

ATA Code of Ethics and Professional Responsibility

Preamble

The American Translators Association (ATA) is dedicated to advancing the professions of language translation and interpreting and to raising the level of awareness and respect for these professions among its members, language professionals in general, and the public at large. In furtherance of these goals, the ATA has adopted this Code of Ethics and Professional Responsibility (CEPR). All ATA members must commit to abide by the tenets of the CEPR and embrace its spirit.

As intermediaries between parties who would not otherwise be able to communicate with each other effectively across languages, interpreters and translators have a great deal of power and bear tremendous responsibility. For that reason, it is essential that the public associate ATA members with competence, honesty, integrity, and professionalism.

The ethical principles and tenets outlined below are intended to ensure professional accountability and quality of service, protect the public, promote our professions, and foster a spirit of trust, solidarity, and cooperation among members. The text of each tenet is authoritative. All tenets carry equal weight and there is no hierarchy among the tenets. The Commentary, which is a separate document, provides important guidance in understanding the tenets.

Applicability

This Code applies to all ATA members. See Section 1 subsection C of the “ATA Policy on Ethics Procedures” for information on applicability to corporate and closely held business entities.

Scope exclusion

It is current ATA policy not to intervene in purely commercial disputes involving its members, such as non-payment disputes. For more information, see Section 1 of the “ATA Policy on Ethics Procedures.”

Compliance

Noncompliance with the provisions of this Code and the ATA Bylaws may result in referral to the Ethics Committee and possible sanctions. For more information, see the “ATA Policy on Ethics Procedures.”

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We the members of the American Translators Association accept as our ethical and professional duty:

Tenet 1

to conduct ourselves in a professional manner with honesty and integrity in our interactions with clients, colleagues, and the general public, and to refrain from conduct that brings the Association, its members, and our professions into disrepute;

Tenet 2

to honestly represent and work within our qualifications, competencies, capabilities, and responsibilities;

Tenet 3

to disclose to the relevant parties any real or potential conflict of interest and avoid situations that may lead to a perceived conflict of interest;

Tenet 4

to abide by commitments and contracts made in advance and by mutual agreement in the course of our professional interactions and activities;

Tenet 5

to hold in confidence, not divulge, and protect privileged and/or confidential information obtained in the course of our work;

Tenet 6

to convey meaning between people, organizations, and cultures accurately, appropriately, and without bias, depending on the context of the source, purpose, readership or audience, and medium;

Tenet 7

to maintain and improve knowledge, skills, and abilities by embracing continuing professional development, keeping abreast of changes in language and culture, technology, subject matter, and professional practice.