

AAMFT Code of Ethics

Effective July 1, 2001

Preamble

The Board of Directors of the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT) hereby promulgates, pursuant to Article 2, Section 2.013 of the Association's Bylaws, the Revised AAMFT Code of Ethics, effective July 1, 2001.

The AAMFT strives to honor the public trust in marriage and family therapists by setting standards for ethical practice as described in this Code. The ethical standards define professional expectations and are enforced by the AAMFT Ethics Committee. The absence of an explicit reference to a specific behavior or situation in the Code does not mean that the behavior is ethical or unethical. The standards are not exhaustive. Marriage and family therapists *who* are uncertain about the ethics of a particular course of action are encouraged to seek counsel from consultants, attorneys, supervisors, colleagues, or other appropriate authorities.

Both law and ethics govern the practice of marriage and family therapy. When making decisions regarding professional behavior, marriage and family therapists must consider the AAMFT Code of Ethics and applicable laws and regulations. If the AAMFT Code of Ethics prescribes a standard higher than that required by law, marriage and family therapists must meet the higher standard of the AAMFT Code of Ethics. Marriage and family therapists comply with the mandates of law, but make known their commitment to the AAMFT Code of Ethics and take steps to resolve the conflict in a responsible manner. The AAMFT supports legal mandates for reporting of alleged unethical conduct.

The AAMFT Code of Ethics is binding on Members of AAMFT in all membership categories, AAMFT-Approved Supervisors, and applicants for membership and the Approved Supervisor designation (hereafter, AAMFT Member). AAMFT members have an obligation to be familiar with the AAMFT Code of Ethics and its application to their professional services. Lack of awareness or misunderstanding of an ethical standard is not a defense to a charge of unethical conduct.

The process for filing, investigating, and resolving complaints of unethical conduct is described in the current Procedures for Handling Ethical Matters of the AAMFT Ethics Committee. Persons accused are considered innocent by the Ethics Committee until proven guilty, except as otherwise provided, and are entitled to due process. If an AAMFT Member resigns in anticipation of, or during the course of, an ethics investigation, the Ethics Committee will complete its investigation. Any publication of action taken by the Association will include the fact that the Member attempted to resign during the investigation.

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Principle I Responsibility to Clients

Marriage and family therapists advance the welfare of families and individuals. They respect the rights of those persons seeking their assistance, and make reasonable efforts to ensure that their services are used appropriately.

1.1. Marriage and family therapists provide professional assistance to persons without discrimination on the basis of race, age, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, disability, gender, health status, religion, national origin, or sexual orientation.

1.2 Marriage and family therapists obtain appropriate informed consent to therapy or related procedures as early as feasible in the therapeutic relationship, and use language that is reasonably understandable to clients. The content of informed consent may vary depending upon the client and treatment plan; however, informed consent generally necessitates that the client: (a) has the capacity to consent; (b) has been adequately informed of significant information concerning treatment processes and procedures; (c) has been adequately informed of potential risks and benefits of treatments for which generally recognized standards do not yet exist; (d) has freely and without undue influence expressed consent; and (e) has provided consent that is appropriately documented. When persons, due to age or mental status, are legally incapable of giving informed consent, marriage and family therapists obtain informed permission from a legally authorized person, if such substitute consent is legally permissible.

1.3 Marriage and family therapists are aware of their influential positions with respect to clients, and they avoid exploiting the trust and dependency of such persons. Therapists, therefore, make every effort to avoid conditions and multiple relationships with clients that could impair professional judgment or increase the risk of exploitation. Such relationships include, but are not limited to, business or close personal relationships with a client or the client's immediate family. When the risk of impairment or exploitation exists due to conditions or multiple roles, therapists take appropriate precautions.

1.4 Sexual intimacy with clients is prohibited.

1.5 Sexual intimacy with former clients is likely to be harmful and is therefore prohibited for two years following the termination of therapy or last professional contact. In an effort to avoid exploiting the trust and dependency of clients, marriage and family therapists should not engage in sexual intimacy with former clients after the two years following termination or last professional contact. Should therapists engage in sexual intimacy with former clients following two years after termination or last professional contact, the burden shifts to the therapist to demonstrate that there has been no exploitation or injury to the former client or to the client's immediate family.

1.6 Marriage and family therapists comply with applicable laws regarding the reporting of alleged unethical conduct.

1.7 Marriage and family therapists do not use their professional relationships with clients to further their own interests.

1.8 Marriage and family therapists respect the rights of clients to make decisions and help them to understand the consequences of these decisions. Therapists clearly advise the clients that they have the responsibility to make decisions regarding relationships such as cohabitation, marriage, divorce, separation, reconciliation, custody, and visitation.

1.9 Marriage and family therapists continue therapeutic relationships only so long as it is reasonably clear that clients are benefiting from the relationship.

1.10 Marriage and family therapists assist persons in obtaining other therapeutic services if the therapist is unable or unwilling, for appropriate reasons, to provide professional help.

1.11 Marriage and family therapists do not abandon or neglect clients in treatment without making reasonable arrangements for the continuation of such treatment.

1.12 Marriage and family therapists obtain written informed consent from clients before videotaping, audio recording, or permitting third-party observation.

1.13 Marriage and family therapists, upon agreeing to provide services to a person or entity at the request of a third party, clarify, to the extent feasible and at the outset of the service, the nature of the relationship with each party and the limits of confidentiality.

Principle II Confidentiality

Marriage and family therapists have unique confidentiality concerns because the client in a therapeutic relationship may be more than one person. Therapists respect and guard the confidences of each individual client.

2.1 Marriage and family therapists disclose to clients and other interested parties, as early as feasible in their professional contacts, the nature of confidentiality and possible limitations of the clients' right to confidentiality. Therapists review with clients the circumstances where confidential information may be requested and where disclosure of confidential information may be legally required. Circumstances may necessitate repeated disclosures.

2.2 Marriage and family therapists do not disclose client confidences except by written authorization or waiver, or where mandated or permitted by law. Verbal authorization will not be sufficient except in emergency situations, unless prohibited by law. When providing couple, family or group treatment, the therapist does not disclose information outside the treatment context without a written authorization from each individual competent to execute a waiver. In the context of couple, family or group treatment, the therapist may not reveal any individual's confidences to others in the client unit without the prior written permission of that individual.

2.3 Marriage and family therapists use client and/or clinical materials in teaching, writing, consulting, research, and public presentations only if a written waiver has been obtained in accordance with Subprinciple 2.2, or when appropriate steps have been taken to protect client identity and confidentiality.

2.4 Marriage and family therapists store, safeguard, and dispose of client records in ways that maintain confidentiality and in accord with applicable laws and professional standards.

2.5 Subsequent to the therapist moving from the area, closing the practice, or upon the death of the therapist, a marriage and family therapist arranges for the storage, transfer, or disposal of client records in ways that maintain confidentiality and safeguard the welfare of clients.

2.6 Marriage and family therapists, when consulting with colleagues or referral sources, do not share confidential information that could reasonably lead to the identification of a client, research participant, supervisee, or other person with whom they have a confidential relationship unless they have obtained the prior written consent of the client, research participant, supervisee, or other person with whom they have a confidential relationship. Information may be shared only to the extent necessary to achieve the purposes

of the consultation.

Principle III Professional Competence and Integrity

Marriage and family therapists maintain high standards of professional competence and integrity.

3.1 Marriage and family therapists pursue knowledge of new developments and maintain competence in marriage and family therapy through education, training, or supervised experience.

3.2 Marriage and family therapists maintain adequate knowledge of and adhere to applicable laws, ethics, and professional standards.

3.3 Marriage and family therapists seek appropriate professional assistance for their personal problems or conflicts that may impair work performance or clinical judgment.

3.4 Marriage and family therapists do not provide services that create a conflict of interest that may impair work performance or clinical judgment.

3.5 Marriage and family therapists, as presenters, teachers, supervisors, consultants and researchers, are dedicated to high standards of scholarship, present accurate information, and disclose potential conflicts of interest.

3.6 Marriage and family therapists maintain accurate and adequate clinical and financial records.

3.7 While developing new skills in specialty areas, marriage and family therapists take steps to ensure the competence of their work and to protect clients from possible harm. Marriage and family therapists practice in specialty areas new to them only after appropriate education, training, or supervised experience.

3.8 Marriage and family therapists do not engage in sexual or other forms of harassment of clients, students, trainees, supervisees, employees, colleagues, or research subjects.

3.9 Marriage and family therapists do not engage in the exploitation of clients, students, trainees, supervisees, employees, colleagues, or research subjects.

3.10 Marriage and family therapists do not give to or receive from clients (a) gifts of substantial value or (b) gifts that impair the integrity or efficacy of the therapeutic relationship.

3.11 Marriage and family therapists do not diagnose, treat, or advise on problems outside the recognized boundaries of their competencies.

3.12 Marriage and family therapists make efforts to prevent the distortion or misuse of their clinical and research findings.

3.13 Marriage and family therapists, because of their ability to influence and alter the lives of others, exercise special care when making public their professional recommendations and opinions through testimony or other public statements.

3.14 To avoid a conflict of interests, marriage and family therapists who treat minors or adults involved in custody or visitation actions may not also perform forensic evaluations for custody, residence, or visitation of the minor. The marriage and family therapist who treats the minor may provide the court or mental health professional performing the evaluation with information about the minor from the marriage and family

therapist's perspective as a treating marriage and family therapist, so long as the marriage and family therapist does not violate confidentiality.

