competence of the person or agency prior to any release of assessment results.

### 5.3 Release of Information to Competent Professionals

a) **Misuse of Results.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals will not misuse assessment results and interpretations and will take reasonable steps to prevent others from misusing the information. Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals will respect the client's right to know the results, the interpretations made and the basis for the professional's conclusions and recommendations.

b) **Release of Raw Data.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals will ordinarily release data (e.g. protocols, interview notes or questionnaires) in which the client is identified only with the consent of the client or the client's legal representatives. Appropriate requests for release of assessment data will result in an interpreted version of the assessment data. Raw test data will be released only to persons recognized to possess the professional competencies to interpret the data and who have established procedures to protect the privacy and confidentiality of test materials. In the absence of a signed written release of information, Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals will provide assessment data only as required by law or court order.

### 5.4 Research and Training

a) **Data Disguise Required.** Use of data derived from vocational evaluations for purposes of training, research or publication will be confined to content that is disguised to ensure the anonymity of the individuals involved.

- b) **Agreement for Identification.** The identification of a client in a presentation or publication will be permissible only when the client has agreed in writing to its presentation or publication.

## 5.5 Competence to Use and Interpret Assessment Instruments

- a) **Limits of Competence.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals will only utilize tests and assessment instruments for which they have been trained and/or are competent to administer and interpret. Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals will meet the publisher's stated qualifications for administering and interpreting specific instruments. Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals using technology-assisted test interpretations should be trained in the construct being measured and the specific instrument being used prior to using its technology based application. Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals will take reasonable measures to ensure the proper use of assessment techniques and tools by persons under their supervision.
- b) **Appropriate Use.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals are responsible for the appropriate administration, scoring, interpretation and use of assessment instruments relevant to the needs of the client, whether they score and interpret such assessment themselves or by other persons under their supervision.
- c) **Decisions Based on Results.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals will be responsible for decisions involving individuals that are based on assessment results and will have a thorough understanding of career assessment measurements including validation criteria, test research and guidelines for test development and use.
- d) **Accurate Information.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals will provide accurate information and avoid false claims or misconceptions when making statements about assessment instruments or techniques.

## 5.6 Assessment Techniques and/or Instrument Selection

- a) **Appropriateness of Instruments.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals should carefully consider the validity, reliability and appropriateness of selected assessment instruments and techniques. When such validity or reliability has not been established, Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals will describe the strengths and limitations of the results and interpretation.
- b) **Culturally Diverse Populations.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals should be cautious when selecting assessment tools for culturally diverse populations to avoid inappropriate and/or discriminatory assessment techniques.
- c) **Norm Divergence.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals use caution in the selection, administration, scoring and interpretation of any assessment techniques where the client population is not represented in the norm group on which an instrument was standardized. Comparisons and/or interpretation of assessment techniques that are based on the use of divergent norms will disclose such information and describe the implications of use on the results and interpretation.

## 5.7 Conditions of Assessment Administration

- a) **Administration Conditions.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals will administer standardized instruments under the same conditions that were established in the standardization. When it is not appropriate to administer under standard conditions such as may be necessary to accommodate modifications for clients with disabilities or when unusual behaviour or irregularities occur during the assessment those conditions will be noted in the interpretation.

- b) **Computer Administration.** When computer or other electronic methods are used for assessment, Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals will be responsible for ensuring that programs function properly to provide clients with accurate results.
- c) **Unsupervised Test-Taking.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals will not permit unsupervised or inadequately supervised use of test or assessments unless the assessment technique or tests are designed, intended and validated for self-administration and or scoring.
- d) **Access to Assessment Techniques.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals carefully consider individual or environmental barriers that may limit a client's ability to effectively access and/or benefit from the assessment technique or instrument (e.g. a client who is blind may benefit from an audiotape version of a written test). Any adaptation and/or accommodation of standardized assessment procedures will be documented and described in terms of the implications of the modification and adaptation on the assessment results and interpretation.

**5.8 Multicultural Issues/Diversity in Assessment.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals use, with caution, assessment techniques that were normed on populations other than that of the client. Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals recognize the effects of age, colour, culture, disability, nationality, ethnic group, gender, race, language preference, religion, spirituality, sexual orientation, marital status, or socioeconomic status on the administration and interpretation, and place assessment results in proper perspective with other relevant contextual factors.

