

Code of Ethical Practice

Preamble

African Register of Exercise Professionals is an Independent Organisation of Fitness Professionals across Africa.

Our vision is for an African Fitness community that is empowered, skilled, professional and aptly equipped to lead the continent in adoption of a healthy, active lifestyle. Our Mission is to professionalize exercise while building leaders across the continent.

To promote this vision of a healthy continent while noting the centrality of ethical and accountable professionals, African Register of Exercise Professionals has produced the Fitness Professionals Code of Practice.

The purpose of this code is to nurture professional, ethical and accountable fitness professionals, who inspire consumer confidence.

Its prescriptive nature offers a clear yet simple guidance to a fitness professional on expected conduct while dealing with clients and other stakeholders while offering the service.

Objectives

- (i) To promote appropriate, expected ethical and professional conduct of fitness professionals; and
- (ii) To promote consumer confidence in the Fitness service sector.

Application of the code

This code applies to African Register of Exercise Professionals certified members.

Nothing in this code limits a Fitness Professional's obligations under any applicable law. This code should not be treated as a legal advice and is to be applied in addition to any imposed legislation.

Where there is any conflict or inconsistency between the code of conduct and any legislation or regulation, the legislation or regulation shall prevail to the extent of the conflict or inconsistency.

African Register of Exercise Professionals, its employees, officers and agents do not accept any liability for the results of any action taken in reliance upon, based on or in connection with this code. To the extent legally possible African Register of Exercise Professionals, and its employees, officers and agents, disclaim all liability arising by reason of any errors and omissions contained in this code.

Administration of this code

The Board of Directors of African Register of Exercise Professionals is responsible for overseeing and administering the code as well as handling complaints raised against a Member including that a member has failed to comply with the code or is otherwise:

- i) engaged in unsatisfactory professional conduct;
- ii) engaged in professional misconduct;
- iii) not a suitable person to be registered as a member; or
- iv) brings African Register of Exercise Professionals into disrepute.

The Board may delegate its powers under this Code to a committee of the Board with delegated authority to investigate and determine complaints made against a member. These are decisions such as suspension or de-registration of a member or any other sanction so determined.

The Board reserves the right to amend or modify this Code from time to time. A member must abide by any such amendment or modification.

1. Good Professional Practice

Good professional practice by exercise professionals means providing a high quality, safe fitness service for clients. Members are expected to:

- 1.1 Work within the limits of their scope of practice, competence and other standards, policies and guidelines.
- 1.2 Act with integrity, maintain professionalism and operate within applicable laws.
- 1.3 Continuously expand their knowledge and skills through continuous professional education.
- 1.4 Take the necessary pre-exercise screening to assess the needs of their clients.
- 1.5 Carefully take into account a client's pre-exercise results as well as their objectives when recommending suitable exercise programs.
- 1.6 Warmly refer a client to a qualified fitness professional where the service needed is outside one's expertise.
- 1.7 Ensure that any physical contact is appropriate and carried out with the consent of the client.
- 1.8 Inform the client all financial costs incidental to receiving the services upfront;
- 1.9 Maintain complete records of services provided to a client, including pre-exercise screening, client progress and referrals.

2. Safety

African Register of Exercise Professionals members will:

- 2.1 Prioritize the safety and health of clients.
- 2.2 Ensure that all participants have been taken through pre-screening and prepared for the use of relevant equipment.
- 2.3 Ensure that the fitness activities are appropriate and as per clients' needs.
- 2.4 Ensure that all exercise is performed in a controlled and safe manner.
- 2.5 Never use or allow the use of prohibited drugs or banned performance enhancing substances.
- 2.6 Respect the physical ability and limits of a client.
- 2.7 Ensure that their premises have met the necessary safety parameters set by law.

3. Working With Clients

Relations between African Register of Exercise Professionals members and clients should be collaborative, based on respect, openness, trust and good communication. At all times, members should:

- 3.1 Be courteous, respectful, compassionate and honest with clients.
- 3.2 Respect their clients' privacy and right to confidentiality.
- 3.3 Ensure that clients consent to the release and exchange of health information with third parties where this is necessary.
- 3.4 Use client information carefully when developing exercise programs.
- 3.5 Respect the dignity and rights of clients at all times;
- 3.6 Conduct themselves within appropriate professional boundaries.
- 3.7 Priorities each client's health, well-being and safety taking into account their individual circumstances and exercise objectives.
- 3.8 Not engage in any form of unwanted intimate contact;
- 3.9 Regardless of any relationship with a client, ensure that professional standards are maintained while offering the services.

4. Working with children

Offering fitness services to children comes with added responsibility and legal obligations on fitness professional. Members are required to:

- 4.1 Comply with children protection legislation in their country.
- 4.2 Consider a young person's capacity to consent or make decisions.
- 4.3 Engage a parent or guardian when entering into any fitness service agreements.
- 4.4 Communicate with a child or young person in a humane manner taking into account:
 - 4.4.1 Age related development and physical exercise needs and limitations;
 - 4.4.2 Encourage questions from the minor and answer them honestly;
 - 4.4.3 Communicate to them in a way that they can understand; and
 - 4.4.4 Recognize the role of parents or guardian.

5. Privacy Laws

A member must ensure that:

- 5.1 All personal information is handled in accordance with the applicable laws.
- 5.2 It obtains the necessary consents from consumers and personnel for African Register of Exercise Professionals to collect personal information about the origins and causes of complaints for the purpose of identifying systemic and recurring problems in the fitness industry.
- 5.3 Must maintain and take all the necessary measures to protect any personal data collected from a client.

6. Confidentiality

A fitness professional must not use, or disclose to another person, confidential information about a client obtained under while providing fitness services, unless the information is otherwise lawfully used or disclosed, or such as necessary consents have been obtained from the client to disclose such information. Confidentiality obligations continue even after a member has terminated the service.

7. Advertising

A member must not use misleading, false, deceptive or unfair advertising or marketing practices in any platform which includes but not limited to misleading or false representations concerning the price of goods or services, false representations that certain goods or services have benefits they do not have.

A member must ensure that sufficient information is available to enable a consumer to make an informed decision in relation to services offered and in particular, should;

- 7.1 Ensure that all promotional material is accurate, unambiguous and truthful.
- 7.2 Ensure that the promotional materials do not promise unrealistic expectations as to the attainable results from getting fitness training.
- 7.3 Not make false, misleading or deceptive comparisons with programs provided by competitors.
- 7.4 Make available for perusal this Code and any other industry codes if requested so by a client, or promptly direct the client where they can access a copy of this document.
- 7.5 Ensure that their employees, personnel or agents act professionally and do not use unreasonable sales methods, high pressure selling techniques, harassment or unconscionable conduct to sell its fitness services.