

Complete Healthcare Compliance Manual 2024

Resource: Code of Ethics for Health Care Compliance Professionals

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HCCA started as an event in Minneapolis in 1996, part of the annual Medical Group Management Association meeting. After that event, Roy Snell, Brent Saunders, and Debbie Troklus decided to form what would later become HCCA—an association for healthcare compliance professionals to network and learn about their emerging profession. To further that cause, in 1999, HCCA created the Compliance Certification Board to certify compliance professionals, and it began holding intensive academies on healthcare compliance.^[1] Since that time, HCCA has grown to serve more than 12,000 members, providing a range of resources and authoritative information and holding events to connect and engage healthcare compliance professionals.

In 2018, the “Code of Ethics for Health Care Compliance Professionals” was created to guide healthcare compliance professionals and the professional community as a whole. The code was produced by HCCA’s Code of Ethics Development Committee (Jan Heller, PhD; Mark Meaney, PhD; Joseph E. Murphy, Esq.; and Jeffrey Oak, PhD). HCCA created this code because healthcare compliance programs are ultimately judged by how they affect, directly or indirectly, the delivery of healthcare to patients, residents, and clients served by the healthcare industry and, thus, by how they contribute to the well-being of the communities they serve. Those served by the healthcare industry are particularly vulnerable, and therefore healthcare compliance professionals understand that the services they provide require the highest standards of professionalism, integrity, and competence. The code of ethics expresses the profession’s recognition of its responsibilities to the general public, to employers and clients, and to the legacy of the profession.^[2]

Using the Code

The HCCA code of ethics consists of two kinds of standards—principles and rules of conduct—and also includes commentaries for certain rules of conduct:

- **Principles:** Broad standards of an aspirational and inspirational nature, and as such, they express ideals of exemplary professional conduct.
- **Rules of conduct** (R1.1, R2.1, etc.): Specific standards that prescribe the minimum level of conduct expected of each healthcare compliance professional.
- **Commentaries:** Clarifies or elaborates on the meaning and application of a rule.

The following conventions are used throughout the code:

- **Employing organization:** Includes the employing organization and clients.
- **Law or laws:** Includes all federal, state, and local laws and regulations; court orders and consent agreements; and all foreign laws and regulations that are consistent with those of the United States.
- **Misconduct:** Includes both illegal acts and unethical conduct.
- **Highest governing body:** The highest policy and decision-making authority in an organization, such as the

board of directors or trustees of an organization.

- **HCCP:** Healthcare compliance professional.

Compliance with this code is a function both of the individual professional and of the professional community. It depends primarily on the healthcare compliance professional's understanding and voluntary actions and, secondarily, on reinforcement by peers and the general public.

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