

CANADIAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

Committee on Ethics

Terms of Reference¹

I. Authority and Accountability

- A. The Committee on Ethics is a Standing Committee of the Association that operates independently of the Board of Directors (i.e., it is an arm's length Committee). The Committee reports to the Board of Directors through the Committee Chair and a member of the Board of Directors appointed by the Board to be Board Liaison to the Committee.
- B. The Committee has the authority to carry out the objectives listed below, subject to the By-Laws and policies of the Association, the *Canadian Code of Ethics for Psychologists* (or successive codes as adopted by the Board of Directors), and any rules and procedures established by the Committee and approved by the Board of Directors.
- C. Opinions and decisions of the Committee on Ethics are independent of the Board of Directors and CPA staff.
- D. The Committee does not have the authority to make policy or policy decisions on behalf of the Association, nor to suspend, expel, or reinstate Members of the Association. The Committee's opinions and recommendations on such matters are advisory.

II. Objectives

- A. The Committee on Ethics is available to the CPA Board of Directors and Head Office staff to:
 - (i) respond to ethics-related questions and requests for ethics consultation from CPA Members and Affiliates, psychology or other organizations, and members of the public;
 - (ii) generate formal opinions on specific ethical questions/issues;
 - (iii) consider the need for and develop new ethical guidelines for approval by the Board;
 - (iv) guide the development of and revisions to the *Canadian Code of Ethics for Psychologists* (or successive codes as adopted by the Board of Directors);
 - (v) develop and/or provide educational ethics resources for Members and Affiliates;
 - (vi) review and provide recommendations when there are self-disclosures (e.g., declarations on membership application forms) or external reports (e.g., regulatory/licensing/certification body reports, media reports, court records) of serious unethical or illegal conduct by CPA Members; and
 - (vii) review and seek informal resolution, or provide recommendations, regarding complaints of alleged unethical conduct when the complaints are against CPA Members and serious enough to warrant a review, and when there is no alternative

¹ Approved by the Board of Directors of the Canadian Psychological Association in March 2020.

forum (e.g., regulatory/licensing/certification body, research ethics board, complaint structure within a university).

III. Committee Membership

- A. As per By-Law 6.08 (Committees), the Committee on Ethics elects its Chair and Vice Chair from the members of the Committee.
- B. To maximize continuity in meeting the Committee's objectives, the Chair and Vice Chair are elected for a 4-year period, which is renewable.
- C. A Student Affiliate member of the Committee is not eligible to be elected Chair or Vice Chair.
- D. Including the Chair and Vice Chair, the Committee on Ethics shall consist of not less than seven Members of the Association and, as feasible, one Student Affiliate.
- E. New members shall be selected by the Chair for terms of 1 to 4 years, renewable, in consultation with other members of the Committee.
- F. A list of Committee members shall be submitted annually to the Board of Directors. Any Committee member may be removed at any time by a majority vote of the Board of Directors.

IV. Meetings

- A. The Committee on Ethics shall hold a business meeting at the annual convention of CPA, and shall maintain other communication among committee members as needed during the year.
- B. In order to support the Committee in its work, and within the limits of protecting confidentiality, the CPA Ethics Officer attends all Committee on Ethics business meetings, but without voting privileges.
- C. In order to help ensure communication between the Committee and the Board, and except for *in camera* portions of the business meeting, the Board-appointed Liaison attends Committee on Ethics business meetings. The Board Liaison does not have voting privileges.
- D. Except for *in camera* portions of the business meeting, other CPA Members and Affiliates may attend as observers at the discretion of and with the prior approval of the Chair. Such attendees do not have voting privileges.

V. Reports

- A. The Committee shall submit a summary of activities of the Committee in an annual report to the Board of Directors and to the Annual General Meeting of the Canadian Psychological Association.