



COMPANY POLICY

CODE OF ETHICS

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1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Code of Ethics is to establish the ethical values, principles and standards of professional conduct expected of all persons affiliated with the Association of Christian Religious Practitioners (ACRP).

This Code promotes professional integrity, accountability and excellence in ministry, pastoral counselling and religious practice. It provides guidance for ethical decision-making and serves to protect the public, uphold the reputation of the profession, and maintain confidence in ACRP and its professional designations.

All members, affiliates and designated persons of ACRP are required to comply with this Code and any related policies, rules and procedures adopted by ACRP from time to time.

2. SCOPE

This Code applies to all persons registered with ACRP, including: designated and non-designated affiliates.

Compliance with this Code is a condition of registration, continued affiliation and retention of any ACRP designation.

Breaches of this Code may result in disciplinary action in accordance with the **ACRP Disciplinary Policy and Procedure**.

3. DEFINITIONS

- **“ACRP (Association of Christian Religious Practitioners)”** – a professional body recognised by the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA), comprising expert practitioners within the field of Christian religious practice.
 - **“Affiliate”** – an individual registered with ACRP, typically through admission, registration, or acceptance into a relevant ACRP Council. **Affiliation** signifies participation, identification, and a recognised relationship with the organisation, often involving adherence to its rules, standards, or values, and may confer certain responsibilities or privileges within that body. An affiliate can either be a designated affiliate or a non-designated affiliate.
 - **“Client/Person Served”** – any individual, family, group, organisation or community to whom an ACRP affiliate provides professional ministry, education, counselling, pastoral care, advice, leadership or support services in the course of their professional practice.
 - **“Designated Affiliate”** – an affiliate who has satisfied the prescribed requirements for an ACRP professional designation and has been formally awarded such a designation.
 - **“Non-Designated Affiliate”** – an affiliate who has been accepted for affiliation, but who has not been awarded an ACRP professional designation.
 - **“Professional conduct”** – the behaviour, actions, decisions and practices of an affiliate in the course of their professional activities, which demonstrate integrity, competence, accountability, respect, ethical responsibility and compliance with the ACRP Code of Ethics, policies, rules, applicable legislation and accepted standards of professional practice.
 - **“Professional Designation”** – a formal title conferred by the professional body recognising an individual’s expertise, competence, professional standing, and right to practice within a specific
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occupational field.

- **“Scope of Practice (SoP)”** – the defined range of activities, responsibilities, and professional functions permitted within a specific professional designation.

4. CORE ETHICAL VALUES AND STANDARDS FOR GOOD PRACTICE

ACRP affirms that professional ministry should be practised in accordance with the principles of the Bible as the Word of God, the principles of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, including the Bill of Rights contained therein, and the Protection of Personal Information Act, 2013 (POPIA), and the responsibilities imposed on affiliates through ACRP policies and procedures, the **Scope of Practice**, and the **Core Ethical Values and Standards for Good Practice** (set out below).

All registered affiliates shall conduct themselves in accordance with the following ethical principles:

4.1 Respect for Human Rights and Dignity

Affiliates shall recognise the human rights of all persons and respect their inherent dignity, worth and value and shall treat all persons with courtesy, fairness and compassion.

4.2 Integrity and Accountability

Affiliates shall act with honesty, integrity, transparency and accountability in all professional activities and relationships. They shall accept responsibility for their actions, decisions and conduct, and remain accountable for the consequences thereof. Through truthful and ethical conduct, affiliates foster trust and confidence in their professional relationships and in the profession as a whole.

4.3 Professional Competence

Affiliates shall maintain appropriate levels of professional knowledge, ministry skills and ethical competence through ongoing learning and Continuing Professional Development (CPD). They shall maintain and develop the knowledge and skills required within their area of practice through appropriate continuing professional development.

