

# Canons of Ethics

## Preamble

### Part I

AAACE International Members shall uphold and advance the honor, dignity, and practices of Cost Engineering and Cost Management.

In keeping with the high standards of ethical conduct members shall:

- Be honest and impartial;
- Serve employer, clients, and the public with dedication;
- Strive to increase the competence and prestige of their practice;
- Apply knowledge and skill to advance human welfare; and,
- Ensure adherence to health, safety, and welfare standards.

### Part II

Throughout the Canons of Ethics, the term “Member” shall be read to include:

- All classes of AAACE International membership;
- All who currently hold AAACE International certification including those applying for certification whether they are AAACE International members or non-members.
- Other professionals contributing their expertise to AAACE International through professional courses of instruction using AAACE International materials.
- Other professionals supporting development of educational and technical products that bear the AAACE International imprimatur.

## I. Relations with the Public

Members shall hold paramount the health, safety, and welfare of the public, including that of future generations. [Paragraph: I.1]

Members shall endeavor to extend public knowledge and appreciation of Cost Engineering and Cost Management and its achievements. [I.2]

Members shall oppose any untrue, unsupported, or exaggerated statements regarding Cost Engineering and Cost Management. [I.3]

Members shall uphold the honor and dignity of their profession with dignity and modesty. [I.4]

Members shall express an opinion on cost engineering or cost management subject only when it is founded on adequate knowledge and honest conviction. [I.5]

Members, shall issue no statements, criticisms, or arguments concerning Cost Engineering and/or/ Cost Management matters, that are inspired or paid for by an interested party or parties, unless they preface their comments by identifying themselves, by disclosing the identities of the party or parties on whose behalf they are speaking, and by revealing the existence of any pecuniary interest they may have in matters under discussion. [I.6]

Members shall approve or apply their seal only those documents, they have reviewed or prepared, which are determined to be safe for public health and welfare in conformity with accepted cost engineering, cost management and economic standards. [I.7]

Members whose judgment is overruled where the health, safety, and welfare of the public are endangered shall inform their clients and employers of the possible consequences. [I.8]

Members shall work through professional societies to encourage and support others who follow these concepts. [I.9]

Members shall work only with those who follow the concepts of health, safety, and welfare of the public. [I.10]

Members shall be objective and truthful in professional reports, statements, and testimony. They shall include all relevant and pertinent information in such reports, statements, and testimony. [I.11]

No members shall represent that any opinion they offer represents that of AACE International unless authorized by the President or the Executive Director/CEO. Further, no member shall represent to commit AACE International to any task, responsibility, or contract without the approval of the President or Executive Director/CEO. [I.12]

## **II. Relations with the Employees and Clients**

Members shall act in all matters as a faithful agent or trustee for each employer or client. [Paragraph: II.1]

Members shall act fairly and justly toward vendors and contractors and shall not accept any commissions or allowances from vendors or contractors, directly or indirectly. [II.2]

Members shall inform their employer or client of financial interest in

- any potential vendor, contractor, or
- any invention, machine, or apparatus

that is involved in a project or work for either employer or client. Members shall not allow such interest to affect any decisions regarding cost engineering or cost management services that they may be called upon to perform. [II.3]

Members, when as a result of their studies, find that a project or work shall not be successful, or

if their Cost Engineering and Cost Management or economic judgment is overruled, shall so advise their employer or client. [II.4]

Members shall undertake only those Cost Engineering and Cost Management assignments for which they are qualified. Members shall engage or advise their employers or clients to retain additional specialists whenever their employer's or client's interests are served best by such an arrangement. Members shall cooperate fully with specialists so engaged. [II.5]

Members shall treat information coming to them in the course of their assignments as confidential and shall not use such information as a means of making personal profit if such action is adverse to the interests of their clients, their employers, or the public. [II.6]

Members shall not disclose confidential information concerning the business affairs or technical processes of any present or former employer, client, or bidder under evaluation, without consent, unless required by law. [II.7]

Members shall not reveal confidential information or finding of any commission or board of which they are Members, unless required by law. [II.8]

Members shall not duplicate for others, without express permission of the client(s), designs, calculations, sketches, etc., supplied to them by clients or bidders. [II.9]

Members shall not use confidential information coming to them in the course of their assignments as a means of making personal profit if such action is adverse to the interests of their clients, employers, or the public. [II.10]

Members shall not accept compensation—financial or otherwise—from more than one party for the same service, or for other services pertaining to the same project or work, without the consent of all interested parties. [II.11]

Members, employed by others, shall engage in supplementary employment or consulting practice only with the consent of their employer. [II.12]

Members shall not use equipment, supplies, laboratory, or office facilities of their employers to carry on outside private practice without the consent of their employers. [II.13]

Members shall not solicit a contract from a governmental body on which a principal officer or employee of their organization is affiliated. [II.14]

Members shall not request, propose, or accept professional commissions on a contingent basis under circumstances that compromise their professional judgment. [II.15]

Members shall act with fairness and justice to all parties when administering a project or work. [II.16]

Members, before undertaking a project or work for others in which the Member may make improvements, plans, designs, inventions, or records that may justify copyrights or patents, shall enter into a positive agreement regarding the rights of respective parties. [II.17]

Members shall admit and accept their own errors when proven wrong and refrain from distorting or altering the facts to justify their decisions. [II.18]

