



COUNCIL OF PROFESSIONAL  
INVESTIGATORS ONTARIO

## Code of Ethics

### 1. Interpretation and Definition

- a. No part of this document shall supersede the Private Security and Investigation Services Act, 2005 or its regulations.
- b. For the purposes of this document, a Member is:
  1. A licensed private investigator, or
  2. An organization licensed to engage in the business of providing private investigators, or
  3. As defined by the Council of Professional Investigators of Ontario membership categories.
  4. The Council is the Council of Professional Investigators - Ontario ("CPIO")

### 2. The objectives of expressing and enforcing a Code of Ethics are:

- a. to set a high standard of professional investigative services provided by every member of the CPIO;
- b. to assure the public that the Council shall regulate the professional conduct of its members to maintain the high standard expressed in the Code of Ethics;
- c. to maintain courteous and professional conduct between members of the CPIO and with the public;
- d. to support and encourage a positive attitude toward the members of CPIO and the investigative profession by: Government, Regulatory Bodies, Law Enforcement, Clients, The Public, and Members & Non-members.



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### 3. Reputation of the Profession

- a. Members, as professional private investigators, must conduct themselves at all times in a manner consistent with the Code of Ethics.
- b. Members have a duty to the client to be competent to perform any investigative services provided on a client's behalf.
- c. Members shall serve the client in a conscientious, diligent and efficient manner to provide a quality of service at least equal to that which other members would expect of another member.
- d. Members shall not engage in any investigative service for which they are not competent and qualified.
- e. Members shall maintain awareness and conduct themselves at all times in accordance with the spirit and intent of governing legislation including Acts respecting the protection of privacy.
- f. Each member is strongly encouraged to participate in educational and professional development on an annual basis.
- g. Members shall respect the requirements of human rights and constitutional laws in force in Canada and in its provinces and territories.
- h. Members shall not discriminate contrary to Human Rights laws in employment or in professional activities with other members or with any other persons.
- i. Members shall ensure that all employees, subcontractors, and other persons paid to assist in performing investigative services comply with this Code of Ethics



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- j. Members will be scrupulous in identifying their academic and professional qualifications. Only Agency members may advertise that they are members of CPIO. Individual, Affiliate, and Associate members may refer to themselves as an “Individual CPIO Member”, “Affiliate Member of the CPIO”, or “Associate member of the CPIO”.

#### 4. Relations with Clients

- a. Members shall exercise diligent inquiry respecting all clients to verify the identity of each client and to be satisfied that every retainer is for a lawful purpose (e.g. to discover facts respecting a breach of contract, contravention of a law, or any litigious matter).
- b. Members shall also determine that no conflict of interest exists that would inhibit the member from accepting the retainer. Members shall not advise or represent both sides of a matter without adequate disclosure to each side and with the written consent of each party.
- c. Members shall ensure that before accepting a retainer that the nature of the retainer has been identified in writing and that the fee schedule of the member has been explained and provided to the client and that the cost of the services and the amount of time estimated to be involved has been recorded in writing for the client. The member shall not charge any fee that is not fully disclosed, fair and reasonable.
- d. Members shall, at the first opportunity, disclose to a client any influence, interest or relationship, pertaining to a retainer, which, may impair or adversely affect the member’s professional judgment or objectivity.
- e. Members must be honest and candid when advising clients.
- f. Written reports to clients shall be factually based and objective, as much as possible.



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- g. Members shall not withdraw from a retainer except for good cause and upon reasonable notice to the client.
- h. Each member shall hold in confidence all information concerning the business and affairs of the client acquired in the course of the professional relationship and shall not divulge any such information except as expressly or impliedly authorized by the client or required by law.
- i. Each member will ensure security for personal information collected in the course of an investigation, and take all reasonable steps to protect against disclosure.
- j. No member shall use information obtained in an investigation for any purpose other than that which has been agreed to by their client, or without the written permission of the client.

## **5. Relations with Fellow Members**

- a. A member's conduct towards all other members with whom contact is made in the course of professional activities shall be courteous and in good faith.
- b. Members should assist in maintaining the integrity of the profession.
- c. Members shall not make false or misleading statements about a fellow member.
- d. Members are encouraged to employ the services of fellow members when an investigation may warrant.
- e. Members who are the beneficiaries of referrals from other members shall not undermine the relationship, which the referring member has with any client to whom the member has been referred.



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## **6. Complaints to the Ethics and Discipline Committee of the Board**

- a. All members shall be subject to the Authority of the Ethics and Discipline Committee of the Board and shall cooperate by responding promptly and fully to any inquiries of that Committee, its agents, or an Inquiry Panel with respect to a complaint received by the Committee respecting the member. The Ethics and Discipline Committee reserves the right to have any parties involved in a complaint or dispute, provide written submissions and/or complaints as a written submission.

The Committee shall determine its own procedure to ensure that a member has a full and fair opportunity to consider any complaint and to respond to the Committee.

- b. No member shall interfere with or hinder the activities of the Ethics and Discipline Committee in respect of a complaint.