

Glossary of MH Ethics Terms ACA

- Abandonment – the inappropriate ending or arbitrary termination of a counseling relationship that puts the client at risk.
- Advocacy – promotion of the well-being of individuals, groups, and the counseling profession within systems and organizations. Advocacy seeks to remove barriers and obstacles that inhibit access, growth, and development.
- Assent – to demonstrate agreement when a person is otherwise not capable or competent to give formal consent (e.g., informed consent) to a counseling service or plan.
- Assessment – the process of collecting in-depth information about a person in order to develop a comprehensive plan that will guide the collaborative counseling and service provision process.
- Bartering – accepting goods or services from clients in exchange for counseling services.
- Client – an individual seeking or referred to the professional services of a counselor.
- Confidentiality – the ethical duty of counselors to protect a client’s identity, identifying characteristics, and private communications.
- Consultation – a professional relationship that may include, but is not limited to, seeking advice, information, and/or testimony.
- Counseling – a professional relationship that empowers diverse individuals, families, and groups to accomplish mental health, wellness, education, and career goals.
- Counselor Educator – a professional counselor engaged primarily in developing, implementing, and supervising the educational preparation of professional counselors.
- Counselor Supervisor – a professional counselor who engages in a formal relationship with a practicing counselor or counselor-in-training for the purpose of overseeing that individual’s counseling work or clinical skill development.
- Culture – membership in a socially constructed way of living, which incorporates collective values, beliefs, norms, boundaries, and lifestyles that are cocreated with others who share similar worldviews comprising biological, psychosocial, historical, psychological, and other factors.
- Discrimination – the prejudicial treatment of an individual or group based on their actual or perceived membership in a particular group, class, or category.
- Distance Counseling – The provision of counseling services by means other than face-to-face meetings, usually with the aid of technology.
- Diversity – the similarities and differences that occur within and across cultures, and the intersection of cultural and social identities.
- Documents – any written, digital, audio, visual, or artistic recording of the work within the counseling relationship between counselor and client.
- Encryption – process of encoding information in such a way that limits access to authorized users.
- Examinee – a recipient of any professional counseling service that includes educational, psychological, and career appraisal, using qualitative or quantitative techniques.

- Exploitation – actions and/or behaviors that take advantage of another for one’s own benefit or gain.
- Fee Splitting – the payment or acceptance of fees for client referrals (e.g., percentage of fee paid for rent, referral fees).
- Forensic Evaluation – the process of forming professional opinions for court or other legal proceedings, based on professional knowledge and expertise, and supported by appropriate data.
- Gatekeeping – the initial and ongoing academic, skill, and dispositional assessment of students’ competency for professional practice, including remediation and termination as appropriate.
- Impairment – a significantly diminished capacity to perform professional functions.
- Incapacitation – an inability to perform professional functions.
- Informed Consent – a process of information sharing associated with possible actions clients may choose to take, aimed at assisting clients in acquiring a full appreciation and understanding of the facts and implications of a given action or actions.
- Instrument – a tool, developed using accepted research practices, that measures the presence and strength of a specified construct or constructs.
- Interdisciplinary Teams – teams of professionals serving clients that may include individuals who may not share counselors’ responsibilities regarding confidentiality.
- Minors – generally, persons under the age of 18 years, unless otherwise designated by statute or regulation. In some jurisdictions, minors may have the right to consent to counseling without consent of the parent or guardian.
- Multicultural/Diversity Competence – counselors’ cultural and diversity awareness and knowledge about self and others, and how this awareness and knowledge are applied effectively in practice with clients and client groups.
- Multicultural/Diversity Counseling – counseling that recognizes diversity and embraces approaches that support the worth, dignity, potential, and uniqueness of individuals within their historical, cultural, economic, political, and psychosocial contexts.
- Personal Virtual Relationship – engaging in a relationship via technology and/or social media that blurs the professional boundary (e.g., friending on social networking sites); using personal accounts as the connection point for the virtual relationship.
- Privacy – the right of an individual to keep oneself and one’s personal information free from unauthorized disclosure.
- Privilege – a legal term denoting the protection of confidential information in a legal proceeding (e.g., subpoena, deposition, testimony).
- Pro bono publico – contributing to society by devoting a portion of professional activities for little or no financial return (e.g., speaking to groups, sharing professional information, offering reduced fees).
- Professional Virtual Relationship – using technology and/or social media in a professional manner and maintaining appropriate professional boundaries; using business accounts that cannot be linked back to personal accounts as the connection point for the virtual relationship (e.g., a business page versus a personal profile).

- Records – all information or documents, in any medium, that the counselor keeps about the client, excluding personal and psychotherapy notes.
- Records of an Artistic Nature – products created by the client as part of the counseling process.
- Records Custodian – a professional colleague who agrees to serve as the caretaker of client records for another mental health professional.
- Self-Growth – a process of self-examination and challenging of a counselor’s assumptions to enhance professional effectiveness.
- Serious and Foreseeable – when a reasonable counselor can anticipate significant and harmful possible consequences.
- Sexual Harassment – sexual solicitation, physical advances, or verbal/nonverbal conduct that is sexual in nature; occurs in connection with professional activities or roles; is unwelcome, offensive, or creates a hostile workplace or learning environment; and/or is sufficiently severe
- or intense to be perceived as harassment by a reasonable person.
- Social Justice – the promotion of equity for all people and groups for the purpose of ending oppression and injustice affecting clients, students, counselors, families, communities,
- schools, workplaces, governments, and other social and institutional systems.
- Social Media – technology-based forms of communication of ideas, beliefs, personal histories, etc. (e.g., social networking sites, blogs).
- Student – an individual engaged in formal graduate-level counselor education.
- Supervisee – a professional counselor or counselor-in-training whose counseling work or clinical skill development is being overseen in a formal supervisory relationship by a qualified trained professional.
- Supervision – a process in which one individual, usually a senior member of a given profession designated as the supervisor, engages in a collaborative relationship with another individual or group, usually a junior member(s) of a given profession designated as the supervisee(s) in
- order to (a) promote the growth and development of the supervisee(s), (b) protect the welfare of the clients seen by the supervisee(s), and (c) evaluate the performance of the supervisee(s).
- Supervisor – counselors who are trained to oversee the professional clinical work of counselors and counselors-in-training.
- Teaching – all activities engaged in as part of a formal educational program that is designed to lead to a graduate degree in counseling.
- Training – the instruction and practice of skills related to the counseling profession. Training contributes to the ongoing proficiency of students and professional counselors.
- Virtual Relationship – a non-face-to-face relationship (e.g., through social media).
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