

HOSPITALITY CODE OF ETHICS

Created by International Hospitality Institute

Recommended for adoption by the global hospitality industry. No permission needed to reproduce.

The global hospitality industry lacks a unified code of conduct governing the actions of hospitality professionals and modulating corporate policy and processes. Given the diversity and multiculturalism of practitioners, and the fact that stakeholders are often faced with ethical dilemmas, there is a dire need for a global code of ethics.

In response to the need, the researcher has created the Hospitality Code of Ethics (HCODE) to guide hospitality companies and practitioners worldwide. The HCODE is founded on the following conceptual frames:

- Ethical Standards
- Ethical Responsibilities
- Fair Treatment
- Commitment to Equality
- Commitment to Diversity
- Cultural Sensitivity
- Fair Pay Standards
- Equal Opportunity Standards
- Avoidance of Human Trafficking
- Avoidance of Sexual Harassment

The HCODE outlines core values, ethical principles, and ethical responsibilities for the global hospitality industry with a view to promoting ethical decision making, guiding ethical behavior, and establishing standards of ethical conduct.

The HCODE will apply when companies and individuals working in the hospitality industry interact professionally with other companies and individuals working in or outside the hospitality industry. The HCODE describes the ethical obligations of entities and individuals working as owners, employers, employees, teachers, trainers, students, vendors, and sponsors. The HCODE will provide clarity to stakeholders who agree to be bound by the code and who take the Hospitality Pledge of Ethics. The HCODE will provide situational awareness on ethical challenges and guidance on how to avoid or tackle such challenges.

The HCODE prescribes the following as 10 core values required of hospitality practitioners:

- Respect—show respect toward all individuals.
- Humility—show humility in all interactions.
- Kindness—show kindness toward all individuals.
- Honesty—be honest in all interactions.
- Community—focus on supporting and improving the local community.
- Integrity—show integrity in professional and personal interactions.

- Perseverance—demonstrate persistence even in the most challenging situations.
- Optimism—maintain a positive outlook and a sense of hopefulness.
- Innovation—practice creative thinking and be receptive to new ideas and technologies.
- Hard work.

The following four sections of the HCODE outline the specific responsibilities of hospitality professionals:

- Section I Responsibility to my customers as a hospitality professional.
- Section II Responsibility to my employers as a hospitality professional.
- Section III Responsibility to my employees or students as a hospitality professional.
- Section IV Responsibility to my colleagues, vendors, and other stakeholders as a hospitality professional.

The following ethical standards should be applied to the professional activities of hospitality professionals:

Section I: Responsibility to My Customers as a Hospitality Professional

- Be kind to your customers at all times.
- Be patient with your customers; work to resolve problems and challenges promptly, to the utmost satisfaction of the customer.
- Protect any personal information of the customer that you encounter or use during the course of your work.
- Maintain confidentiality of the customer's name, address, location, personal or professional information, unless required by law to do otherwise.
- Understand and comply with all applicable laws relating to handling of personal data and communications.
- Respect the privacy of the customer at all times before, during, and after the encounter or visit.
- Display humility and compassion in all interactions with the customer.
- Demonstrate open, truthful, and constructive communication in all interactions with the customer.
- Demonstrate active listening skills when interacting with customer.
- Ensure and promote the safety, security and wellbeing of the customer at all times during their visit to your establishment.
- Solicit feedback about your performance from the customer.

Section II: Responsibility to my Employers as a Hospitality Professional

- Be honest and truthful in all interactions with the employer.
- Maintain confidentiality of employer's proprietary information; do not share or distribute with others, unless expressly permitted to do so.
- Practice open and clear communication.
- Promptly notify employer of situations that are unethical or pose ethical concern.

- Notify employer of any wrongdoing that you have observed.
- Notify employer of any threats to the company, or threats to employees of the company.
- Protect the employer's financial and professional interests.
- Avoid situations involving conflicts of interest.
- Avoid criminal or unethical actions.
- Abide by the company's handbook.
- Work hard.
- Pursue professional training and/or developmental opportunities to expand your knowledge base.

Section III: Responsibility to my Employees (or Students) as a Hospitality Professional

- Treat all employees fairly, equally, and respectfully.
- Be aware and respectful of cultural, religious, and racial diversity.
- Avoid actions that are hurtful, disrespectful, bullying in nature, or meant to intimidate.
- Be ethical and promote an ethical work climate.
- Provide a safe, healthy, and comfortable work environment.
- Avoid sexual harassment and conduct sexual harassment training.
- Avoid favoritism.
- Practice open, direct, and clear communication.
- Administer employee reviews timely and issue merit increases, when deserved.
- Use power judiciously; be mindful of status and power differences between you and the employee.
- Ensure that employees are paid fair and competitive wages that are aligned with the market.
- Provide access to physical and mental healthcare resources for your employees, and actively encourage employees to prioritize their physical and mental health.
- Encourage workplace practices that will help your employees achieve an optimal work-life balance.
- Conduct human trafficking awareness training.
- Commit to employee development and training.
- Protect the employee's personal information.
- Provide equal employment, compensation, and promotion opportunities for all employees, regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, disability, religion, age, military status, and national origin.
- Require adherence to the Hospitality Code of Ethics by all team members.
- Promote and recognize excellence in the hospitality industry; provide customer service training, recognize and reward exceptional customer service performance.
- Clearly define each employee's job responsibilities, job requirements, goals, and targets.
- Establish clear metrics for measuring and incenting employee goal achievement.
- Avoid retaliation when employees report grievances or wrongdoing.
- Be a steward of the environment; implement environmental sustainability practices.

Section IV: Responsibility to my Colleagues, Vendors, and Other Stakeholders as a Hospitality Professional

- Treat all colleagues, vendors, and stakeholders, with dignity.
- Be aware and respectful of cultural, religious, racial, and linguistic, diversity.
- Avoid actions that are hurtful, disrespectful, bullying in nature, or meant to intimidate.
- Be kind.
- Be respectful about the gender identification and sexual orientation of others.
- Be ethical.
- Report illegal and unethical behavior.
- Create and promote a positive work environment.
- Be a team player.
- Be optimistic.
- Be humble.
- Practice active listening; be patient, and concentrate on the meaning of what is being said, and avoid mental or physical distractions when listening.
- Practice clear and direct communication.
- Be receptive to feedback.

The researcher has created a Pledge of Ethics for hospitality practitioners which he is recommending that practitioners adopt. The Pledge of Ethics is named after St. Julian, the patron saint of hospitality. Much like the Hippocratic Oath taken by physicians, the Julian Oath will bind hospitality professionals to ethical conduct.

The Julian Oath

I hereby pledge to abide by the Hospitality Code of Ethics; I acknowledge and agree to fulfill all ethical and legal obligations to my employees or employers, teachers or students, customers or vendors, my colleagues, and the public at large. I agree to serve others with a spirit of humility and kindness and to demonstrate hospitality to all who I encounter.