Members shall not attempt to attract an employee from another employer by false or misleading representations. [II.19]

Members shall act in professional matters for each employer or client as faithful agents or trustees and shall avoid conflicts of interest. [II.20]

Members shall avoid all known or potential conflicts of interest with their employers or clients and shall promptly inform their employers or clients of any business association, interests, or circumstances that could influence their judgment or the quality of their services. [II.21]

Members shall not solicit or accept gratuities, directly or indirectly, from contractors, their agents, or other parties dealing with their clients or employers in connection with project or work for which they are responsible. [II.22]

### **III. Relations with Other Professionals**

Members shall acknowledge that credit for Cost Engineering and Cost Management work is given to those to whom credit is properly due. [Paragraph: III.1]

Members shall provide prospective employees with complete information on working conditions and their proposed status of employment. After employment begins, Members shall keep the employee informed of any changes in status and working conditions. [III.2]

Members shall not:

- Maliciously or falsely, directly or indirectly, injure the professional reputation, prospects, practice, or employment of another, or
- Indiscriminately criticize another's project or work.

Proof that another cost professional has been unethical, unfair, or illegal in their practice shall be cause for advising proper authority. [III.3]

Members shall not compete unfairly with other cost professionals. [III.4]

Members shall cooperate in advancing the Cost Engineering and Cost Management profession by interchanging information and experience with other cost professionals and students, by contributing to public communication media, to cost engineering, and cost management and scientific societies, and schools. [III.5]

Members shall not seek to acquire or provide to other individuals certification examination questions or any other certification examination materials, to include derivative materials, not in the public domain. [III.6]

Members shall not falsify or permit misrepresentation of their own or their associates' academic

or professional qualifications. They shall not misrepresent or exaggerate their degrees or responsibility in or for the subject matter of prior assignments. Brochures or other presentations incident to the solicitation of employment, shall not misrepresent pertinent facts concerning employers, employees, associates, joint ventures, accomplishments, or membership in technical societies. [III.7]

Members shall prepare articles for technical or lay press that are only factual, dignified, and free from ostentatious or laudatory implications. Such articles shall not imply credit to the cost professionals for other than their direct participation in the project or work described unless credit is given to others for their share of the project or work. [III.8]

## **IV. Standards of Professional Performance**

Members shall be dignified and modest in explaining their accomplishments and merit and shall avoid any act tending to promote their own interests at the expense of the integrity, honor, and dignity of the profession. [Paragraph IV.1]

Members, when serving as expert witnesses, shall express Cost Engineering and Cost Management opinions only when it is founded upon adequate knowledge of the facts, upon a background of technical competence, and upon honest conviction. [IV.2]

Members shall continue their professional development throughout their careers and shall provide opportunities for the professional development of cost professionals under their supervision. [IV.3]

Members shall encourage their Cost Engineering and Cost Management employees to attend and present papers at professional and technical society meetings. [IV.4]

Members shall uphold the principle of mutually satisfying relationships between employers and employees with respect to terms of employment, including professional grade descriptions, salary ranges, and fringe benefits. [IV.5]

Members serving as AACE International Section Officers shall not claim that they or their employers represent AACE International for the purposes of gaining or soliciting business. [IV.6]

## **Administration**

### **Ethics Complaints**

Any AACE International member or AACE International staff member may file a complaint against an AACE International member alleging a violation of this Canon of Ethics. Complaints shall be filed in accordance with the Constitution and By-Laws and the Policies and Procedures of Ethics Committee. Complaints from non-members who have direct knowledge of an alleged violation may also be considered.

## **Recommendations for changes or corrections:**

Recommendations for changes or corrections to the AACE International Canons of Ethics are welcome. Changes or corrections shall be directed to: Chair, AACE International Ethics Committee or the Executive Director, AACE International.

Each recommended change and/or correction shall have full consideration by the AACE International Ethics Committee. The Chair of the Ethics Committee shall provide a full response to the submitter and all other affected parties.

## **Administrative Management of the AACE International Canons of Ethics:**

The Chair, appointed annually by the President, is responsible to the President and Board of Directors for administrative management of the Canons of Ethics.

## **Changes and Approval of Changes to the AACE International Canons of Ethics are made as follows:**

Minor administrative corrections and/or changes will be coordinated between the Chair of the AACE International Ethics Committee and the Executive Director. Suggestions considered to have merit will be forwarded, with a recommendation, to the Executive Board of the Board of Directors. The Executive Board will formulate their recommendation for action by the Board of Directors. Resulting action will be implemented by the Executive Director/CEO.

Significant and/or major changes to the AACE International Canons of Ethics will be coordinated between the Chair of the AACE International Ethics Committee and the Executive Director. Suggestions considered to have merit will be forwarded, with a recommendation, to the Executive Board of the Board of Directors. The Executive Committee will make a determination if the proposal shall be presented for public comment or may direct the proposal to the Board of Directors for action. Proposals recommended for public comment will be broadly presented to AACE International Membership for comment over a thirty-day period. All comments will be evaluated with responses to the submitter. The proposed change to the Canons of Ethics will be resubmitted, with comments received. The Executive will formulate their recommendation for action by the Board of Directors. Resulting action will be implemented by the Executive Director/CEO.

## **Publication and maintenance of the current edition of Canons of Ethics:**

The Executive Director/CEO is responsible to publication and maintenance of the AACE International Canons of Ethics.