4.4 Confidentiality

Affiliates shall respect clients' privacy and safeguard confidential information. Information may be disclosed only with the client's informed consent, when required by law or court order—including mandatory child-protection reporting—or when necessary to protect the client or others from serious harm. Consent does not remove the affiliate's responsibility to exercise sound professional judgement and avoid disclosure that may cause harm. Any disclosure shall be limited to the minimum information necessary and appropriately documented.

4.5 Compassion and Care

Affiliates shall demonstrate compassion by showing sensitivity, empathy, and care towards those they serve, promoting their well-being and providing appropriate support where possible without causing harm.

4.6 Respect, Fairness and Freedom of Belief

Affiliates shall respect the dignity, rights, beliefs and values of all persons. They shall honour the right of individuals to make informed decisions and to live according to their own beliefs, values and preferences,

while treating all persons and groups with fairness, impartiality and respect, regardless of differing religious, cultural or ethical convictions.

In applying this principle, affiliates retain the right and responsibility to proclaim the teachings, faith and wisdom of the Bible and their relevant faith tradition. This principle also does not preclude faith-based institutions from establishing and applying membership requirements relating to doctrine, confession of faith and ethical conduct, provided that such requirements are consistent with the core ethical values contained in this Code.

4.7 Best Interests and Well-being

Affiliates shall act in the best interests of those they serve and seek to promote their well-being through responsible, ethical and professional conduct. They shall not abuse their position of trust or engage in any conduct that may reasonably be expected to cause physical, emotional, spiritual, financial or other harm. Affiliates shall avoid placing personal interests above the interests of those they serve and shall not engage in harmful, exploitative or inappropriate professional practices. This principle does not limit an affiliate's right to freedom of expression as protected by the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa.

4.8 Professional Responsibility

Affiliates shall exercise sound judgement, diligence and responsibility in all aspects of their professional practice.

4.9 Community Responsibility

Affiliates shall seek to promote the well-being and betterment of society in a manner consistent with their professional competence, ethical obligations and role within the community.

5. RESPONSIBILITIES TOWARDS THOSE SERVED

Affiliates shall:

- Act in the best interests of those they serve and avoid conduct that may cause physical, emotional, spiritual, financial or reputational harm.
- Act promptly to protect clients from risk for any reason, and report violations or seek appropriate redress where there are reasonable grounds to believe that clients' rights are being violated.
- Respect the rights, beliefs, cultural backgrounds and personal circumstances of individuals.
- Provide services honestly, responsibly and within the limits of their competence and scope of practice.
- Obtain informed consent where appropriate and ensure that persons understand the nature and purpose of the services being provided.
- Respect the right of individuals to make informed decisions about their own lives and circumstances, regardless of their legal capacity to give consent.
- **Informed Consent:** Affiliates shall respect the right of individuals to make informed decisions by providing relevant information in a clear, accurate and understandable manner, taking into account the individual's language, level of understanding, values and beliefs. Informed consent shall be regarded as an ongoing process, and affiliates shall provide access to records and information where appropriate and permitted by law.

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- Respect the rights of those they serve to choose whether to participate in teaching or research.
 - Maintain appropriate professional boundaries and avoid any exploitation of relationships for personal, financial, emotional, sexual or other gain.
 - Refrain from all forms of abuse, intimidation, manipulation, coercion or harassment.
 - Keep accurate records and ensure appropriate safeguarding of personal information.
 - Inform clients of their right to seek a second opinion without affecting their future care.

