

Employer Bulletin

Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice for Early Childhood Educators

As a self-regulatory body, the College of Early Childhood Educators (the College) exists to serve and protect the public interest. Under the *Early Childhood Educators Act, 2007*, the College has a legislated mandate “to establish and enforce professional standards and ethical standards that are applicable to members of the College”.

Taken together, the Code of Ethics and the Standards of Practice define and describe the professional knowledge, expertise, ethical values and behaviours required of registered early childhood educators. The Code of Ethics and the Standards of Practice:

- Articulate the knowledge, skills and ethical values that are inherent to the work of an early childhood educator
- Communicate to others the scope and nature of the early childhood education profession
- Express a common set of ideals and aspirations for members of the College, regardless of the early childhood education setting in which they may practise.

These standards convey certain expectations for which it is reasonable to hold members of the profession accountable.

Why do early childhood educators need a code of ethics and standards of practice?

The ethical and professional standards established in the Code of Ethics and the Standards of Practice describe the responsibilities of College members who must demonstrate safe, ethical and competent practice.

The Code of Ethics and the Standards of Practice, along with the Professional Misconduct regulation, serve as the basis on which members of the College are held accountable for professional practice and professional responsibilities.

Members of the College are guided in their decisions by the Code of Ethics, the Standards

of Practice and legislation applicable to early childhood educators, and use their professional judgement to make decisions.

How were the standards developed?

With Council approval, the College began developing the Code of Ethics and the Standards of Practice in May 2009.

The Code of Ethics and the Standards of Practice were developed in four phases which included:

- data collection
- data analysis and synthesis
- validation
- publication

Please visit our website for further information.

How will early childhood educators be held accountable to the Code of Ethics and the Standards of Practice?

Members of the College are required to practise in accordance with the ethical and professional standards of the profession, as set out in the Code of Ethics and the Standards of Practice.

Upon becoming a registered early childhood educator, a member becomes accountable for abiding by the ethical responsibilities and professional standards of the profession.

What happens if a member of the College does not abide by the ethical and professional standards?

As part of its duty to serve and protect the public interest, the College has a formal complaints process.

Anyone with a complaint about a College member's conduct or actions can submit a written complaint to the College.

The Complaints Committee considers whether or not to refer the matter to the Discipline Committee or Fitness to Practise Committee for a hearing or to take other action.

The Discipline Committee may make a determination, after a hearing, that a member of the College is guilty of professional misconduct (as defined in Ontario Regulation 223/08). Professional misconduct includes "failing to maintain the standards of the profession".

An overview of the College's complaints process and the Professional Misconduct regulation are available on our website.

What is the employer's responsibility?

Employers should be aware that if there is a conflict between the College's Code of Ethics and the Standards of Practice and a member's work environment and/or the policies and procedures of his or her employer, members of the College have an obligation to comply with the College's Code of Ethics and the Standards of Practice.

To increase awareness of the standards, the College is requesting that employers display the *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice* poster in an area visible to parents and staff.

For other information relevant to employers, please visit our website for Employer Bulletins on topics such as Mandatory Reports and the Public Register.

For more information and to update your contact information:

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