

Confidentiality and Privacy



CODE OF ETHICS

The NADSP Code of Ethics serves as a straightforward and relevant guide for direct support professionals (DSPs), helping them resolve the ethical dilemmas they face every day and encouraging them to achieve the highest ideals of the profession.

The **Confidentiality and Privacy tenet** of the Code of Ethics centers on DSPs promoting, protecting, and respecting confidentiality and privacy. People who receive services should be able to rely on each and every DSP's commitment to keep their information private. It is impossible to provide direct support to another human being without learning a great deal about them. That might include medical information, financial information, family background, or difficult moments from the past.

As important as Federal laws like HIPAA and FERPA are to understanding a DSP's responsibilities regarding confidentiality, the ethical responsibilities under the Code of Ethics can be broader than these Federal laws require. DSPs will often have access to information that does not strictly qualify as protected health information or as an educational record, but might represent information which DSPs have an ethical obligation not to share publicly. As professionals, DSPs must be intentional in their approach to confidentiality.

TOP TENET TIPS

- Be sure you understand your responsibilities under both the law and your employer's policies.
- If you are uncertain about those responsibilities, speak to your supervisor or ask questions in training.
- Take some time to read and reflect on the NADSP Code of Ethics as well.
- As important as it is to "follow HIPAA," there are potentially situations where it would be possible for a DSP to act unethically even if they are not violating that particular Federal law.
- Remember who the information in question belongs to.



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