



Working with Ethics

Ethical Decision Making

Ethical decision making is not always easy and guidelines do not explain the appropriate ethical behavior for every situation.

As a guide to help you in ethical decision making, ask yourself these questions:

- ? Is it legal?
- ? Does it feel right?
- ? Will it reflect negatively on me or the agency?
- ? Would I be embarrassed if others knew about it?
- ? How would this look in the newspapers?
- ? Can I sleep at night?



And, make these assumptions:

- 👁 Whenever you think that no one will know, someone will.



- 👁 Whenever you think that no one will care, someone will.



- 👁 Whenever you think that it will never be missed, it will.



- 👁 Whenever you think that you are as good as you need to be, you aren't.



Mentor Responsibility




You have an obligation to uphold and fulfill the agency's expectation of lawful and ethical business conduct. This obligation requires you to:



- ☞ Be courteous, attentive and communicative.**
- ☞ Have a thorough understanding of and comply with agency policies, procedures and practices.**
- ☞ Seek advice from a supervisor, or in their absence a veteran line staff, when you are in doubt about the best course of action in a particular situation or have questions regarding policies, procedures and practices.**
- ☞ Report promptly, any business practice or other activity that you believe may be a violation of policies and procedures or is ethically questionable.**

Reporting Procedures

When you find yourself in a situation that may be uncomfortable, but you have the responsibility to report questionable behavior or practice, where do you start?

-  Contact Law Enforcement if immediate assistance is needed.
-  Contact a supervisor or probation officer immediately.
-  Always follow up with a written report as soon as possible for your records and the probation officer's records.

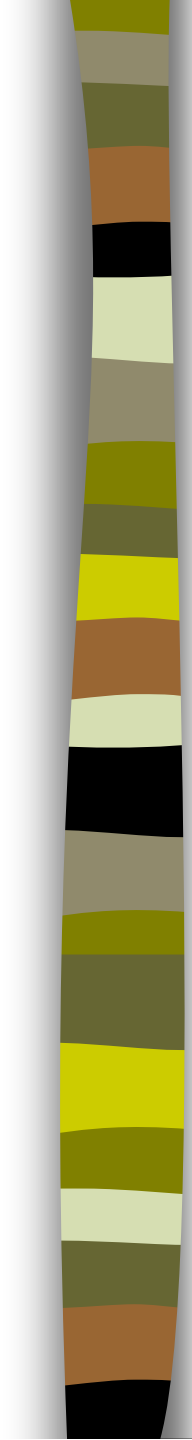


Why Mentors should report violations of probation

LIABILITY, LIABILITY, LIABILITY!

Definition of Liability: *A body of rules and statutes that defines conduct prohibited by the government because it threatens and harms public safety and welfare and that establishes punishment to be imposed for the commission of such acts.*

- *mentors are liable for community safety
- *probation officers are liable for community safety
- *accountability helps client recognize areas of their life that need changed.



Mentor/Probation Officer Relationship (Safety)

- Call prior to appointment if you want to sit in on office visit.
- No hats, cell phones, or layered clothing allowed in office visits.
- Door to back offices can not be held open.

Mentor/Probation Officer Relationship (Safety) Continued

- Understand that if you have information about a client's probation violation, you may be subject to testify on state's behalf at the request of county attorney.
- Be aware that client's may have illegal substances on them while you are transporting them.



Mentor/Probation Officer Relationship (Safety) Continued

- A client who is under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs may act out violently if confronted about the use.
- Clients will often try to “play one against the other” with probation officer and mentors



REMEMBER.....

- Probation officers and Mentors are working for a common goal:
 - Rehabilitate the Offender
 - Ensure Public Safety



**Why does it matter
how you appear to
others on and off
the job?**



Research Findings and Ethical Behavior*

Of more than 1,000 employees surveyed:

- ‡ 60 percent say job dissatisfaction is a leading reason why people make unethical decisions at work, second only to a lack of personal integrity.
- ‡ Financial rewards (44 percent), pressure to meet goals (41 percent) and ignorance of code of conduct (33 percent) also were cited as reasons people make unethical decisions at work.



‡ Only 10 percent ranked criminal penalties for code-of-conduct violations among the top three factors that help foster an ethical workplace environment.

‡ Only 16 percent ranked ethics training as a factor that positively influences the promotion of ethical behavior.

‡ **Encouraging high ethical standards within an organization starts with an environment conducive to ethical behavior.**

* Deloitte & Touche USA On-Line Survey, April 2007, SHRM On-Line.

Common Rationalizations Used to Justify Unethical Behavior

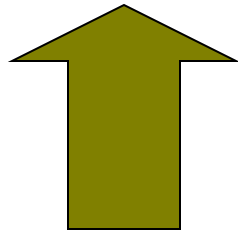
- 💣 Pretending the behavior is not really unethical or illegal.
- 💣 Excusing the behavior by saying it's really in the organization's or your best interest.
- 💣 Assuming the behavior is okay because no one else would ever be expected to find out about it.
- 💣 Expecting your superiors to support and protect you if anything should go wrong.

Any agency employee/mentor who observes or understands that another employee/mentor has violated the Code of Ethics is required to report it to his/her immediate supervisor.

Remember...

You are responsible for yourself and your choices regardless of what others around you are saying or doing.

**"So learn this as a first lesson about life. The only successful beings in any field, including living itself, are those who have a professional viewpoint and make themselves and ARE professionals" —
L. Ron Hubbard**



**Agency expectations
will not be lowered.**