



CODE OF ETHICS

CORE VALUES AND ETHICAL PRINCIPLES

INTRODUCTION

Probation work applies professional knowledge, values and skills to working in the community with people who have offended with the aim of rehabilitating them and protecting victims and potential future victims. Through this work probation makes a significant contribution to public safety.

“ Probation relates to the implementation in the community of sanctions and measures, defined by law and imposed on an offender. It includes a range of activities and interventions, which involve supervision, guidance and assistance aiming at the social inclusion of the offender, as well as contributing to community safety.”

COUNCIL OF EUROPE PROBATION RULES

The Probation Institute is a professional organisation for people who work within probation and community justice organisations, including practitioners, managers, administrators and corporate support staff.

This code of ethics states the core values and ethical principles that every member of the Probation Institute accepts as part of their membership and which underpin the profession. They support the Institute’s objective of ensuring the highest possible professional standards in service delivery and conduct.

CORE VALUES & ETHICAL PRINCIPLES

1. We believe in the ability of people who have offended to change for the better and become responsible members of society.

1.1 Desistance from offending is a process that may take time, requiring a level of patience, tenacity, care and proactive engagement on the part of probation workers

2. We believe in the inherent worth and dignity of the individual.

2.1 Interventions must show due regard to the dignity, health, safety and well-being of service users

3. We are committed to promoting social justice, social inclusion, equality and diversity

3.1 People who have offended should receive fair, impartial and just treatment throughout all phases of the system and discrimination should be challenged

3.2 Diversity and difference is viewed with positive regard

3.3 Human rights and equality will be upheld and promoted

3.4 Service users should have a voice in the planning of services

4. We believe in the worth of probation supervision in the community, based on establishing positive relationships with service users, to promote their rehabilitation

4.1 Effective supervision relies on setting an environment in which sensitive issues can be explored whilst maintaining appropriate role boundaries

4.2 Meeting the needs of service users will frequently involve working in partnership with other agencies and organisations in the community

4.3 The most appropriate use of custodial sentences is for serious or persistent offending. Community sentences are more effective in supporting rehabilitation than short custodial sentences

5. We recognise that full consideration should be given to the rights and needs of victims when planning how a service user's sentence will be managed.

5.1 Responses to the needs of service users must take account of their assessed level of risk of causing harm to victims and future potential victims

5.2 Restorative justice in its various forms can be a useful intervention with both crime victims who want to understand the harm done to them, and perpetrators who feel the need to apologise and, if possible, to make amends

5.3 Restorative justice interventions must safeguard against the secondary or repeat victimisation of victims

6. We recognise the importance of training for identified levels of competence and of continuing professional development

6.1 Initial qualifying and continuing training must be of a length and quality appropriate to the level and complexity of the work to be undertaken

6.2 Individual workers are accountable for the quality of their work and for maintaining and improving their professional practice, whilst recognising that the employer also has a responsibility to enable this

7. We are committed to the development of knowledge, through research, to inform probation policy and practice

7.1 Methods of working with service users vary according to their different risks and needs and their social contexts

7.2 The effectiveness of different interventions should be judged on the basis of evaluation and research that can be widely disseminated and scrutinised

7.3 Supporting and contributing to research is essential for the development of good practice

8. We are committed to acting with professional integrity

8.1 The values and principles of the profession are upheld and all work will be conducted in a reliable, honest and trustworthy manner

8.2 Appropriate boundaries must be established in relationships with service users and colleagues

8.3 Judgements should be based on balanced and considered reasoning. Members should maintain awareness of the impact of their own values, prejudices and conflicts of interest on their practice and on other people

8.4 Equality and diversity will be actively promoted

8.5 Staff should account for and justify their judgements and actions to service users, to employers and to the general public

8.6 Record keeping must be accurate and professional

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