



MINNESOTA ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION CODE OF PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

- I. Preamble
- II. Purpose and Foundation
- III. Commitment to:
 - The Public
 - Those we regulate
 - Partners, colleagues and customers
 - The advancement of the Environmental Health profession
 - Communication, partnership, inclusiveness and collaboration
 - The Minnesota Environmental Health Association

I. Preamble

The MEHA Code of Professional Standards has been developed in response to the profession's acceptance of its goals, values and the trust conferred upon it by society to guide the conduct and practices of the profession. As professionals, we accept the responsibility and inherent obligation to uphold these values. This Code of Professional Standards is based on the belief that the environmental health profession is a unified team working to protect and improve public health by means of a specialized practice that focuses on health education, promotion, and restoration; prevention of illness and injury; control of diseases; protection of the food and water supply; assurance of occupational health and safety; prevention of environmental hazards and public health emergency preparedness and response.

II. Purpose and Foundation

The purpose of the MEHA Code of Professional Standards is to serve as a guide to maintain and pursue professionally recognized ethical behavior in conducting our duties, serving the community and clients, and working with colleagues and partners. Membership in MEHA is not required in order to practice our profession; MEHA membership is a privilege and not a right. The organization has adopted this Code as a guide for conduct. Breach of this Code of Professional Standards will likely result in the loss of the privilege of membership in the Association.

Environmental health professionals utilize these significant universal principles when making judgments related to the health, safety and welfare of the community and the individual client:

- Right of self-determination
- Confidentiality
- Honesty
- Doing or producing good
- Avoiding harm
- Fair and nondiscriminatory treatment and cultural understanding
- Public Service

Environmental health professionals recognize that dilemmas and conflicts may develop that do not have guidelines, data or statutes to assist with problem resolution; thus, environmental health professionals use problem-solving, communication, collaboration and appropriate resources to resolve dilemmas and conflicts.

The MEHA Code of Professional Standards is not intended to establish nor replace standards of practice. In summary, the Code of Professional Standards and interpretive statements provide a guiding ethical framework for decision-making, the manner in which we work with colleagues and the evaluation of actions as environmental health professionals fulfill responsibilities to society and the profession.

III. Ethical Commitment to our World, Profession and Association

As a member of the Minnesota Environmental Health Association, I acknowledge and pledge to honor to the best of my ability the following values:

“I commit that my professional goal is to serve humankind by working to raise the standards of environmental health to the highest attainable levels because the enjoyment of health is an inalienable right of every human being without distinction of race, sexual orientation, religion, cultural background, economic, or social condition.

I will appreciate and respect diversity in its value to bring a global perspective and a broader spectrum of viewpoints into solving the environmental public health challenges of today and the future. I will strive to engage stakeholders and promote inclusiveness and unity in our common purpose to protect the health and well-being of the public.

I will communicate openly with my colleagues and collaborate to find creative solutions to problems and challenges that confront the field. Where possible, I will address my differences and concerns directly with the respective individual or party.

I will be aware of, and sensitive to, cultural differences and will act in a respectful manner in concurrence with maintaining the integrity of public health protection. I will seek and utilize the needed resources to educate and inform to the individuals we serve to empower them to protect public health.

I will conduct myself in such a manner that the public is not deceived nor misled and will conduct myself in a manner that is professional and impartial to all parties including governmental, industrial, institutional, and public. I will behave honestly in all matters, honor confidential information, respect privileged communication, and interact with others courteously and politely.

I will practice my profession following recognized scientific principles with full realization that the lives, health, and well being of the public may depend on my professional judgment.

I will work to raise the standards of the profession, mentor future and emerging environmental health professionals and demonstrate through sound knowledge, practice, ethical behavior, and professionalism in the environmental health field. I will continually search for ways to improve the delivery of services, support others by sharing my experiences, foster creativity through encouragement, and strive to keep myself fully informed of new developments in the profession. I will remain qualified for my position and maintain an acceptable level of competence by continued study, observation, and personal investigation. I will perform services only in the areas of my competence, and properly represent my professional education, credentials and experience.

I will act responsibly to uphold the integrity of my profession and avoid conduct or practices that may appear to or in actual fact discredit my profession. I will ensure ethical conduct regarding conflicts of interest by recognizing, acknowledging, and appropriately addressing any secondary interests that might in reality distort the integrity of judgments or be perceived to do so.

I will uphold the highest personal standards of conduct in all my dealings with colleagues in the Association and others with whom I relate professionally.

I will proudly represent MEHA membership to my professional peers and to the public I serve in the course of performing my duties. I will conduct myself in a manner befitting my professional status and will do nothing to undermine, detract from, or otherwise cause damage to my membership or representation of MEHA. I accept that any activity on my part that will cause MEHA injury serves as a failure on my part to uphold my obligations to MEHA.

I will uphold the By-Laws of the Minnesota Environmental Health Association, enforce the applicable laws, rules, principles of public health to ensure equitable protection to the public and will at all times conduct myself in a manner worthy of my profession.

I will do nothing to undermine, detract from, or otherwise cause damage to my membership or representation of MEHA. I accept that any activity or communication on my part that will cause MEHA any measure of injury serves as a breach and a failure on my part to uphold this code of ethics. Moreover, I accept that such action for which I might be responsible could result in disciplinary action, up to and including the revocation of my membership or office by the MEHA Board of Directors. I understand that after a violation of this Code the MEHA board may elect to inform a governmental licensing agency and/or my employer of this violation.”