#### **5.9 Scoring and Interpretation of Assessments**

- a) **Reporting Reservations.** When reporting assessment results, Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals will indicate any reservations that exist regarding validity or reliability of instruments used because of the circumstances of the assessment or the inappropriateness of the norms for the person assessed.
- b) **Diversity in Assessment Techniques.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals will place assessment results and their interpretations in proper perspective considering other relevant factors including age, colour, culture, disability, ethnic group, gender, race, religion, language preference, sexual orientation, marital status, and socioeconomic status.
- c) **Research Instruments.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals will exercise caution when interpreting the results of research instruments possessing insufficient technical data to support respondent results. The specific purposes for the use of such instruments will be stated explicitly to the examinee.
- d) **Testing Services.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals who provide test scoring and test interpretation services to support the assessment process will confirm the validity of such interpretations. The interpretations of assessment data will be related to the particular goals of the evaluation. Vocational Assessment Professionals will accurately describe the purpose, norms, validity, reliability and applications of the procedures and any special qualifications applicable to their use.
- e) **Automated Testing Services.** The public offering of an automated test interpretation service will be considered a professional-to-professional consultation. The formal responsibility of the consultant will be to the consultee, but the ultimate and overriding responsibility will be to the client.

**5.10 Security.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals will maintain the integrity and security of test and other assessment techniques consistent with legal and contractual obligations. Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals will not appropriate, reproduce, or modify a published test or parts thereof without acknowledgement and permission of the publisher.

- 5.11 Obsolete Tests and Outdated Results.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals will not use data or results from assessments that are obsolete or outdated for current purposes. Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals will make every effort to prevent misuse of obsolete measures and assessment data by others.
- 5.12 Assessment Construction.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals will use established procedures, relevant standards and current professional knowledge for assessment design in the development, publication and utilization of vocational and career assessment tools.
- 5.13 Forensic Evaluation.** When providing forensic evaluations, the primary obligation of forensic vocational rehabilitation professionals is to produce objective findings that can be substantiated based on information and techniques appropriate to the evaluation, which may include examination of the individual, research, and /or review of records. Forensic Rehabilitation Professionals are entitled to form professional opinions based on their professional knowledge and expertise that can be supported by the data gathered in evaluations. Forensic Rehabilitation Professionals define the limits of their reports or testimony, especially when an examination of the individual has not been conducted.

## 6. BUSINESS PRACTICES

### Value Statement

Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals strive to be honest, loyal and honour promises or commitments made and/or expectations that were legitimately engendered. Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals uphold professional standards of conduct, clarify their professional roles and obligations, accept appropriate responsibility for their behaviour and seek to manage conflicts of interest that lead to exploitation or harm. Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals exercise reasonable judgment and take precautions to ensure their potential biases; boundaries of professional competence and limitations of their expertise do not lead to or condone unjust practices.

### 6.1 Accepting, Declining, Terminating and/or Withdrawing from Cases

- a) **Ethical concerns.** While all Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals have the discretionary right to accept retention in any case and proceed within their area(s) of expertise, they should decline involvement in any case when asked to take or support a predetermined position, or where there are ethical concerns about the nature of the requested assignment.
- b) **Assumptions/Methodology Concerns.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals should decline involvement in any case when they are asked to assume invalid representations of fact and/or alter their methodology or process without foundation or compelling reason.
- c) **Withdrawing.** If necessary to withdraw from a case after it has been referred, the Vocational Rehabilitation Professional will make a reasonable effort to assist the client and/or referral source in locating another Vocational Rehabilitation Professional to take over the assignment.
- d) **Non-payment of fees.** Services may be terminated for nonpayment if no harm comes to the client and the Vocational Rehabilitation Professional assists in making a reasonable effort to support the client and/or referral source in locating another Vocational Rehabilitation Professional to take over the assignment or other suitable, applicable arrangements are made.