3.15 Marriage and family therapists are in violation of this Code and subject to termination of membership or other appropriate action if they: (a) are convicted of any felony; (b) are convicted of a misdemeanor related to their qualifications or functions; (c) engage in conduct which could lead to conviction of a felony, or a misdemeanor related to their qualifications or functions; (d) are expelled from or disciplined by other professional organizations; (e) have their licenses or certificates suspended or revoked or are otherwise disciplined by regulatory bodies; (f) continue to practice marriage and family therapy while no longer competent to do so because they are impaired by physical or mental causes or the abuse of alcohol or other substances; or (g) fail to cooperate with the Association at any point from the inception of an ethical complaint through the completion of all proceedings regarding that complaint.

Principle IV Responsibility to Students and Supervisees

Marriage and family therapists do not exploit the trust and dependency of students and supervisees.

4.1 Marriage and family therapists are aware of their influential positions with respect to students and supervisees, and they avoid exploiting the trust and dependency of such persons. Therapists, therefore, make every effort to avoid conditions and multiple relationships that could impair professional objectivity or increase the risk of exploitation. When the risk of impairment or exploitation exists due to conditions or multiple roles, therapists take appropriate precautions.

4.2 Marriage and family therapists do not provide therapy to current students or supervisees.

4.3 Marriage and family therapists do not engage in sexual intimacy with students or supervisees during the evaluative or training relationship between the therapist and student or supervisee. Should a supervisor engage in sexual activity with a former supervisee, the burden of proof shifts to the supervisor to demonstrate that there has been no exploitation or injury to the supervisee.

4.4 Marriage and family therapists do not permit students or supervisees to perform or to hold themselves out as competent to perform professional services beyond their training, level of experience, and competence.

4.5 Marriage and family therapists take reasonable measures to ensure that services provided by supervisees are professional.

4.6 Marriage and family therapists avoid accepting as supervisees or students those individuals with whom a prior or existing relationship could compromise the therapist's objectivity. When such situations cannot be avoided, therapists take appropriate precautions to maintain objectivity. Examples of such relationships include, but are not limited to, those individuals with whom the therapist has a current or prior sexual, close personal, immediate familial, or therapeutic relationship.

4.7 Marriage and family therapists do not disclose supervisee confidences except by written authorization or waiver, or when mandated or permitted by law. In educational or training settings where there are multiple supervisors, disclosures are permitted only to other professional colleagues, administrators, or employers who share responsibility for training of the supervisee. Verbal authorization will not be sufficient except in emergency situations, unless prohibited by law.

Principle V Responsibility to Research Participants

Investigators respect the dignity and protect the welfare of research participants, and are aware of applicable laws and regulations and professional standards governing the conduct of research.

5.1 Investigators are responsible for making careful examinations of ethical acceptability in planning studies. To the extent that services to research participants may be compromised by participation in research, investigators seek the ethical advice of qualified professionals not directly involved in the investigation and observe safeguards to protect the rights of research participants.

5.2 Investigators requesting participant involvement in research inform participants of the aspects of the research that might reasonably be expected to influence willingness to participate. Investigators are especially sensitive to the possibility of diminished consent when participants are also receiving clinical services, or have impairments which limit understanding and/or communication, or when participants are children.

5.3 Investigators respect each participant's freedom to decline participation in or to withdraw from a research study at any time. This obligation requires special thought and consideration when investigators or other members of the research team are in positions of authority or influence over participants. Marriage and family therapists, therefore, make every effort to avoid multiple relationships with research participants that could impair professional judgment or increase the risk of exploitation.

5.4 Information obtained about a research participant during the course of an investigation is confidential unless there is a waiver previously obtained in writing. When the possibility exists that others, including family members, may obtain access to such information, this possibility, together with the plan for protecting confidentiality, is explained as part of the procedure for obtaining informed consent.

Principle VI Responsibility to the Profession

Marriage and family therapists respect the rights and responsibilities of professional colleagues and participate in activities that advance the goals of the profession.

6.1 Marriage and family therapists remain accountable to the standards of the profession when acting as members or employees of organizations. If the mandates of an organization with which a marriage and family therapist is affiliated, through employment, contract or otherwise, conflict with the AAMFT Code of Ethics, marriage and family therapists make known to the organization their commitment to the AAMFT Code of Ethics and attempt to resolve the conflict in a way that allows the fullest adherence to the Code of Ethics.

6.2 Marriage and family therapists assign publication credit to those who have contributed to a publication in proportion to their contributions and in accordance with customary professional publication practices.

6.3 Marriage and family therapists do not accept or require authorship credit for a publication based on research from a student's program, unless the therapist made a substantial contribution beyond being a faculty advisor or research committee member. Coauthorship on a student thesis, dissertation, or project should be determined in accordance with principles of fairness and justice.

6.4 Marriage and family therapists who are the authors of books or other materials that are published or distributed do not plagiarize or fail to cite persons to whom credit for original ideas or work is due.

6.5 Marriage and family therapists who are the authors of books or other materials published or distributed

by an organization take reasonable precautions to ensure that the organization promotes and advertises the materials accurately and factually.

6.6 Marriage and family therapists participate in activities that contribute to a better community and society, including devoting a portion of their professional activity to services for which there is little or no financial return.

6.7 Marriage and family therapists are concerned with developing laws and regulations pertaining to marriage and family therapy that serve the public interest, and with altering such laws and regulations that are not in the public interest.

6.8 Marriage and family therapists encourage public participation in the design and delivery of professional services and in the regulation of practitioners.

Principle VII Financial Arrangements

Marriage and family therapists make financial arrangements with clients, third-party payors, and supervisees that are reasonably understandable and conform to accepted professional practices.

7.1 Marriage and family therapists do not offer or accept kickbacks, rebates, bonuses, or other remuneration for referrals; fee-for-service arrangements are not prohibited.

7.2 Prior to entering into the therapeutic or supervisory relationship, marriage and family therapists clearly disclose and explain to clients and supervisees: (a) all financial arrangements and fees related to professional services, including charges for canceled or missed appointments; (b) the use of collection agencies or legal measures for nonpayment; and (c) the procedure for obtaining payment from the client, to the extent allowed by law, if payment is denied by the third-party payor. Once services have begun, therapists provide reasonable notice of any changes in fees or other charges.

7.3 Marriage and family therapists give reasonable notice to clients with unpaid balances of their intent to seek collection by agency or legal recourse. When such action is taken, therapists will not disclose clinical information.

7.4 Marriage and family therapists represent facts truthfully to clients, third-party payors, and supervisees regarding services rendered.

7.5 Marriage and family therapists ordinarily refrain from accepting goods and services from clients in return for services rendered. Bartering for professional services may be conducted only if: (a) the supervisee or client requests it, (b) the relationship is not exploitative, (c) the professional relationship is not distorted, and (d) a clear written contract is established.

7.6 Marriage and family therapists may not withhold records under their immediate control that are requested and needed for a client's treatment solely because payment has not been received for past services, except as otherwise provided by law.

Principle VIII Advertising

Marriage and family therapists engage in appropriate informational activities, including those that enable the public, referral sources, or others to choose professional services on an informed basis.

8.1 Marriage and family therapists accurately represent their competencies, education, training, and experience relevant to their practice of marriage and family therapy.

8.2 Marriage and family therapists ensure that advertisements and publications in any media (such as directories, announcements, business cards, newspapers, radio, television, Internet, and facsimiles) convey information that is necessary for the public to make an appropriate selection of professional services. Information could include: (a) office information, such as name, address, telephone number, credit card acceptability, fees, languages spoken, and office hours; (b) qualifying clinical degree (see subprinciple 8.5); (c) other earned degrees (see subprinciple 8.5) and state or provincial licensures and/or certifications; (d) AAMFT clinical member status; and (e) description of practice.

8.3 Marriage and family therapists do not use names that could mislead the public concerning the identity, responsibility, source, and status of those practicing under that name, and do not hold themselves out as being partners or associates of a firm if they are not.

8.4 Marriage and family therapists do not use any professional identification (such as a business card, office sign, letterhead, Internet, or telephone or association directory listing) if it includes a statement or claim that is false, fraudulent, misleading, or deceptive.

8.5 In representing their educational qualifications, marriage and family therapists list and claim as evidence only those earned degrees: (a) from institutions accredited by regional accreditation sources recognized by the United States Department of Education, (b) from institutions recognized by states or provinces that license or certify marriage and family therapists, or (c) from equivalent foreign institutions.

8.6 Marriage and family therapists correct, wherever possible, false, misleading, or inaccurate information and representations made by others concerning the therapist's qualifications, services, or products.

8.7 Marriage and family therapists make certain that the qualifications of their employees or supervisees are represented in a manner that is not false, misleading, or deceptive.

8.8 Marriage and family therapists do not represent themselves as providing specialized services unless they have the appropriate education, training, or supervised experience.

This Code is published by:
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Violations of this Code should be brought in writing to the attention of:

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New Explicit Duties and Other Changes In The 2001 AAMFT Code of Ethics

The following list is intended as a quick reference for therapists, supervisors, students and teachers who need a way to rapidly access the changes in the 2001 AAMFT Code of Ethics. Of course, everyone held to the Code should take the time to thoroughly read and absorb the Code itself.

The goal of the AAMFT Ethics Code Revision Taskforce was not a radically different Code but a clearer and more useful one. Most of the changes in the 2001 Code are instances of taking ethical obligations that were implicit in the 1998 Code and making them explicit. These are called "new explicit duties." Rewording of existing concepts is called "other changes." Very minor editorial changes are not listed.

