



IAIH

Code of Ethics

*Ethical Principles and Standards for
Hypnotherapy Professionals*

*Compassion • Integrity • Professionalism
Responsibility • Respect • Excellence*

Inside This Code

- Professional Integrity and Boundaries
- Client Safety, Confidentiality, and Consent
- Competence, Education, and Supervision
- Ethical Practice, Advertising, and Referrals
- Professional Responsibility and Accountability



International Association of Interpersonal Hypnotherapists (IAIH)

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Educational and informational resource. Not legal advice.

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Statement of Continuity and Purpose

This Code of Ethics establishes the ethical standards of the International Association of Interpersonal Hypnotherapists (IAIH). It preserves the Association's longstanding emphasis on compassionate service, personal responsibility, professional integrity, lawful practice, client autonomy, and the relational nature of Interpersonal Hypnotherapy while updating the Code to align with current IAIH scope-of-practice and legal guidance.

This Code does not expand any practitioner's legal scope of practice and does not supersede applicable law. Ethical compliance and legal compliance are related but distinct responsibilities: an activity may be ethically inappropriate even when lawful, and an ethically intended activity may still be prohibited by law.

Governing Authority and Applicability

Adherence to this Code is a condition of IAIH certification, membership, approved training participation, and continued standing with the Association. It applies, as relevant to their roles, to:

- IAIH Certified Hypnotherapists and advanced-level certified practitioners
- IAIH Certified Supervisors, Examiners, and Instructors
- Directors and personnel of IAIH Approved Schools and approved externship or practicum locations
- Students participating in IAIH-approved education or supervised practice
- Other persons or organizations expressly operating under IAIH authority

When a member also holds a governmental professional license or another professional credential, the member must comply with the standards and scope requirements applicable to that credential as well as this Code.

Preamble

Interpersonal Hypnotherapy is both a professional discipline and a relational path of service. IAIH recognizes that every professional encounter involves a human relationship and therefore carries responsibilities of honesty, compassion, respect, competence, humility, and care.

IAIH affirms that professional service and sustainable livelihood are compatible. Members may build successful practices and receive fair compensation while ensuring that financial interests never override client welfare, informed choice, truthful representation, or professional boundaries.

Members are individually responsible for understanding the laws and regulations applicable to their practice. IAIH provides education and professional guidance, but certification is not a governmental health-care or mental-health license and does not independently authorize activities reserved to licensed professions.

Principles and Values

- Compassionate service and respect for the dignity, autonomy, beliefs, and lived experience of each person.
- Integrity, honesty, accountability, and transparency in professional relationships.
- Competence, continuing education, consultation, and appropriate referral.
- Client welfare, safety, informed choice, and freedom from exploitation.
- Respectful cooperation with colleagues and other professions.
- Lawful practice and responsible representation of hypnosis, hypnotherapy, credentials, and professional titles.
- Prosperity and professional success pursued in harmony with ethical service.
- Community, cooperation, inclusion, and mutual respect.

Mission

The mission of IAIH is to establish and uphold high ethical standards for the education, certification, and professional practice of Interpersonal Hypnotherapy; to promote competent and lawful practice; to strengthen

public trust in the profession; and to support practitioners in serving clients with compassion, responsibility, and integrity.

IAIH Code of Ethics

1. Compassionate Service. Members shall approach clients, students, colleagues, and the public with compassion, respect, professionalism, and concern for human dignity and welfare.

2. Client Autonomy and Informed Choice. Members shall respect the client's right to make informed decisions, ask questions, decline techniques, discontinue a session, or terminate services. Hypnosis shall never be used to coerce, manipulate, intimidate, or improperly influence a client.

3. Competence. Members shall provide only those services for which they have appropriate education, training, supervised experience where applicable, and demonstrated competence. Completion of a course or certification does not by itself establish competence for every population, technique, condition, or circumstance.

4. Scope of Practice and Legal Compliance. Members shall practice within the limits of their competence, credentials, IAIH Scope of Practice Standards, and applicable law. Members shall consult the current IAIH United States Hypnosis & Hypnotherapy Law and Scope-of-Practice Guide when relevant and independently verify the laws applicable to their jurisdiction and, for remote work, the client's jurisdiction.

5. Medical and Mental-Health Boundaries. Members who are not independently licensed and legally authorized to diagnose or treat medical or mental-health disorders shall not represent themselves as doing so. They shall not advise clients to discontinue, alter, replace, or disregard prescribed medication or medical or mental-health treatment.

6. Referral, Consultation, and Collaboration. Members shall seek consultation, collaborate, refer, or decline a case when client needs exceed their competence or legal authority. A referral, prescription, supervision arrangement, or recommendation from another professional does not automatically create legal authority to perform an otherwise restricted service.

7. Health, Safety, and Crisis Situations. Client and practitioner safety shall be prioritized. Members who are not independently qualified and legally authorized as crisis clinicians shall not assume responsibility for formal suicide-risk assessment, psychiatric diagnosis, safety planning, or ongoing crisis management. When a client appears to present an immediate danger to self or others or another apparent emergency, ordinary hypnotherapy shall stop and appropriate crisis or emergency resources shall be used consistent with applicable law and circumstances.