## 6.2 Financial Arrangements/Billing/Commissions/Fees

- a) **Remuneration.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals will neither give nor receive commissions, rebates, contingency fees, or any other form of remuneration when accepting a case and/or referring clients for professional services. Payments for services will not be contingent upon a case outcome or award.
- b) **Reasonable Fee Charges.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals will charge only for the reasonable hours of service, research, consultation and administrative work.
- c) **Differential Fee Charges.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals may charge differential fees for services when such a difference in fee is for the benefit of the client and the fee is not discriminatory.
- d) **Interest Charges.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals may charge a rate of interest on delinquent accounts as is allowed by law. When such interest is being charged, professionals state the rate of interest on all invoices or bills.
- e) **Financial Commitments.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals will not enter into professionally related financial commitments that will compromise the quality of their services.

**6.3 Bartering.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals shall avoid accepting goods or services from clients as payment for professional services. Bartering arrangements, particularly involving services, create the potential for conflicts of interest, exploitation and inappropriate boundaries in professional relationship with clients.

**6.4 Giving and Receiving Gifts.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals will recognize that in some cultures small gifts are a token of respect and gratitude. When determining whether or not to accept or give a gift, Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals will take into account the relationship, the monetary value of the gift, the motivation for giving the gift and for wanting or declining the gift.

**6.5 Maintenance, Dissemination and Disposal.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals maintain confidentiality in creating, storing, accessing, transferring, and disposing of records under their control, whether these are written, automated or in any other medium. Subsequent to file closure, records will be maintained for the number of years consistent with jurisdictional requirements or for a longer period during which maintenance of such records is necessary or helpful to provide reasonably anticipated services to the client. After that time, records will be destroyed in a manner assuring preservation of confidentiality. If there are no jurisdictional requirements, records will be kept for at least three (3) years after closure. However, in some cases, records received with the case referral may be destroyed or returned to the referral source upon closure of the case if approved by, and/or requested by the referral source.

## 6.6 Advertising, Soliciting Business and other Public Statements

- a) **Avoidance of False, Deceptive and/or Exploitive Statements.** Public statements include but are not limited to paid or unpaid advertising, product endorsements, grant applications, licensing applications, other credentialing applications, brochures, printed matter, directory listings, personal resumes or curriculum vitae, or comments for use in media such as print or electronic transmissions, statements in legal proceedings, lectures and oral presentations, and published materials. Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals do not knowingly make public statements that are false, deceptive or fraudulent concerning their research, practice or other work activities or those of persons or organizations with which they are affiliated. Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals do not exploit others.

- b) **Testimonials.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals who use testimonials do not solicit them from current clients nor former clients or any other persons who may be vulnerable to undue influence.
- c) **Statements by Others.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals make reasonable efforts to ensure that statements made by others about them or the profession are accurate.
- d) **Recruiting Through Employment.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals do not use their place of employment or institutional affiliation to recruit or gain clients for their private practice.
- e) **Products and Training Advertisements.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals who develop products related to their profession or conduct workshops or training events ensure that the advertisements concerning these products or events are accurate and disclose adequate information for consumers to make informed choices.
- f) **Promoting Self-Interests.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals do not use teaching, training, assessment or supervisory relationships to promote their products or training events in a manner that is deceptive or would exert undue influence on individuals who may be vulnerable. However, educators may adopt textbooks they have authored for instructional purposes.

## 7. TEACHING, TRAINING AND SUPERVISION

### Value Statement

Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals are encouraged to assist those who enter the profession by helping them to acquire a full understanding of the ethics, responsibilities, and needed competencies of their chosen area of practice, teaching or research.

#### 7.1 Rehabilitation Educators and Trainers.

- a) **Relationship Boundaries with Students and Supervisees.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals will clearly define and maintain ethical, professional and social relationship boundaries with their students and supervisees. They will be aware of the differential in power that exists and the student or supervisee's possible incomprehension of that power differential. Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals will explain to students and supervisees the potential for the relationship to become exploitive.
- b) **Sexual Relationships.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals will not engage in sexual relationships with students or supervisees and will not subject them to sexual harassment.
- c) **Supervisor Preparation.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals will supervise only within the boundaries of their competence, based on their education, training, supervised experience, professional credentials, and appropriate professional experience. Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals who are doctoral students serving as practicum or internship supervisors will be adequately prepared and supervised by the training program.
- d) **Responsibility for Services to Clients.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals who supervise the vocational rehabilitation services of others will perform direct supervision sufficient to ensure that rehabilitation services provided to clients are adequate and do not cause harm to the client.