6. RESPONSIBILITIES TOWARDS COLLEAGUES AND OTHER PROFESSIONALS

Affiliates shall:

- Treat colleagues and other professionals with respect, fairness and courtesy. In the case of referred clients, treat them with the same level of care and professionalism as own clients.
- Promote cooperation and professional collaboration where this serves the best interests of those receiving services.
- **Referrals and Conflicts of Interest:** Affiliates shall act in the best interests of those they serve when making referrals or recommending services. They shall not solicit, offer, accept or provide any improper inducement, incentive or benefit that may influence, or reasonably be perceived to influence, their professional judgement or decision-making.
- Refrain from making false, malicious, or unjustified statements about colleagues, and avoid comments that may unfairly undermine a client's confidence in their knowledge or professional skills.
- Use appropriate procedures to address concerns regarding the conduct or competence of another colleague/practitioner/professional.
- Support and encourage ethical conduct and professional excellence within the profession.
- Avoid conflicts of interest and disclose any actual or potential conflicts that may affect professional judgement.

7. RESPONSIBILITIES TOWARDS THE PROFESSION

Affiliates shall:

- Uphold the honour, credibility and reputation of the profession.
 - Promote ethical and professional ministry practice.
 - Maintain compliance with applicable legislation, regulations and professional standards.
 - Maintain and enhance professional standards by keeping knowledge and skills up to date and regularly participating in educational and professional development activities (such as ACRP CPD events) that support the effective delivery of services.
 - Accurately represent their qualifications, experience, registration status and professional designations.
 - Refrain from conduct that may damage public confidence in the profession.
 - Report serious unethical conduct, professional misconduct or breaches of this Code through the appropriate channels.
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- **Professional Practice:** Affiliates shall maintain a professional, safe and appropriate working environment, keep accurate and up-to-date records, safeguard the rights and confidentiality of those they serve, and take reasonable steps to ensure that their health, conduct and professional practices do not impair their ability to provide competent and ethical services.

8. RESPONSIBILITIES TOWARDS ACRP

Affiliates shall:

- Comply with the ACRP Constitution, Rules, Regulations, Policies and Procedures.
- Cooperate with any lawful investigation, review or disciplinary process conducted by ACRP.
- Provide accurate and truthful information to ACRP at all times.
- Notify ACRP of any matter that may materially affect their professional standing or eligibility for registration.
- Use ACRP designations, logos and intellectual property only as authorised by ACRP.
- Conduct themselves in a manner that promotes and protects the reputation of ACRP.

9. PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

Affiliates shall **not**:

- Engage in unlawful conduct, fraud, dishonesty, corruption or misrepresentation.
- Abuse their professional position for personal or financial gain.
- Exploit individuals emotionally, spiritually, financially or sexually.
- Practise while impaired by alcohol, drugs or any condition that significantly affects professional judgement or performance.
- Knowingly provide services beyond their level of professional knowledge, competence or scope of practice.
- Engage in conduct that constitutes harassment, intimidation, bullying or discrimination.
- Bring ACRP, its designations or the profession into disrepute.

10. REPORTING OF UNETHICAL CONDUCT

Affiliates have an ethical duty to report conduct that they reasonably believe constitutes professional misconduct, unethical behaviour, abuse, exploitation, fraud, corruption or a serious breach of a client's rights or of this Code.

Reports shall be made in good faith and in accordance with ACRP policies and procedures.

Where possible, individuals who report misconduct will be protected from victimisation, intimidation, or retaliation.

11. COMPLIANCE AND DISCIPLINARY ACTION

Failure to comply with this Code may constitute professional misconduct and may result in disciplinary action in terms of the **ACRP Disciplinary Policy and Procedure**.

Penalties may include corrective measures, suspension, cancellation (revocation) of a designation / affiliation or any other action deemed appropriate by ACRP.

12. REVIEW OF THE CODE

This Code shall be reviewed periodically by ACRP to ensure continued relevance and ethical considerations, alignment with legislation, professional standards and the needs of the profession.

13. EFFECTIVE DATE

This Code becomes effective on the date approved by the ACRP Board and replaces all previous versions of the Code.

Approved:

Chief Executive Officer	Signature	Date:
Dr Gerhard Botha		4 September 2026

This Policy was drafted and refined with the assistance of AI tools. All content was reviewed, edited and approved by the author to ensure compliance with applicable laws and the company's standards.