8. Client Agreements and Informed Consent. Members shall use an appropriate written client agreement and disclosure process and shall ensure that consent is informed and ongoing. The agreement should accurately describe credentials, services, fees, confidentiality practices, relevant limitations, and the voluntary nature of participation.

9. Confidentiality and Privacy. Members shall protect confidential information and maintain records using reasonable safeguards. Confidentiality is subject to applicable law, valid client authorization, court orders, emergency circumstances, and other lawful exceptions. Members shall not state or imply that HIPAA applies merely because a client was referred by a HIPAA-covered professional; HIPAA obligations depend on the actual legal relationship and handling of protected health information.

10. Records and Documentation. Members shall maintain accurate, objective, secure, and appropriately limited records consistent with the services provided and applicable law. Records shall not falsely imply diagnosis, licensure, or clinical authority the practitioner does not possess.

11. Respect and Non-Discrimination. Members shall provide professional services without unlawful discrimination and shall respect differences in culture, race, ethnicity, nationality, religion, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, disability, socioeconomic background, worldview, and other individual characteristics.

12. Professional Boundaries. Members shall maintain boundaries that protect clients from emotional, sexual, financial, spiritual, or other exploitation. Members shall not use the authority, intimacy, suggestibility, or trust associated with hypnosis for personal gratification or improper advantage.

13. Sexual and Romantic Relationships. Members shall not engage in sexual or romantic conduct with current clients. Consistent with longstanding IAIH policy, members shall refrain from sexual or intimate relationships with former clients for a minimum of two years following termination of the professional relationship, and longer when the prior relationship, client vulnerability, applicable law, or risk of exploitation makes such involvement inappropriate.

14. Touch and Physical Contact. Any touch used in a professional context shall have a legitimate purpose, be appropriate to the service, and be preceded by explanation and consent. Members shall avoid physical contact that could reasonably be experienced as coercive, sexualized, exploitative, or misleading.

15. Conflicts of Interest and Dual Relationships. Members shall identify and appropriately avoid or manage conflicts of interest and dual relationships that could impair professional judgment, increase the risk of exploitation, or interfere with client welfare. When uncertainty exists, consultation should be sought.

16. Fees and Financial Integrity. Fees, payment terms, cancellation policies, packages, and other financial arrangements shall be disclosed clearly and in advance. Members shall not exploit clients financially, pressure clients into unnecessary services, or prolong professional relationships primarily for financial gain.

17. Advertising, Marketing, and Public Claims. Advertising and marketing shall be truthful, supportable, and consistent with the practitioner's actual credentials, competence, and legal authority. Members shall not guarantee cures or outcomes, misrepresent evidence, create unjustified expectations, or imply that hypnotherapy is a substitute for medical or mental-health care when it is not.

18. Occupational Titles and Credentials. Members shall use only titles, certifications, degrees, licenses, registrations, and professional affiliations to which they are legitimately entitled. Use of the occupational title Hypnotherapist or related terminology must comply with applicable state law. IAIH certification shall never be described as a state license or governmental authorization.

19. Testimonials, Reviews, and Endorsements. Members shall not fabricate, purchase, manipulate, or materially misrepresent testimonials, reviews, endorsements, or client outcomes. When testimonials are used, members shall respect privacy, obtain any consent required by law or ethical standards, and avoid presenting individual experiences as guaranteed results.

20. Media, Social Media, and Public Education. Members shall communicate responsibly in websites, social media, podcasts, videos, interviews, demonstrations, public presentations, and other media. Public statements should distinguish professional education from individualized diagnosis or treatment and should not disclose identifiable client information without appropriate authorization.

21. Recording and Use of Client Material. Members shall obtain appropriate written permission before audio- or video-recording sessions or using identifiable client material for teaching, demonstration, publication, marketing, research, or other secondary purposes. Recordings and identifiable materials shall be protected as confidential information.

22. Memory, Regression, and Suggestibility. Members shall use particular care when working with memory, age regression, past-life material, trauma-related narratives, or other highly suggestible content. Members shall not present imagery, hypnotic experiences, inferred material, or subjective recollections as independently verified historical fact and shall avoid suggestive practices that could unnecessarily shape or reinforce uncertain memories.

23. Minors and Persons Requiring Legal Consent. Members shall comply with applicable law concerning minors, guardianship, consent, assent, parental rights, and decision-making capacity. Appropriate written authorization shall be obtained when legally required, while respecting the dignity, privacy, and developmental needs of the person receiving services.

24. Termination, Referral, and Avoidance of Abandonment. Members shall not unnecessarily prolong services. When services are no longer beneficial, appropriate, lawful, or within scope, members shall discuss termination responsibly and, when indicated, provide reasonable referral options or assistance with continuity of support.