- e) **Endorsement.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals will not endorse students or supervisees for certification, licensure, employment, or completion of an academic or training program if they believe students or supervisees are not qualified for the endorsement. Rehabilitation Professionals will take reasonable steps to assist students or supervisees who are not qualified for endorsement to become qualified.

## 7.2 Rehabilitation Education and Training Programs

- a) **Orientation.** Prior to admission, Vocational Rehabilitation Educators will orient prospective students to the education or training program's expectations, including but not limited to the following: (1) the type and level of skill acquisition required for successful completion of the training, (2) subject matter to be covered, (3) basis for evaluation, (4) training components that encourage self-growth or self-disclosure as part of the training process, (5) the type of supervision settings and requirements of the sites for required clinical field experiences, (6) student evaluation and dismissal policies and procedures, and (7) up-to-date employment prospects for graduates.
- b) **Evaluation.** Vocational Rehabilitation Educators will clearly state, in advance of training, to students and internship supervisees, the levels of competency expected, appraisal methods, and timing of evaluations for both didactic and experiential; components. Vocational Rehabilitation Educators will provide students and internship supervisees with periodic performance appraisals and evaluation feedback throughout the training program.
- c) **Teaching Ethics.** Vocational Rehabilitation educators will teach students and internship supervisees the ethical responsibilities and standards of the profession and the students' and supervisees' professional ethical responsibilities.
- d) **Peer Relationships.** When students are assigned to lead groups or provide clinical supervision for their peers, the Vocational Rehabilitation educator will take steps to ensure that students placed in these roles do not have personal or adverse relationships with peers and they ought to understand they have the same ethical obligations as educators, trainers and supervisors. Vocational Rehabilitation educators will make every effort to ensure that the rights of peers are not compromised when students are assigned to lead groups or provide clinical supervision.
- e) **Varied Theoretical Positions.** Vocational Rehabilitation educators will present varied theoretical positions so that students may make comparisons and have opportunities to develop their own positions. Vocational Rehabilitation educators will provide information concerning the scientific bases of professional practice.
- f) **Field Placements.** Vocational Rehabilitation educators will develop clear policies within their training program regarding field placement and other clinical experiences. Vocational Rehabilitation educators will provide clearly stated roles and responsibilities for the student and the site supervisor. Vocational Rehabilitation educators will confirm that site supervisors will be qualified to provide site supervision and are informed of their professional and ethical responsibilities in this role. Vocational Rehabilitation educators will not accept any form of professional services, fees, commissions, reimbursement, or remuneration from a site for student placement.
- g) **Diversity in Programs.** Vocational Rehabilitation educators will respond to their institution and program's recruitment and retention needs for training program administrators, facility, and students with diverse backgrounds and special needs. They will provide appropriate accommodations that enhance and support the well-being and performance of administrative, facility and/or students.



- h) **Distance Education Programs.** Vocational Rehabilitation educators are held to the same level of professional behaviour as defined in the Code regardless of the instruction or technology used (i.e., distance education).

### 7.3 Students and Supervisees

- a) **Limitations.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals, through ongoing evaluation and appraisal, will be aware of the academic and personal limitations of students and supervisees that might impede performance. Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals will assist students and supervisees in securing remedial assistance when needed, and will dismiss students or supervisees who are unable to provide competent service due to academic or personal limitations. Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals will seek professional consultation and document their decision to dismiss or refer students or supervisees for assistance. Vocational Rehabilitation professionals will advise students and supervisees of appeals processes as appropriate.
- b) **Self-growth Experiences.** Vocational Rehabilitation educators, when designing training groups or other experiences conducted by the vocational rehabilitation educator themselves, will inform students of the potential risks of self-disclosure. Vocational Rehabilitation educators will respect the privacy of students by not requiring self-disclosure that could reasonably be expected to be harmful and student evaluation criteria will not include the level of the student's self-disclosure.
- c) **Counseling for Students and Supervisees.** If students or supervisees request counseling, supervisors or vocational rehabilitation educators will provide them with acceptable referrals. Supervisors or vocational rehabilitation educators will not serve as counselors to students or supervisees over whom they hold administrative, teaching, or evaluative roles unless this is a brief role associated with a training experience.
- d) **Clients of Students and Supervisees.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals will make every effort to ensure that clients are aware of the services rendered and the qualifications of the students and the supervisees rendering those services. Clients will receive professional disclosure information and will be informed of the limits of confidentiality. Client permission will be obtained in order for the students and supervisees to use any information concerning the relationship in the training process.
- e) **Professional Development.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals who employ or supervise individuals will provide appropriate working conditions, timely evaluations, constructive consultations, and suitable opportunities for experience and training.
- f) **Cultural Diversity Competence.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals will actively infuse cultural diversity competencies into their training and supervisory practices. They will actively educate trainees to gain awareness, knowledge and skills in the competencies of culturally diverse practices.

