GHANA ASSOCIATION
OF SOCIAL WORKERS

The code is intended to serve as a guide to the everyday conduct of members of the social work profession and as a basis for adjudication of issues in ethics when the conduct of social workers is alleged to deviate from standards expressed in this code.

The code serves six purposes:

1. To establish the core values upon which the social work profession is based.

2. To create specific ethical standards that should guide social work practice and reflect the core values.

3. To help social workers navigate professional considerations and obligations when ethical uncertainties arise.

4. To provide ethical standards to which the social work profession can be held accountable.

5. To initiate new social workers to the profession's mission, values, and ethical principles and standards.

6. To create standards by which the social work profession can assess if a social worker has engaged in unethical conduct. Social workers who pledge to abide by this code must cooperate with its implementation and disciplinary rulings based upon it.

The code is also based on the six core values of the social work profession:

1. Service

2. Social justice

3. Dignity and worth of the individual

4. Importance and centrality of human relationships

5. Integrity

6. Competence

Major Points from the Social Work Code of Ethics

The code is composed of thematic sections that outline a social worker's responsibility to clients, colleagues, employers, and the profession in general. Following is a summary of some of the major points.

· Conduct/Comportment

Social workers must:

- · Maintain high standards of personal conduct.

- · Maintain a high degree of professionalism throughout their careers.

- · Acknowledge service as the most important element of social work.

- · Maintain a high level of professional integrity.

- · Engage in lifelong learning to maintain competence.

- · Guide practice according to scholarly inquiry and use evidence to inform best practices.

Responsibility to Clients

Social workers must:

- · Make clients (individuals, groups and communities) their primary responsibility.

- · Foster maximum self-determination in clients.

- · Respect the privacy of clients and keep information that has been shared during the course of

their duties confidential.

· Charge fees for services that are fair and considerate to clients.

Responsibility to Colleagues and Employers

Social workers should:

· Treat colleagues with respect, fairness, and courtesy.

· Respect confidences shared by colleagues in the course of their professional relationships and transactions.

· Extend to colleagues of other professions the same respect and co-operation that is extended to social work colleagues

· Adhere to professional obligations as determined by their employers.

· Not exploit the problems of colleagues to gain personal enhancement in employment

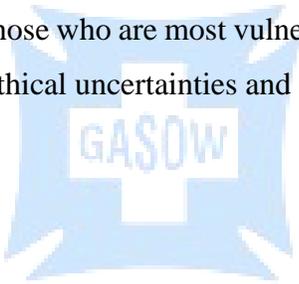**Responsibility to the Social Work Profession**

Social workers should:

· Uphold, represent, and advance the values of the social work profession.

· Protect and enhance he dignity of the profession

· Take action through appropriate channels to prevent the unauthorized and unqualified practice of social work

• Help the profession make social services available to the general public.

• Educate themselves to become culturally competent and understanding of diversity.

• **Responsibility to society**

Social workers should

- promote the general welfare of the society

- act to prevent and eliminate discrimination against any person on the basis of race, colour, sex, orientation, age, religion, origin, status, political belief, mental or physical handicap, or other preference

- advocate change in policy and legislation to improve social conditions and promote social justice

In summary, the Social Work **Code of Ethics** helps social workers navigate these challenges throughout their careers and provides a framework for the principles and standards that they must uphold.

At its most basic level, social work is about promoting the general welfare of society by representing those who are most vulnerable. Providing social services can sometimes be a difficult task, wrought with ethical uncertainties and challenges.