25. Personal Fitness to Practice. Members shall monitor whether illness, impairment, substance use, emotional distress, fatigue, conflicts, or personal circumstances are materially affecting professional judgment or

competence. When fitness to practice is impaired, members shall reduce, suspend, or modify professional activities and seek appropriate support.

26. Interprofessional Respect and Cooperation. Members shall respect the lawful roles and expertise of other professionals. With appropriate client authorization and when consistent with law, members should cooperate with other professionals when doing so supports client welfare.

27. Supervision, Consultation, and Continuing Education. Members shall maintain competence through ongoing education and, when appropriate, supervision, mentoring, peer consultation, or professional consultation. Members shall meet current IAIH continuing-education requirements for maintenance of certification or membership.

28. Teaching, Supervision, and Training Responsibilities. Members who teach, supervise, examine, or mentor others shall accurately represent training standards, provide appropriate oversight, maintain boundaries, evaluate learners fairly, and avoid encouraging students to practice beyond their competence or legal authority.

29. Intellectual Property, Attribution, and Plagiarism. Members shall respect copyrights, trademarks, proprietary training materials, authorship, and other intellectual-property rights. Members shall not plagiarize or present another person's words, methods, materials, or creative work as their own and shall provide appropriate attribution when required.

30. Research and Demonstration Ethics. When members conduct research, case demonstrations, or educational projects involving participants, participation shall be voluntary and based on appropriate informed consent. Client welfare, privacy, and freedom from undue influence shall take priority over research, publicity, or educational objectives.

31. Artificial Intelligence and Digital Tools. Members remain professionally responsible for work performed with the assistance of artificial intelligence, automated documentation, transcription, digital communication, or other technology. Members shall use reasonable safeguards for confidential information, review AI-generated material for accuracy, avoid presenting automated output as professional certainty, and comply with applicable privacy, consent, and legal requirements.

32. Professional Business Conduct. Members shall conduct business honestly and fairly, honor lawful agreements, communicate material terms clearly, and avoid deceptive, coercive, exploitative, or predatory business practices. Ethical competition is compatible with professional service.

33. Responsibility to the Profession and Public. Members shall act in ways that strengthen public trust in hypnotherapy, contribute to responsible public education, and avoid conduct that materially misrepresents or discredits the profession.

34. Reporting Ethical or Illegal Conduct. Members who become aware of credible serious misconduct should use appropriate IAIH complaint procedures and, when legally required or reasonably necessary to protect the public, appropriate regulatory or legal channels. Reports and criticisms shall be made responsibly, in good faith, and without knowingly false or malicious allegations.

35. No Retaliation. Retaliation, intimidation, harassment, or discrimination against a person for making a good-faith ethical complaint, participating in an investigation, or raising a legitimate safety or compliance concern is prohibited.

36. Cooperation with Ethics Proceedings. Members shall cooperate honestly and in a timely manner with authorized IAIH ethics inquiries, subject to applicable law and legitimate confidentiality obligations. Members shall not knowingly destroy, falsify, conceal, or manipulate material evidence relevant to an ethics proceeding.

37. Ethical Decision-Making. When this Code does not directly address a situation, members shall use careful ethical reasoning, consider client welfare, autonomy, competence, law, boundaries, foreseeable harm, and professional integrity, and seek consultation when appropriate. When in doubt about scope: pause, verify, consult, collaborate, or refer.

Complaints, Due Process, and Disciplinary Authority

IAIH may receive and review complaints concerning alleged violations of this Code by persons subject to IAIH authority. Ethics procedures should provide reasonable notice of the allegations, an opportunity to respond, impartial review, appropriate documentation, and an appeal or reconsideration process as established by current IAIH policy.

Depending on the seriousness, pattern, circumstances, and substantiation of the conduct, outcomes may include dismissal of the complaint, education or corrective action, warning, conditions on standing, suspension, revocation of membership or certification, or other action authorized by IAIH policy. IAIH disciplinary action is separate from any governmental, civil, criminal, licensing, employment, or other proceeding.

IAIH may refer matters to appropriate authorities when required by law or when circumstances reasonably warrant doing so. Nothing in this Code promises confidentiality beyond what IAIH can lawfully and practically provide during an investigation.

Relationship to IAIH Scope and Law Documents

This Code of Ethics should be read together with the IAIH Scope of Practice Standards and the current IAIH United States Hypnosis & Hypnotherapy Law and Scope-of-Practice Guide. The Code establishes how members are expected to behave; the Scope of Practice Standards establish professional boundaries for practice; and the Law Guide provides jurisdiction-specific legal research and risk-management guidance.

Where these documents appear to conflict with applicable law, the law controls. Where IAIH standards are more protective of client welfare than the minimum required by law, members remain expected to comply with IAIH ethical standards as a condition of Association standing.

Adoption

This Code of Ethics is adopted as the current ethical standard of the International Association of Interpersonal Hypnotherapists and supersedes prior IAIH Codes of Ethics upon its effective date.

Effective Date: September 1, 2026

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