## 8. RESEARCH AND PUBLICATION

### Value Statement

Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals are encouraged to engage in or support research and publication activities that will benefit service delivery and which promotes the quality of life for persons with disabilities.

- 8.1 Research Methodology.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals engaged in research, presentations and publications will ensure that the literature reviews are thorough and accurate and that the research methodology is appropriate and sound. They will also ensure that data analysis is honest and correct, that the confidentiality of client and professional data is strictly maintained and that materials cited from other authors or publishers is correctly referenced and that it is culturally sensitive.
- 8.2 Recognition of Others.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals will ensure that the contributions of others in the collection of data or development of a manuscript are acknowledged through co-authorship, in an introductory or concluding statement, or in a footnote, depending on the extent of their involvement.
- 8.3 Responsibility to Report Findings.** When reporting results, Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals will honestly report the research findings that are judged to hold professional value even if the results reflect unfavourably on institutions, programs, services, prevailing opinions or vested interests.
- 8.4 Reporting Errors.** If it becomes known that there are significant errors in their research, Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals take reasonable steps to correct such errors through appropriate means (i.e., correction erratum or through other appropriate publication means.)
- 8.5 Student Research.** For an article that is substantially based on a student's dissertation or thesis, the student will be listed as the principle author.
- 8.6 Availability of Data.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals will be obligated to make sufficient original research data available to qualified Vocational Rehabilitation Professional who may wish to replicate the study.
- 8.7 Submission of Manuscripts.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals will submit manuscripts for consideration to only one journal at a time. Manuscripts that are published in whole or in substantial part in another journal or published work are not submitted for publication without acknowledgment and permission from the previous publication.
- 8.8 Peer Review.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals who review material for publication will respect the confidentiality and proprietary rights of those who submit the material.
- 8.9 Use of Human Research Subjects.**
  - a) Informed Consent.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals will ensure that research subjects are completely informed about the purpose of the study and have agreed to participate. Research subjects will be fully informed of the nature of the study and the responsibilities of the researchers and the subjects. Participation in research is typically voluntary and subjects have the right to withdraw from the study at any time. Professional's commitments to subjects will be clearly communicated and honoured. Information from subjects obtained during the study will be confidential.
  - b) Protection of Subject Rights.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals will seek consultation and observe stringent safeguards to protect the rights of research participants when a research problem suggest a deviation from standard or accepted practice.

- c) **Protection of Subject Welfare.** Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals who conduct research with human participants will be responsible for the participant's welfare throughout the research and will take reasonable precautions to avoid causing injurious psychological, physical or social effects to their participants and create minimal interference in their lives.
- d) **Research Planning.** When using human participants, Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals will plan, design, conduct and report research in a manner that reflects cultural sensitivity and is culturally appropriate.
- e) **Research Conduct.** Research will be consistent with pertinent ethical principles, federal and provincial laws, host institutional regulations and scientific standards governing research with human participants.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

VRA Canada acknowledges the influence of other codes of ethics and would like to recognize and thank the following organizations:

The Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification (Revised Draft) (2010) Code of Professional Ethics for Rehabilitation Counselors, Schaumburg, Illinois.

The Commission on Certification of Work Adjustment and Vocational Evaluation Specialists (2008), CCWAVES Code of Professional Ethics, Schaumburg, Illinois.

The Canadian Association of Rehabilitation Professionals (2002), Canadian Code of Ethics for Rehabilitation Professionals, Toronto, Ontario.

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