Former Principle	New Principle	What is new? (Key terms are highlighted)
Preamble	Preamble	<p>New Explicit Duties:</p> <p>1) "If the AAMFT Code of Ethics prescribes a standard higher than that required by law, marriage and family therapists must meet the higher standard of the AAMFT Code of Ethics."</p> <p>2) "Marriage and family therapists comply with the mandates of law, but make known their commitment to the AAMFT Code of Ethics and take steps to resolve the conflict in a responsible manner."</p> <p>Other changes: Explanatory comments regarding the purpose of the Code, including: standards are not exhaustive; absence of explicit reference to specific behaviors does not mean behavior is ethical or unethical; encouragement to seek guidance when uncertain; the AAMFT supports legal mandates for reporting alleged unethical conduct.</p> <p>Explanatory comments regarding the AAMFT's ethics complaint process: process is guided by Procedures for Handling Ethical Matters, accused persons are considered innocent until proven guilty and are entitled to due process.</p>

1.1	1.1	New Explicit Duties: avoid discrimination regarding age, ethnicity, socio-economic status, disability and health status.
--	1.2	New Explicit Duties: "Marriage and family therapists obtain appropriate informed consent to therapy or related procedures as early as feasible in the therapeutic relationship, and use language that is reasonably understandable to clients. The content of informed consent may vary depending upon the client and treatment plan; however, informed consent generally necessitates that the client: (a) has the capacity to consent; (b) has been adequately informed of significant information concerning treatment processes and procedures; (c) has been adequately informed of potential risks and benefits of treatments for which generally recognized standards do not yet exist; (d) has freely and without undue influence expressed consent; and (e) has provided consent that is appropriately documented. When persons, due to age or mental status, are legally incapable of giving informed consent, marriage and family therapists obtain informed permission from a legally authorized person, if such substitute consent is legally permissible.
1.2	1.3	New Explicit Duty: "Avoid close personal relationships with...the client's immediate family. " Other changes: Avoid "conditions" that could impair; "multiple" substituted for "dual" relationships.
1.2	1.5	New Explicit Duty: "...In an effort to avoid exploiting the trust and dependency of clients, marriage and family therapists should not engage in sexual intimacy with former clients after the two years following termination or last professional contact. Should therapists engage in sexual intimacy with former clients following two years after termination or last professional contact, the burden shifts to the therapist to demonstrate that there has been no exploitation or injury to the former client or to the client's immediate family."
--	1.6	New Explicit Duty : "Marriage and family therapists comply with applicable laws regarding the reporting of alleged unethical conduct. "
1.4	1.8	Other changes: Decisions regarding "marriage" is expanded to include: "...relationships such as cohabitation, marriage, divorce, separation, reconciliation, custody, and visitation."
--	1.13	New Explicit Duty: "Marriage and family therapists, upon agreeing to provide services to a person or entity at the request of a third party , clarify, to the extent feasible and at the outset of the service, the nature of the relationship with each party and the limits of confidentiality."
--	2.1	New Explicit Duty: "Marriage and family therapists disclose to clients and other interested parties, as early as feasible in their professional contacts, the nature of confidentiality and possible limitations of the clients' right to confidentiality. Therapists review with clients the circumstances where confidential information may be requested and where disclosure of confidential information may be legally required. Circumstances may necessitate repeated disclosures."
2.1	2.2	New Explicit Duty: "In the context of couple, family or group treatment, the therapist may not reveal any individual's confidences to others in the client unit without the prior written permission of that individual." Other changes: The old Principle 2.1 has been reworded as follows: "Marriage and family therapists do not disclose client confidences except by written authorization or waiver, or where mandated or permitted by law. Verbal authorization will not be sufficient except in emergency situations, unless prohibited by law. When providing couple, family or group treatment,

		the therapist does not disclose information outside the treatment context without a written authorization from each individual competent to execute a waiver."
2.3	2.4	Other changes: "Marriage and family therapists store, safeguard , and dispose of client records in ways that maintain confidentiality and in accord with applicable laws and professional standards. "
--	2.5	New Explicit Duty: "Subsequent to the therapist moving from the area, closing the practice, or upon the death of the therapist, a marriage and family therapist arranges for the storage, transfer, or disposal of client records in ways that maintain confidentiality and safeguard the welfare of clients."
--	2.6	New Explicit Duty: "Marriage and family therapists, when consulting with colleagues or referral sources, do not share confidential information that could reasonably lead to the identification of a client, research participant, supervisee , or other person with whom they have a confidential relationship unless they have obtained the prior written consent of the client, research participant, supervisee, or other person with whom they have a confidential relationship. Information may be shared only to the extent necessary to achieve the purposes of the consultation."
3.4	3.1	Other changes: Old Principle 3.4 has been reworded: "Marriage and family therapists pursue knowledge of new developments and maintain competence in marriage and family therapy through education, training, or supervised experience. "
--	3.2	New Explicit Duty: " ... maintain adequate knowledge of and adhere to applicable laws, ethics, and professional standards. "
--	3.4	New Explicit Duty: " Marriage and family therapists do not provide services that create a conflict of interest that may impair work performance or clinical judgment."
3.3	3.5	New Explicit Duty: "Marriage and family therapists, as presenters , teachers, supervisors, consultants and researchers, are dedicated to high standards of scholarship, present accurate information, and disclose potential conflicts of interest. "
--	3.6	New Explicit Duty: "... maintain accurate and adequate clinical and financial records. "
--	3.7	New Explicit Duty: " While developing new skills in specialty areas , marriage and family therapists take steps to ensure the competence of their work and to protect clients from possible harm . Marriage and family therapists practice in specialty areas new to them only after appropriate education, training, or supervised experience."
3.5	3.8	Other changes: Old Subprinciple 3.5 regarding "harassment & exploitation" has been split into a new subprinciple 3.8 about harassment and subprinciple 3.9 about exploitation. Subprinciple 3.8 drops protection of actual or potential witnesses or complainants in investigations and ethical complaints.
--	3.10	New Explicit Duty: " Marriage and family therapists do not give to or receive from clients (a) gifts of substantial value or (b) gifts that impair the integrity or efficacy of the therapeutic relationship."
--	3.14	New Explicit Duty: " To avoid a conflict of interests, marriage and family therapists who treat minors or adults involved in custody or visitation actions may not also perform forensic evaluations for custody, residence, or visitation of the minor. The marriage and family therapist who treats the minor may provide the court or mental health professional performing the evaluation with information about the minor from the marriage and family therapist's perspective as a treating marriage and family therapist, so long as the marriage and family therapist does not violate confidentiality."
4.1	4.1	Other changes: "Dual relationships" has been replaced with "conditions and

		multiple relationships." "When a dual relationship cannot be avoided..." has been replaced with " when the risk of impairment or exploitation exists due to conditions or multiple roles."
--	4.3	New Explicit Duty: "Should a supervisor engage in sexual activity with a former supervisee , the burden of proof shifts to the supervisor to demonstrate that there has been no exploitation or injury to the supervisee." Other changes: "Marriage and family therapists do not engage in sexual intimacy with students or supervisees during the evaluative or training relationship between the therapist and student or supervisee."
--	4.5	New Explicit Duty: " Marriage and family therapists take reasonable measures to ensure that services provided by supervisees are professional. "
4.1	4.6	New Explicit Duty regarding prior relationships: " Marriage and family therapists avoid accepting as supervisees or students those individuals with whom a prior or existing relationship could compromise the therapist's objectivity. When such situations cannot be avoided, therapists take appropriate precautions to maintain objectivity. Examples of such relationships include, but are not limited to, those individuals with whom the therapist has a current or prior sexual, close personal, immediate familial, or therapeutic relationship."
4.3	4.7	Other changes: Subprinciple 4.3 about supervisee confidences has been reworded: "Marriage and family therapists do not disclose supervisee confidences except by written authorization or waiver, or when mandated or permitted by law. In educational or training settings where there are multiple supervisors, disclosures are permitted only to other professional colleagues, administrators, or employers who share responsibility for training of the supervisee. Verbal authorization will not be sufficient except in emergency situations, unless prohibited by law."
6.1	6.1	Other changes: Subprinciple 6.1 has been expanded to include this clarification: "If the mandates of an organization with which a marriage and family therapist is affiliated, through employment, contract or otherwise, conflict with the AAMFT Code of Ethics, marriage and family therapists make known to the organization their commitment to the AAMFT Code of Ethics and attempt to resolve the conflict in a way that allows the fullest adherence to the Code of Ethics."
--	6.3	New Explicit Duty: "Marriage and family therapists do not accept or require authorship credit for a publication based on research from a student's program , unless the therapist made a substantial contribution beyond being a faculty advisor or research committee member. Coauthorship on a student thesis, dissertation, or project should be determined in accordance with principles of fairness and justice."
7.1	7.1	Other changes: " Payment for referrals " is clarified to mean: "kickbacks, rebates, bonuses, or other remuneration for referrals" but "fee-for-service arrangements are not prohibited."
--	7.2	New Explicit Duties: "Prior to entering into the therapeutic or supervisory relationship, marriage and family therapists clearly disclose and explain to clients and supervisees: (a) all financial arrangements and fees related to professional services, including charges for canceled or missed appointments; (b) the use of collection agencies or legal measures for nonpayment ; and (c) the procedure for obtaining payment from the client, to the extent allowed by law, if payment is denied by the third-party payor . Once services have begun, therapists provide reasonable notice of any changes

		in fees or other charges."
--	7.3	New Explicit Duty: "Marriage and family therapists give reasonable notice to clients with unpaid balances of their intent to seek collection by agency or legal recourse. When such action is taken, therapists will not disclose clinical information. "
--	7.5	New Explicit Duties if barter is engaged in: "Marriage and family therapists ordinarily refrain from accepting goods and services from clients in return for services rendered. Bartering for professional services may be conducted only if: (a) the supervisee or client requests it, (b) the relationship is not exploitative, (c) the professional relationship is not distorted, and (d) a clear written contract is established."
--	7.6	New Explicit Duty: "Marriage and family therapists may not withhold records under their immediate control that are requested and needed for a client's treatment solely because payment has not been received for past services , except as otherwise provided by law."
8.6	8.7	"Persons in their employ" reworded to "employees or supervisees."
--	8.5	New Explicit duty: In representing their educational qualifications, marriage and family therapists list and claim as evidence only those earned degrees: (a) from institutions accredited by regional accreditation sources recognized by the United States Department of Education , (b) from institutions recognized by states or provinces that license or certify marriage and family therapists , or (c) from equivalent foreign institutions.
8.7	8.8	Reworded to: "Marriage and family therapists do not represent themselves as providing specialized services unless they have the appropriate education, training, or supervised experience."
8.8--8.19	--	These subprinciples, which had to do with permitted forms of referring to the AAMFT name in advertising and public information, have been removed from the Code, as they are not ethical principles per se. Instead, the contents of these subprinciples, including guidelines for using the AAMFT Clinical Member Logo, will be enforced separately as a matter of protecting AAMFT's name and interests as an organization. Only egregious or persistent violations of these guidelines will lead to charges of violating the Code of Ethics itself.

