

WEST ISLAND CITIZEN ADVOCACY

CODE OF ETHICS

(approved in April 2003 and updated in 2006, 2011 and 2012)

Introduction

This code of ethics has been prepared with proper consideration of the Charters of Rights and Liberties of Canada and Quebec, the Civil Code of Quebec, other codes of ethics and the unique structure of a citizen advocacy office based on Dr. Wolfensberger's original work on citizen advocacy. West Island Citizen Advocacy (hereinafter called "WICA") adheres to his work on provision of services to those with a handicapping condition, or protégés, with competent volunteers, citizen advocates. Staff, volunteer advocates and Board members centre their work on the protégé and his needs according to our mission statement and charter. Volunteer advocates are supported by the staff and other community resources as necessary.

The Rights of All

Everyone has the right to integrity and liberty as well as to the safeguarding of his dignity, honor and his reputation.

Everyone has the right to liberty of conscience, religion, opinion and expression.

Everyone has the right to exercise his rights and liberties regardless of race, religion, color, sex, origin, age, status, sexual orientation or any other distinction.

Everyone has the right to be treated with respect, courtesy and politeness.

Everyone has the right to an environment that is clean and which corresponds to security norms.

Everyone has the right to confidentiality of personal information. All WICA lists are kept confidential and are for the exclusive use of WICA.

Everyone has the right of access to his file.

The Responsibilities of All

Everyone must respect the by-laws, mission and working guidelines of WICA.

Everyone must respect the rights of others.

Everyone has the responsibility for making his working or residential environment a harmonious and safe place.

Everyone must respect the belongings of WICA and of others.

Everyone must respect this Code of Ethics or may be asked to leave WICA.

The Rights of Protégés to Services

Every protégé has the right to ask the staff to recruit an appropriate volunteer advocate for his emotional or practical support in ways mutually agreed on with staff. However, this does not mean that an appropriate volunteer advocate will always be found, as recruiting is reliant on citizen volunteers.

Every protégé has the right to staff support for referral or other assistance if a volunteer advocate cannot be found within a reasonable delay.

Every protégé has the right to be part to any decision regarding his services and to be informed regarding his status waiting for a volunteer advocate.

Every protégé has the right to state his dissatisfaction regarding the services offered, whether by staff or a volunteer advocate. He has the right not to be prejudiced because of his dissatisfaction and to be helped to make his dissatisfaction known to the appropriate authority.

The Responsibilities of the Staff and Advocates

Staff and advocates must acquit their obligations with integrity and objectivity as required by the WICA policies and procedures and its mission.

Staff and advocates must respect the confidentiality of protégés' information as required by WICA's confidentiality policy.

Staff and advocates must know their limits as far as their skills are concerned and provide referrals for those whom they cannot serve.

Staff and advocates must inform the management of WICA if a situation arises where there would be a conflict of interest or an appearance of a conflict of interest.

Staff and advocates must work to create a favourable and harmonious atmosphere in the work place conducive to meeting the requirements of this code.

Staff and advocates must never become involved in a personal relationship with a protégé, of either a romantic or sexual nature.

Staff and advocates must not, under any circumstance, or at any time, accept money, gifts, or other advantages pursuant to working with protégés either from the protégé, his friends or his family.

Staff and advocates must treat the protégés with respect, mutual confidence, diligence and courtesy while providing quality services which meet the needs of the protégés.

Staff and advocates may cease to provide services to a protégé for good reasons that shall be made known to the protégé.