

# Overview

## **APA Guide vs. AICP Code**

### *Ethical Principles in Planning (APA)*

A guide to ethical conduct for all who participate in the process of planning. This is only a guide and not a code by which individuals may be held accountable. <http://www.planning.org/knowledge/ethics.htm>

### **AICP Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct**

For those who are certified planners (identified as members of the American Institute of Certified Planners), the AICP Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct applies and members are held accountable to this code. <http://www.planning.org/ethics/>

### **Key Responsibilities for a Certified Planner:**

- Consider the public interest and long-term consequences
- Provide adequate, timely, clear, accurate information
- Do not mislead, misstate, plagiarize, or otherwise conceal the truth
- Do not discriminate
- Do provide opportunities for participation
- Avoid all real and perceived conflicts of interest

### **Sections of the AICP Code of Ethics & Professional Conduct:**

#### **Section A: Aspirational Statement; ideals & principles**

1. Our Overall Responsibility to the Public
2. Our Responsibility to Our Clients and Employers
3. Our Responsibility to Our Profession and Colleagues

#### **Section B: Rules of Conduct**

Conflict of Interest, Confidentiality, Representation, Competency, Plagiarism, Disclosure

#### **Section C: Advisory Opinions**

Describes the way that one may obtain informal advice or a formal advisory ruling.

#### **Section D: Adjudication of Complaints of Misconduct Planners**

Describes the process for filing a charge of misconduct against a certified planner, including time frames and procedures for dismissals, appeals, settlements, etc.

#### **Section E: Discipline of Members**

Describes the forms of discipline imposed on members who are found to have violated ethical rules of conduct or who have been convicted of serious crimes or actions inconsistent with a planners professional responsibilities.

### **Format of Ethics Questions on the Exam**

Questions (multiple-choice) can be particularly troublesome for ethics questions because these are the kinds of things we usually want to talk and argue about. The questions that you will find on the exam all have four choices and you have to select what you think is the best one. Two types of ethics questions to:

- Test your knowledge of the precise content of the Code, including whether something is or is not included in the Code
- Test your understanding of the Code and the ability to apply the Code in a given situation: a scenario to determine whether the planner's behavior was ethical or select which of the following choices is most ethical under the Code.
- Read the question carefully! (beware of "all the following, except" or "which is not")

### **How to Prepare for Ethics Questions**

- Know the Code – the general categories as well as specific principles
- Everyone learns differently (study code and review scenarios for application principles).
- Talking with people about ethics and planning
- To prepare for a scenario/story question:
  - 1) Figure out what the central question is once you have read the story.
  - 2) Figure out what options you have. How could you actually resolve the ethical question at hand?
  - 3) Test these options against your knowledge of the AICP Code: specific clauses, the Code as a whole, and the Advisory Rulings.
  - 4) Determine which one really looks best as your selection.