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Procedures for Handling Ethical Matters

The Board of Directors of the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy, pursuant to Article 5.02 and 6.02 of the Association's Bylaws (effective August 2004) (hereafter, the Bylaws), promulgates the revised AAMFT Procedures for Handling Ethical Matters (hereafter, the Procedures), effective October 2008.

I. The Role of AAMFT Divisions

1.00 Role of Divisions. It is the policy of AAMFT that the primary role of divisions in regard to ethics is to educate AAMFT members and the AAMFT Code of Ethics (hereafter, the Code of Ethics) and to refer potential cases to the AAMFT Ethics Committee.

1.01 Complaints. If a person makes an initial complaint or discusses a potential complaint with a division officer, staff person, or member, he or she should be referred to the AAMFT Ethics Committee, 112 S. Alfred Street, Alexandria, VA 22314.

1.02 AAMFT Members. The divisional ethics role includes disseminating copies of the Code of Ethics and the Procedures and providing workshops on the Code of Ethics.

2.00 Confidentiality. All information concerning ethical complaints made against AAMFT members should be treated in a strictly confidential manner by division officers, staff persons, and members. Insuring that confidentiality is maintained is important in order to protect the rights of the individual members who are the subject of complaints, and to protect AAMFT and its divisions because of improper disclosure of information. Under the terms of these Procedures, all information regarding complaints shall be treated in a strictly confidential manner.

2.01 Questions about Disclosure. When division officers, staff, and members have questions about whether information may properly be disclosed, these should be referred to the AAMFT Ethics Committee.

3.00 Advisory Ethical Opinions. It is the policy of AAMFT that its Ethics Committee may on occasion choose to give advisory opinions about ethical issues raised by a member of the Association (see Section II, #6.00). It remains the policy of AAMFT that divisions, division officers, and division ethics chairs and committees do not give advisory opinions.

II. The AAMFT Ethics Committee

1.00 Basis and Scope of Authority of the Ethics Committee.

1.01 Responsibilities of the Ethics Committee. The Bylaws of the Association (Article 6.04) authorize the AAMFT Ethics Committee to:

Review the AAMFT Code of Ethics and interpret it to the membership and to the public, and consider allegations of ethical standards made against members. It shall be the specific responsibility of the Committee to conduct investigations of alleged violations of the AAMFT Code of Ethics, and to resolve such allegations by mutual agreement with the member, or to make a recommendation of disciplinary action to be taken against the member and, if the case is heard by the Judicial Committee, to prosecute the charges against the member.

1.02 Jurisdiction over Members. The Code of Ethics is binding on Members of AAMFT in all membership categories, AAMFT Approved Supervisors, and applicants for membership and the Approved Supervisor designation. The Association continues to have jurisdiction over a member who has resigned or had their membership terminated for non-payment of dues if the complaint in question is received within one year of the date of resignation or termination for non-payment of dues. (hereafter, AAMFT Member or member).

2.00 Membership and Meetings of the Committee.

2.01 Membership. The Committee shall consist of no more than six (6) people, all of whom shall be appointed by the President with the approval of the Board of Directors. Of these, as many as five (5), and no less than four (4) shall be Clinical Members of the Association and as many as two (2), and no less than one (1), person (s) not

members of the Association shall act as public members of the Committee.

2.011 Term of Members. Each member of the Committee shall serve for a three-year appointment period, except that any person chosen to fill a vacancy shall be appointed for the unexpired term for the member whom he or she shall succeed.

2.012 Number of Terms. No Committee member who is a member of AAMFT shall serve for more than two consecutive terms.

2.013 Appointment of the Chair. The President shall appoint the Chair from one of the Association members who are currently members of the Ethics Committee.

2.014 Resignation from the Committee. Any member who misses two consecutive Committee meetings shall be deemed to have resigned from Committee membership unless the member can demonstrate good cause to the satisfaction of the Committee.

2.02 Voting. All Committee members, including public members, shall have full voting privileges.

2.03 Action by Majority. All actions by the Committee shall be made by a majority of those Committee members present and voting. A quorum, consisting of a least half the Committee members, is required before the Committee can vote on any action.

2.031 Conflicts of Interest. No Committee member shall vote on any particular case in which he or she has a conflict of interest, whether because of personal knowledge of the charged member, or for any other reason.

2.04 Schedule of Meetings. The Ethics Committee ordinarily meets at least once each year. Special meetings, in person or by other means of communication, may be called by the Chair if needed and funds are allocated. With the exception of special meetings, the Ethics Committee will have an in person meeting only if there are at least three cases ready for deliberation by the full Ethics Committee. Special meetings can be called at the Chair's discretion.

3.00 Procedures for Handling Ethical Complaints.

3.01 Role of the Committee. One role of the Ethics Committee is to investigate complaints of violations of the Code of Ethics and, if violations are found, to take action by mutual agreement with the member involved, or to recommend disciplinary action.

3.02 Committee Constraints. In carrying out its responsibilities, the Ethics Committee shall act in accordance with the articles of incorporation and Bylaws, with the Code of Ethics, and with these Procedures. AAMFT adjudication proceedings are not formal legal proceedings.

3.03 Subject's Use of Legal Counsel. The member under investigation may consult with his or her legal counsel at any time, but the member himself or herself is to be an active participant in these proceedings. The member must respond to the charges himself or herself at all levels of the process.

3.04 Initiation and Withdrawal of Complaints.

3.041 Written Complaints by Members and Non-Members. The Ethics Committee shall receive written complaints from both members of the Association and non-members. The complainant must have personal knowledge of the alleged behavior complained about or be in a position to supply relevant, reliable testimony or other evidence on the subject. Complaints must be in writing. Complaints must be signed and accompanied by the complainant's address, telephone number, and email address.

3.0411 Confidentiality. All correspondences with the complainant and member will be marked as confidential.

3.042 Anonymous Complaints. Anonymous complaints shall not be recognized as a basis for action.

3.043 Initiation of a Complaint by the Committee. The Ethics Committee may proceed on its own initiative when it has been presented with sufficient allegations which, if proven factual, would constitute a violation of the Code of Ethics. For example, the Committee could proceed on information received from another professional organization, a state regulatory agency, or from public sources. If the Committee decides to proceed on its own initiative, it shall prepare a written statement concerning factual allegations of a Code of Ethics violation or violations.

3.044 Withdrawal of Complaints. If the complainant wishes to withdraw the complaint after the member has been charged, the Ethics Committee can use to proceed on its initiative. In these situations, the Ethics Committee will, in effect, step into the shoes of the withdrawn complainant, and the case will then proceed.

3.045 Time Factors.

3.0451 Time Limitations. The Ethics Committee may determine, at its discretion, that a complaint cannot be investigated because the events complained about occurred too far in the past.

3.0452 Complaints Regarding Resigned Members. A complaint will be considered by the Ethics Committee if it received within one year from the date of resignation of membership or termination of membership for non-payment of dues, and if the conduct in question occurred while the person was a member of the Association, an AAMFT Approved Supervisor, or an applicant for membership or the Approved Supervisor designation.

3.0453 Action Prior to Membership. An AAMFT member may be charged with unethical behavior for any actions related to his or her professional conduct prior to the time the individual became an AAMFT member.

3.0454 Time Requirements for the Adjudication. AAMFT shall make its best efforts to adhere strictly to the time requirements specified in these Procedures. However, failure to do so will not prohibit final adjudication unless the person under investigation can show that such failure was willful or unfairly prejudicial.

3.05 Initial Action by Executive Director.

3.051 Determination of AAMFT Membership. Upon receipt of a complaint, the Executive Director or his or her designee (hereafter Executive Director) shall determine whether the person about whom the complaint has been made is a member or applicant for membership in the Association.

3.0511 Non-Member. If the person has never been a member, or has resigned or been terminated for non-payment of dues more than one year prior, the Executive Director shall so inform the complainant and explain that the Association has no authority to proceed against the person, and may refer the complainant to another agency or association with proper jurisdiction.

3.0512 Recently Resigned Member. If the person is a recently resigned or terminated member, the Executive Director will investigate the complaint and determine whether the alleged violation occurred during the period of the person's membership. If it is determined that the Ethics Committee has jurisdiction, the investigation will proceed pursuant to Section II, #3.06 of these *Procedures*.

3.0513 Applicant for Membership or the Approved Supervisor Designation. If the person is an applicant for membership in the Association or an applicant for the Approved Supervisor designation, the complaint shall be referred immediately to the Chair of the Ethics Committee. The Ethics Committee will conduct an investigation of the complaint, pursuant to Section II, #3.06 ff of these *Procedures*.

3.05131 Outcome of the Investigation. Upon completion of the investigation, the Chair of the Ethics Committee

will take one of two actions:

3.051311 Ethical Matter. If the investigation results in charges of alleged ethical violations against the applicant the Ethics Committee may find a violation(s) of the Code of Ethics with recommended actions to be taken against the applicant, including whether the application shall proceed or be terminated, pursuant to Section II, #3.08 of these Procedures.

3.051312 No Violation. If no violation of the Code of Ethics is found, the complaint is dismissed and the application process can proceed through the normal channels.

3.052 AAMFT Member. If the person is a member of the Association, the Executive Director shall forward a copy of the complaint to the Chair of the Ethics Committee.

3.06 Preliminary Determination by Chair of Ethics Committee.

3.061 Determination if Grounds for a Complaint. The Chair of the Ethics Committee or his or her designee (hereafter, Chair), with the advice of the Executive Director and in consultation with staff, shall review the complaint and shall determine whether it states allegations which, if proven factual, would constitute (a) violation(s) of the Code of Ethics. In the event the Chair cannot decide on such action or on any other action required of them under these rules, the matter shall be referred to the full Ethics Committee for decision.

3.0611 Insufficient Grounds. The Chair shall notify the complainant in writing if the complaint does not state factual allegations which constitute (a) violation(s) of the Code of Ethics.

3.0612 Sufficient Grounds. If the complaint states allegations which, if proven factual, would constitute (a) violation(s) of the Code of Ethics, the Chair shall so notify the complainant in writing and shall request the complainant's permission to use his or her name, disclose his or her name, and provide a copy of the complaint (or a summary) to the member in the Ethics Committee's investigation. The Chair shall also request that the complainant agree in writing to waive any relevant client/therapist privilege available to him or her so that the Ethics Committee may obtain information from the member and others.

3.062 Complainant Refusal of Permission. If the complainant refuses permission for the use or disclosure of his or her name, the Chair of the Ethics Committee may refer the matter to the full Committee or, shall decide whether it may proceed with the complaint with an investigation on the Committee's own initiative pursuant to #3.043 of these Ethics Committee Procedures.

3.07 Preliminary Investigation by Chair of the Ethics Committee.

3.071 Notification of the Member. After the Chair of the Ethics Committee receives permission for the use of the complainant's name, or after a decision to proceed on the Committee's own initiative is made, the Chair of the Ethics Committee shall notify the member of the complaint. The notice to the member:

- (a) shall state the portions of the Code of Ethics relevant to the allegations of the complaint;
- (b) if the complainant has granted permission for the use of his or her name, shall enclose a copy or a summary of the complaint, or if the Ethics Committee is proceeding on its own initiative, shall state the Committee's basis for statement of the complaint;
- (c) shall enclose a copy of the Code of Ethics and a copy of these Procedures;
- (d) shall direct that the member respond to the allegations, in writing, within thirty (30) days from receipt of the notification;
- (e) shall inform the member that failure to respond in writing within thirty (30) days may result in termination of his or her membership in the Association.

For the purposes of notification, the last address received from the member with the payment of dues will be

used, and mailing to that address will be deemed sufficient notice, even if the notice is returned.

3.0711 No Response by the Member. If no response is received from the member within thirty (30) days, the matter shall be submitted to the full Ethics Committee. The Ethics Committee may take the lack of response as an admission of the facts contained in the allegation and may choose to terminate the member from AAMFT. The Chair, at his or her discretion, may grant the member an extension of time to respond to the complaint.

3.0712 Resignation by the Member. If a charged member resigns from membership in the Association at any stage of the Committee's investigation of the complaint, the Committee will complete its investigation, and may publicize a proven violation in accordance with #3.086 of these Ethics Committee Procedures.

3.072 Preliminary Investigation by the Chair. If a response is received from the member within thirty (30) days, the Chair of the Ethics Committee shall either (a) seek additional information; or (b) submit the case to the full Ethics Committee at its next meeting.

3.073 Submission to the Full Ethics Committee. If the Chair decides to submit the case to the full Ethics Committee, he or she shall:

- (a) forward to each member of the Ethics Committee a copy of the complaint, or his or her statement of the complaint; a copy of his or her letter to the member; a copy of the member's response, if one was received, or if no response was received, a statement to that effect;
- (b) present the case to the full Committee at its next meeting;
- (c) notify the member and the complainant that the case has been submitted to the full Ethics Committee.

3.08 Action by the Full Ethics Committee. After investigation, the case is submitted to the full Ethics Committee for deliberation.

3.081 Factors Affecting Deliberation.

3.0811 Action during Litigation. Civil or criminal litigation shall not prohibit the consideration of complaints by AAMFT.

3.0812 Findings of Other Professional Associations, Regulatory Bodies, and Courts as the Basis for a Finding of Violation of Subprinciple 3.15. When a member has been disciplined by another professional association or regulatory board, or convicted of a felony, or a misdemeanor related to his or her qualifications or functions by a court, it is the policy of the AAMFT Ethics Committee that the Committee will presume that such findings are correct and appropriate.

3.08121 Member's Demonstration of Evidence to Overcome Presumption. In order to overcome this presumption, the member must prove to the Committee's satisfaction one or both of the following:

3.081211 A Flawed Process. That the process was so flawed that the finding of the association or board is not entitled to a presumption of correctness. A process is flawed if a regulatory board or association deviates from their standard procedure or if the requisite amount of due process is not provided. Due process is composed of the following elements: notice, opportunity to respond and occasion to appeal.

3.081212 Action Too Severe. That in the case of a disciplinary action by an association or board, the action was far in excess of the member's conduct (for example, having one's membership terminated for an inadvertent advertising error).

3.08122 Absent Evidence: The Committee's Recommended Action. Absent any contention of a flawed process, the AAMFT Ethics Committee will not question or go behind the finding of the association, board, or court, and will move on to its decision about what disciplinary action it will recommend.

3.08123 Cases Held in Abeyance. When a case is filed concurrently with the state regulatory board and the

Association, the policy is to hold the Association's case in abeyance until the regulatory board has completed its investigation and adjudication. When abeyance is feasible, the Committee will proceed pursuant to the Procedures, Section II, #3.0812.

3.081231 Factors Affecting the Decision to Hold a Case in Abeyance. The Chair must determine if a case will be held in abeyance. When making this determination, he or she shall consider the following factors: (a) the amount of time the regulatory board will take, or has taken, to conclusively investigate and adjudicate the case; (b) whether the reputation of the Association would be in jeopardy if the action is delayed; and (c) whether the ethical standards under which the regulatory board operates are comparable to those of the AAMFT Code of Ethics.

3.08124 Other Charges. The Committee, at its discretion, may decide to charge the member with additional alleged violations of the AAMFT Code of Ethics growing out of the facts related to the charge of violation of Subprinciple 3.15.

3.082 Settlement by Mutual Agreement. After review of the complaint and response of the member, the Ethics Committee may attempt to settle the case by mutual agreement with the member.

3.0821 Possible Actions in Mutual Agreements. In making such a settlement, the Committee may recommend to the member that he or she agree to the Committee's request that the member cease and desist; accept censure; be given supervision, education, and/or therapy; perform community service; agree to suspension (holding membership in abeyance for a specific purpose, for example, rehabilitation), resignation with or without publication, or termination of membership (a permanent bar to readmission); suspension or termination of the Approved Supervisor designation; publication of the terms of the settlement by mutual agreement under the conditions specified in #3.086; or any other action which the Committee deems appropriate.

3.0822 Written Agreement. The mutual agreement shall be reduced to writing and shall detail the facts upon which it is based and the manner in which it is to be instituted and/or supervised.

3.0823 Supervision of the Agreement. The mutual agreement shall be instituted and/or supervised by the Ethics Committee and/or any member of the Association so designated in the agreement.

3.0824 Finalization of the Agreement. The mutual agreement shall become final as soon as it is reduced to writing and signed by the member and the Chair of the Ethics Committee, or at any other time designated in the agreement.

3.0825 Failure to Meet the Terms of the Agreement. If at any time the member fails to fully comply with the terms of the agreement, the Ethics Committee may take further action, including termination of membership.

3.083 Other Action. If the Ethics Committee does not attempt settling by mutual agreement, or if an offer of a settlement by mutual agreement is not accepted by the member, it will either drop the charges and close the case, or make a formal recommendation to the Judicial Committee that action should be taken. If the Committee recommends formal action it shall:

- (a) recommend action to be taken, including an order to cease and desist; censure, supervision, therapy, education, or rehabilitation; performing community service; suspension (holding membership in abeyance for a specific purpose, for example, rehabilitation) or termination of membership (a permanent bar to readmission); suspension or termination of the Approved Supervisor designation; or any other action which the Association is authorized to take against a member;
- (b) recommend the manner in which the action will be instituted and/or supervised;
- (c) notify the member of the recommendation;
- (d) send the member a copy of the findings and recommendations of the Ethics Committee; and
- (e) inform the member by certified mail, marked "confidential" (using appropriate means), that he or she has a right to a hearing before the Judicial Committee of the Association, and that if he or she does not request a hearing before the Judicial Committee within fifteen (15) days from the receipt of notification, no hearing will be

held, and the Ethics Committee's recommendation for action will become final.

The Ethics Committee may appropriately impose more stringent sanctions upon individuals previously found to have violated the Code of Ethics, or any other relevant professional or state regulatory code of professional conduct.

3.084 No Request for Hearing by the Member. If the member does not request a hearing within fifteen (15) days, the Ethics Committee recommendation shall become the final determination of the matter. The Ethics Committee Chair shall thereafter forward a determination of the matter to the Executive Director for execution.

3.085 Reopening a Case. If additional evidence of unethical conduct is brought to the attention of the Committee after a matter has been closed, the case may be reopened and acted upon under these Procedures.

3.086 Publication of Sanctions.

3.0861 Termination of Membership. Whenever an Ethics Committee recommendation for termination of membership becomes final, the Executive Director shall publicize this fact to the Association membership, including the relevant state or provincial division and committees and councils of the Association. Publication will include a notice in Family Therapy News and will state the member's full name, any earned degree, his or her geographical location, and the violation of the section of the Code of Ethics proven. Notification of a member's termination may be provided to other relevant professional associations and state regulatory bodies.

3.0862 Publication of Other Sanctions. Publication of sanctions other than termination, including notifications of relevant professional associations and state regulatory bodies, may be directed by the Ethics Committee, within its sole discretion, in whatever manner and to whatever extent the Committee deems appropriate.

3.0863 Resignation from Membership. In situations in which a charged member resigned from AAMFT membership in the face of an Ethics Committee investigation, and a violation of the Code of Ethics is subsequently proven, any publication of the findings and actions of the Ethics Committee shall include the fact of the member's resignation.

3.087 Allowed to Resign. If a member is allowed to resign, or if his or her membership is suspended or terminated, he or she must at once surrender his or her membership certificate to the Executive Director.

4.00 Request for Hearing by the Member.

4.01 Transmittal to the Judicial Committee. If the member requests a hearing before the Judicial Committee, then the Ethics Committee shall prepare and transmit to the Judicial Committee the statement of the charges against the member and the action which the Ethics Committee recommends.

4.02 Presentation of the Case to the Judicial Committee. In any hearing of the Judicial Committee of the Association, the Ethics Committee, through its chair or his or her designee, shall present the case against the member pursuant to the rules established for the Judicial Committee.

5.00 Records and Disclosure of Information

5.01 Permanent Files. The permanent files of the Ethics Committee shall be maintained in the central office of the Association.

5.02 Confidentiality of Files. All information obtained by the Ethics Committee and all proceedings of the Ethics Committee shall be confidential except as follows:

5.021 Publication of Sanctions. Whenever the Ethics Committee orders publication of sanctions pursuant to #3.086 of the Ethics Committee Procedures, such publication shall be an exception to the rule of confidentiality

stated in #5.02 above.

5.022 Disclosure to the Complainant. The Ethics Committee shall disclose to the complainant the disposition of a particular case.

5.023 State and Federal Regulatory Agencies and Professional Organizations. The Ethics Committee may inform state regulatory agencies, federal governmental agencies, other professional organizations, or any other institution or organization which has disciplinary control over the member, of any disciplinary action taken against a member for violating the Code of Ethics.

5.0231 Inquiries from State Regulatory Agencies and Professional Organizations. It is the policy of the AAMFT Ethics Committee to cooperate with state regulatory agencies, other professional organizations, or any other institution or organization which has disciplinary control over the member or former member, when they inquire about any disciplinary action taken against a member or former member for violating the Code of Ethics. If the member or former member has never been found to have violated the Code of Ethics, the state regulatory agency or professional association will be so informed. In cases where the member or former member has been found to have violated the Code of Ethics, and when such an inquiry is received, the following Procedures will be followed:

5.02311 Notification of the Member. The member or former member will be notified in writing that such a request has been received and that AAMFT intends to comply by a specific date.

5.02312 Content of Response to the Inquiry. The inquiry will be answered with a report from the Ethics Committee Chair. The report will include the following: (i) the principle(s)/subprinciple(s) of the Code of Ethics that were violated; (ii) a brief statement regarding the nature of the offense; (iii) the disciplinary action taken, if any; and (iv) the date of the event and/or finding. A copy of the report will be sent to the member or former member.

5.024 Disclosures to AAMFT Staff and Governance Units.

5.0241 Reports to the Board Awards Subcommittee and the Elections Committee. If a person is currently the subject of a complaint filed with the Ethics Committee or has been found in violation of the Code of Ethics, the Ethics Committee will make a report to the Board Awards Subcommittee when the member is a nominee for an honor, or to the Elections Committee when the member is a nominee for office, provided that the person has signed an appropriate waiver at the request of the Board Awards Subcommittee or the Elections Committee. The report of the Ethics Committee will state the section of the Code of Ethics violated or alleged to have been violated, a brief statement regarding the nature of the offense, the disciplinary action taken, and the date of the event and/or the finding.

5.0242 Reports to the Executive Director. If a person has been found in violation of the Code of Ethics, the Ethics Committee will make a report to the Executive Director. The Executive Director shall enact the action directed in the sanction and make an appropriate notation in the person's membership file.

5.025 Disclosures Required by Law. AAMFT may disclose such information when compelled by a validly issued subpoena, or when otherwise required by law.

5.03 Disposition of Files. Case files will be maintained for a minimum of ten (10) years in a manner that insures confidentiality. Case files may be destroyed at the discretion of the Association. When such destruction occurs, the Association will comply with state and federal laws.

6.00 Advisory Opinions. The Ethics Committee, at its discretion, may choose to give an advisory opinion about an ethical issue raised by a member of the Association, but it is not required to do so. An advisory opinion will be given only when actual and not hypothetical question(s) have been asked. Such opinions will be rendered only in

writing and in response to a written request.

III. The AAMFT Judicial Committee

1.00 Basis and Scope of Authority of the Judicial Committee.

The Bylaws (Article 6.05, effective August 2004) provide for the function of the Judicial Committee as follows:

The function of the Judicial Committee shall be to hear impeachment charges against a member of the Board, an Officer of the Association, or members of Committees; hear charges of violations of the AAMFT Code of Ethics which are submitted for review pursuant to the Ethics Committee Procedures; review decisions which deny applications for membership or other designations; and hear other grievances brought by or against the Association pursuant to the rules and regulations adopted by the Board.

The Judicial Committee is also empowered by the AAMFT Board of Directors to hear impeachment charges against members of the elected governance bodies of the Association (excluding divisions).

2.00 Membership of the Judicial Committee.

2.01 Membership and Term of Office. The Judicial Committee shall consist of at least four (4) Clinical Members of the Association, all of whom shall be appointed by the President with the approval of the Board. Each member of the Judicial Committee shall serve for a three-year term. No member shall serve more than two (2) consecutive terms.

2.02 Appointment of the Chair. The President shall appoint one (1) member as Chairperson.

3.00 Procedures for Handling Complaints.

3.01 Role of the Judicial Committee. One role of the Committee is to hear charges of violations of the Code of Ethics which are submitted for review pursuant to the Ethics Committee Procedures.

3.02 Judicial Committee Constraints. The Judicial Committee shall operate pursuant to these Procedures, which may be adopted by the Board from time to time. AAMFT adjudication proceedings are not formal legal proceedings.

3.03 Receipt of Charges from the Ethics Committee. If the Ethics Committee makes a formal recommendation that action be taken against a member and if, thereafter, the member requests a hearing before the Judicial Committee, the Ethics Committee shall transmit to the Chair of the Judicial Committee a statement of the charges against the member and the action recommended.

3.04 Initial Action by the Chair of the Judicial Committee. Upon receipt of the statement of charges and recommended action from the Ethics Committee, the Chair of the Judicial Committee or his or her designee (hereafter, Chair) shall:

3.041 Inform the Member. The Chair will inform the charged member by mail, marked "confidential" (using appropriate means) that his or her request for a hearing has been received and enclose a copy of the charges and recommended action; and

3.042 Appoint a Hearing Panel. The Chair will appoint three members of the Judicial Committee to serve as a Hearing Panel, and will designate one member of the Hearing Panel as Chair. A member of the Judicial Committee shall not serve on a Hearing Panel in any case if, in the opinion of the Chair, he or she has a clear conflict of interest or personal bias.

3.05 Hearing Date and Location

3.051 Location. Hearings will normally be held in Alexandria, Virginia. The Chair of the Judicial Committee can schedule meetings outside of Alexandria, Virginia only when the total meeting costs (members and staff travel, hotel, meals, etc.), would not exceed the total costs if the hearing were held in Alexandria. To plan a hearing outside of Alexandria, the Chair of the Judicial Committee must develop the comparable cost data and submit it to the Treasurer prior to scheduling or announcing such a meeting. If an out of town hearing would exceed the cost of a Alexandria-based hearing, the Committee may make a special request to the Treasurer for an exception to this policy. This request must include the comparable cost data and reasons why an exception should be considered.

3.052 Hearing Schedule. The Hearing shall be scheduled within ninety (90) days after the case was submitted to the Judicial Committee, on a date chosen by the Chair of the Hearing Panel. An extension of this ninety (90) day deadline may be granted by the Chair of the Hearing Panel, at his or her sole discretion, when a request for such an extension has been made by the Chair of the Ethics Committee or by the member.

3.053 Notification of the Participants. The Chair of the Hearing Panel shall notify the Chair of the Ethics Committee, legal counsel for the Association, and the member of the date and location of the hearing by mail, marked "confidential" (using appropriate means).

3.06 Pre-Hearing Disclosure by the Member. At least thirty (30) days before the hearing, the member must submit to the Chair of the Hearing Panel and the Chair of the Ethics Committee the following documentation:

3.061 A Statement of the Grounds for the Request for the Hearing. The member must submit in writing which of the following grounds are the basis for his or her request of a review, and his arguments for these contentions, that is:

3.0611 Findings. The request is based on the contention that the findings of the Committee were not consonant with the facts, or that the member disputes the facts, and if so, which facts, and the member's argument for this contention.

3.0612 Procedures. The request is based on the contention that the Ethics Committee did not follow the Procedures for handling complaints, and the member's argument for these contentions.

3.0613 Actions. The request is based on the contention that the recommended actions of the Ethics Committee are inappropriate or too harsh, and the member's argument for this contention.

3.0614 Other Grounds. The request is based on other contentions, and the member's argument for these contentions.

3.062 List of the Witnesses and Summary of the Testimony. The member must submit in writing a list of any witnesses he or she intends to present, and a summary of the testimony they would present, so substantial portions of such testimony can be stipulated and not repeated during the actual hearing.

3.063 Statements by the Member and/or the Member's Attorney, and Additional Materials. The member and/or his or her attorney may submit any addition written statements they may wish to make, as well as any additional materials they believe are relevant to the case.

3.07 Pre-Hearing Disclosure by the Ethics Committee. At least thirty (30) days before the hearing, the Ethics Committee shall furnish the charged member and Hearing Panel with copies of all relevant documents and the names of witnesses who will appear in support of the charges, if any. The Chair of the Ethics Committee will also submit a summary of the testimony the witnesses would present, so substantial portions of such testimony can be stipulated and not repeated during the actual hearing.

3.08 Conduct of the Hearing.

3.081 Chair of the Hearing. The Chair of the Hearing Panel shall preside over the hearing and assure that these Procedures are followed. The Chair will have access to legal counsel for advice on procedural matters.

3.082 Role of the Ethics Committee Chair or designee. The Ethics Committee Chair shall present the charges against the member and shall have the right to:

3.0821 be assisted by staff and have access to legal counsel for advice on procedural matters;

3.0822 present witnesses and evidence to support the charge;

3.0823 cross-examine witnesses who appear for the charged member;

3.0824 offer rebuttal evidence;

3.0825 make brief opening and closing statements.

3.083 Rights of the Member. The costs incurred by the charged member, the member's attorney (if accompanied by legal counsel), and any witnesses the member requests to present are not borne by the Association. The charged member shall have the right to:

3.0831 be assisted by counsel;

3.0832 present witnesses or evidence;

3.0833 cross-examine witnesses against him or her;

3.0834 appear on his or her own behalf;

3.0835 make brief opening and closing statements.

3.084 Evidence. All evidence which is relevant and reliable, as determined by the Chair of the Hearing Panel, shall be admissible. The formal rules of evidence shall not apply.

3.085 Recording of the Hearing. A recording of the hearing shall be made. Transcripts, if requested, may be made at the charged member's expense.

3.086 Burden of Proof. The Ethics Committee shall have the burden of proving the charges by a preponderance of the evidence.

3.09 Decision of the Hearing Panel.

3.091 Deadline. The Hearing Panel shall issue its decision within thirty (30) days after the hearing.

3.092 Action by Majority. All actions by the hearing panel shall be made by a majority of those members present and voting.

3.093 No Violation Found. If no violation of the Code of Ethics is found, the Hearing Panel shall order that the member be cleared of all charges which were reviewed at the hearing.

3.094 Violation Found. If a violation(s) is found, the decision shall state:

3.0941 The Findings of Fact.

3.0942 The Code Violation(s). The Hearing Panel must affirm or reject the Ethics Committee's finding with regard to each violation.

3.0943 The Action Ordered.

3.095 Ordered Action. If a violation or violations of the Code of Ethics are found, the Hearing Panel shall order action to be taken. The Hearing Panel may order that the Ethics Committee's recommended actions be implemented, or the Panel may impose its own actions, whether more lenient or severe. In imposing its own actions, the Hearing Panel may go beyond what the Ethics Committee recommends. For example, when the Ethics Committee recommends supervision, the Hearing Panel could order termination. Actions which may be ordered include an order to cease and desist; censure; supervision, education, and/or therapy; perform community service; suspension (holding membership in abeyance for a specific purpose, for example, rehabilitation), resignation with or without publication, or termination of membership (a permanent bar to readmission); suspension or termination of the Approved Supervisor designation; or any other action which the Hearing Panel deems appropriate. The decision shall also recommend the manner in which the action is to be instituted and/or supervised. If a member is allowed to resign, or his or her membership is suspended or terminated, he or she must at once surrender his or her membership certificate to the Executive Director.

3.096 Transmittal by the Judicial Committee Chair. The decision shall be transmitted by the Chair of the Judicial Committee.

3.097 Informing the Participants. The Chair of the Judicial Committee shall inform, in writing, the following persons of the decision: the member and the Chair of the Ethics Committee. Notice of the decision to the member shall be sent by mail, marked "confidential".

3.10 Appeal.

3.101 Member's Deadline. The member shall have fifteen (15) days from receipt of the Hearing Panel's decision to appeal to the Board of Directors.

3.102 Grounds. The only ground for appeal is that there were violations of these procedural rules of the Judicial Committee which substantially impaired the member's ability to defend against the charges.

3.103 Judicial Committee Transmittal to the Board. If an appeal is made to the Board of Directors, the Judicial Committee shall transmit to the Board of Directors the statement of the charges, the recording, and the Hearing Panel's decision.

3.104 Member's Written Statement. In order to effectuate an appeal, the member shall state, in writing, to the Board of Directors the specific violations of these procedural rules by the Judicial Committee and how they impaired the member's ability to defend against the charges.

3.11 Enforcement of Recommendation.

3.111 Finalization of Decision. If no appeal is made within fifteen (15) days after the member has been notified of the decision of the Hearing Panel, the decision of the Hearing Panel shall become final.

3.112 Transmittal of Decision. As soon as the decision becomes final, the Chair of the Judicial Committee shall transmit the decision to the Executive Director, the Chair of the Ethics Committee, legal counsel of the Association, and to the person or persons who are responsible for instituting and/or supervising the decision.

3.113 Publication of Sanctions.

3.1131 Publication of Termination. Whenever the Judicial Committee upholds an Ethics Committee recommendation for termination of membership, and whenever a Judicial Committee order for termination of membership becomes final, then the provisions concerning publication found in Section II, #3.0861 of these Procedures apply.

3.1132 Publication of Other Sanctions. Publication of sanctions other than termination, including notifications of relevant professional associations and state regulatory bodies, may be directed by the Judicial Committee, within its sole discretion, in whatever manner and to whatever extent the Judicial Committee deems appropriate, consistent with state and federal law.

3.1133 Resignation from Membership. In situations in which a charged member resigned from AAMFT membership in the face of an Ethics Committee investigation, and a violation of the Code of Ethics is subsequently proven, any publication of a finding of the Judicial Committee shall include the fact of the member's resignation.

4.00 Records and Disclosure of Information.

4.01 Records. All records of the Judicial Committee proceedings, including the decisions, recordings of hearings, and supporting documents, shall be maintained in the central office of the Association.

4.02 Confidentiality of Files. All records of the Judicial Committee proceedings shall be confidential except as follows:

4.021 Publication of Sanctions. The Judicial Committee may order publication of sanctions pursuant to #3.113 of the Judicial Committee Procedures.

4.022 Disclosure to the Complainant. The Chair of the Ethics Committee shall disclose to the complainant the disposition of a particular case.

4.023 State and Federal Regulatory Agencies and Professional Organizations. The Judicial Committee may inform state regulatory agencies, other professional organizations, or any other institution or organization which has disciplinary control over the member, of any disciplinary action taken against a member for violating the Code of Ethics.

4.024 Disclosures Required by Law. AAMFT may disclose such information when compelled by a validly issued subpoena, or when otherwise required by law.

4.025 Disclosure to AAMFT Governance Units. The Judicial Committee may inform AAMFT governance units of any disciplinary action taken against a member for violating the AAMFT Code of Ethics, pursuant to these Procedures, Section II, #5.025, ff.

4.03 Disposition of Files. Case files will be maintained for a minimum of ten (10) years in a manner that insures confidentiality. Case files may be destroyed at the discretion of the Association. When such destruction occurs, the Association will comply with state and federal laws.

IV. The AAMFT Board of Directors

1.00 Appeals to the Board of Directors.

1.01 Grounds. The only basis for appeal to the AAMFT Board of Directors by a member regarding the decision of the Judicial Committee is that there was a violation of the procedural rules of the Judicial Committee, and that this violation substantially impaired the member's ability to defend against the charges. The Board shall not reconsider the underlying facts of the case and will only consider if there was a violation of the Judicial

Committee's procedures, which did substantially impair the member's ability to defend against the charges.

1.02 Written Statement of the Member. In order to effectuate an appeal, the member shall state, in writing, to the Board of Directors the specific violation of the Judicial Committee's procedural rules and how this violation substantially impaired the member's ability to defend against the charges. The President of AAMFT shall review the statement to ensure that the appeal is based on the contention that the Judicial Committee violated its procedural rules. If not, the President may deny the appeal. This letter must be sent to the AAMFT President at AAMFT headquarters within fifteen (15) days from the member's receipt of the Hearing Panel's decision.

1.03 Statement of the Judicial Committee. The Judicial Committee shall prepare a statement in response to the member's statement, to include a review of the relevant procedural rules and any substantive materials relating to the procedural review of the Judicial Committee's actions. The President, in consultation with Board Officers, will ensure that sufficient materials are submitted to the Board.

1.04 Scheduling the Appeal. The Board of Directors shall consider the appeal solely on the basis of the member's written statement and the response of the Judicial Committee or the Association's legal counsel (which may or may not be in writing), and there shall be no right to a personal appearance before the Board by the member or his or her personal representative. The Board of Directors shall consider the appeal at its next meeting after receiving the notice of the appeal.

1.05 Vote on the Appeal. A majority vote by the Board of Directors, present and voting, shall determine the appeal.

1.06 Board Decision. The Board of Directors shall issue a written decision on the appeal and shall inform the member and the Judicial Committee of the decision in writing within thirty (30) days of the meeting. The Board must either affirm the Judicial Committee's decision or order a new hearing before a hearing panel of the Judicial Committee. The only basis for ordering a new hearing is the Board's decision that the member demonstrated there was a violation of the Judicial Committee's procedures which did substantially impair the member's ability to defend against the charges.

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The Ethics Complaint Process: A Fair Process In A Difficult Situation

Marriage and family therapists are professionals who strive to provide the best services for their clients. Therapists are also human beings and on occasion tend to make unfortunate mistakes when rendering these services. The point at which the client perceives that they have been injured by the professional is when they may seek justice from an outside source, such as the courts or a licensing board and/or professional organization. This article will explain how an ethics complaint is processed by the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT).

The AAMFT Procedures for Handling Ethical Matters is the official document that outlines the association's process for investigating ethics complaints against its members. An examination of

these procedures indicates that it is primarily a "paper review" process. Complaints may be submitted by members of the AAMFT, non-members and the AAMFT Ethics Committee. In all but those cases that are filed by the AAMFT Ethics Committee, the complainant must have first-hand knowledge about the issue or be able to provide relevant testimony related to it.

The AAMFT Ethics Committee may initiate a complaint when presented with sufficient information indicating allegations that could constitute a violation of the Code of Ethics. According to the procedures, "When a member has been disciplined by another professional association or a regulatory board, or convicted of a felony, or misdemeanor related to his or her qualifications or functions by a court, it is the policy of the AAMFT Ethics Committee that the Committee will presume that such findings are correct and appropriate." However, the member is offered an opportunity to demonstrate evidence to overcome this presumption, through documentation that: (1) the investigative process was flawed and resulted in an incorrect outcome, and/or (2) that the action taken was too severe for the type of infraction.

Upon receipt of a complaint alleging violations of the AAMFT Code of Ethics ("Code"), ethics staff review for jurisdiction, filing deadlines, merit and precedent. For a case to proceed, complainants must waive therapist-client confidentiality and permit the use of their name and the provision of a copy of the allegations to the respondent member. All applicants and members are held to the Code, as are resigned members for a period of one year after resignation. If the complaint is judged to have merit under the Code, staff draft charges and present the case to the chair of the Ethics Committee for consultation and approval or modification. The Ethics Committee, usually acting through the chair, has the sole authority to make charges against members. Once the member is charged, the full investigative process is engaged and the complainant is notified. The member is required to address the allegations and present a defense within 30 days. If the member resigns in anticipation of, or during, the course of an ethics investigation, the Ethics Committee will complete its investigation. Any publication of action taken by the association will include the fact that the member attempted to resign during the investigation.

At any point in the process, the chair or full Ethics Committee may close the case for lack of merit or hold it in abeyance if the allegations appear to be more appropriately handled by another professional, civil or regulatory body.

When case materials are complete, the staff prepares and presents them to the Ethics Committee for deliberation. Only the full Committee can make a finding that a violation has occurred. "Preponderance of the evidence" is the standard of proof, and no members, complainants or witnesses attend Committee meetings, which are held each spring and fall. The Committee is composed of four Clinical Members and two public members.

If the Committee finds the member in violation of the AAMFT Code of Ethics, the next step is to render an appropriate sanction based on the severity of the infraction. For the most serious violations, the Committee may recommend termination of membership with a permanent bar to readmission. As a sanction for lesser violations, the Committee may seek rehabilitation of the member by offering a "mutual settlement" in which the member agrees to mandated education, supervision, therapy, suspension or other actions. If the complaint has been filed against an applicant for membership, the Committee makes a report to the Standards Committee recommending that the application proceed or be denied. The Committee also issues warnings or reprimands as deemed appropriate. Members found in violation of the Code have the right to a hearing before the AAMFT Judicial Committee. If an appeal hearing is not requested, the Ethics Committee's findings and sanctions become final.

If the member files an appeal with the Judicial Committee, the committee's chair appoints a Hearing Panel to conduct a hearing. At the hearing, the Ethics Committee chair presents the charges against the member and has the burden of proving these charges by a preponderance of the evidence. During the hearing, the Ethics Committee chair and the member may be assisted by counsel, present

witnesses, cross-examine witnesses and make brief opening and closing statements. An audiotape is made of the hearing. The Hearing Panel renders a decision within 30 days, indicating whether or not a violation was found, and if a violation is found, ordering action to be taken. Since 1990, 25 ethics cases have been reviewed by the Judicial Committee. The last hearing was held in 1997.

A member may make a final appeal to the AAMFT Board of Directors if they believe that a procedural violation impaired their defense before the Judicial Committee Hearing Panel. The Board reviews the appeal at its next scheduled meeting and renders a decision based solely on the member's written statement and the response from the Judicial Committee or AAMFT's legal counsel. The Board renders a written decision within 30 days of the meeting. This decision may affirm the Judicial Committee's decision or order a new hearing. Since 1990, the AAMFT Board has reviewed three ethics cases. The last appeal to the Board was reviewed in 1994.

All information obtained by the Ethics Committee and all case proceedings are confidential with limited exceptions. At this time, termination of membership is the only sanction that is routinely made public. Sanctions that involve mutual settlements, warnings or reprimands remain confidential and the only notification is made to the complainant. The procedures permit AAMFT to provide a limited report on the case to a regulatory board or another professional association upon their request. At that time, the member is provided a copy of the report.

For information on how to file an ethical complaint with the association, please consult the AAMFT's Web site at www.aamft.org or call (703) 838-9808 and request to speak with the AAMFT Ethics staff.

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Ethical Practice Information

The AAMFT Ethical Practice Information offers comprehensive ethical consultation and resources based on the AAMFT Code of Ethics. Marriage and family therapists can obtain FREE informal ethical advisory opinions, plus training and resources to protect and inform you about how to maintain an ethical practice.

AAMFT Ethics Committee

- [List of Committee members - Members Only](#)

On-line Ethical Advisory Opinions

- [Send a question to the Ethics Department and receive an informal advisory opinion based on the AAMFT Code of Ethics - Members Only](#)

Ethics Complaint Information

- [AAMFT Code of Ethics \(effective 7/2001 to present\)](#)
- [How to file an ethical complaint](#)
- [Complaint form available soon](#)
- [Procedures for handling Ethical Matters \(2008\)](#)
- [Decision Tree](#)

Ethical Resources

Learn more about the AAMFT Code of Ethics, the ethics complaint process and tips on maintaining an ethical practice. Obtain a copy of the 1998 and 2001 AAMFT Code of Ethics and chart that explains the new duties on the revised Code. View a copy of the AAMFT Procedures for Handling Ethics Matters and review articles that explain the ethics complaint process, plus statistical outcomes of prior cases deliberated by the AAMFT Ethics Committee

- [AAMFT Code of Ethics \(effective 7/1998 to 6/2001\)](#)
- [AAMFT Code of Ethics \(effective 7/2001 to present\)](#)
- [New Explicit Duties and Other Changes in the 2001 AAMFT Code of Ethics](#)
- [AAMFT Clinical Member Logo Guidelines - Members Only](#)
- [Procedures for Handling Ethical Matters \(2008\)](#)
- [Ethics Complaints Process \(2001\)](#)
- [Tips for Maintaining an Ethical Practice - Members Only](#)

Ethical Fact Sheets

Learn more about maintaining an ethical practice through articles and fact sheets on various ethical issues

- [Guidelines for Billing Insurance Companies and Other Third Party Payors \(1986\) - Members Only](#)
- [Confidentiality in the Electronic Age \(1995\) - Members Only](#)
- [Telephone Therapy: What's the Toll? \(1995\) - Members Only](#)
- [Guidelines for nontraditional techniques \(1994\) - Members Only](#)
- [Ethical Responsibility in the Treatment of Repressed Memories \(1997\) - Members Only](#)
- [Therapeutic Contracts Help Clarify Dual Relationships in Rural Settings \(1995\) - Members Only](#)
- [Ethical Opinion: Therapy by E-mail? \(1999\) - Members Only](#)
- [Ethical Opinion: Fees, Contracts, and Sliding Scales \(1999\) - Members Only](#)
- [Ethical Opinion: When a Client wants to Remain Anonymous \(1999\) - Members Only](#)
- [Ethics and Evaluation: Ethical Challenges Facing MFT's as They Evaluate Their Practices \(1997\) - Members Only](#)
- [Homework: Experienced Therapists Find Personal, Professional Satisfaction with Home Offices \(1999\) - Members Only](#)
- [Confidentiality and Emails from Clients \(2001\) - Members Only](#)
- [Technically Ethical \(2002\) - Members Only](#)

Ethics Education Resources

- [Learn more about prior workshop presentations by the AAMFT Ethics Committee and how to develop an ethics workshop, seminar or class. \[Click Here\]\(#\) to access these resources - Members Only](#)

Ethical Training Materials

Purchase AAMFT's publications and training tapes designed specifically for marriage and family therapists

- Books and Publications
- Training Tapes
- Online Continuing Education Tests

Comprehensive Professional Liability Insurance

- [Click here for more information on the AAMFT professional liability insurance program](#)

AAMFT Legal Risk Management Plan

- The AAMFT offers legal consultation services and resources specifically designed for marriage and family therapists. AAMFT Clinical Members are eligible to consult with Richard S. Leslie, J.D., AAMFT's legal consultant on matters relating to their practice. [Click Here to access these great resources today !](#)